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THE WORKS

OF

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

Sir J. Watson Gordon P.R.S.A. Geo. Stodart

James Hogg

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD

THE WORKS

OF

The Ettrick Shepherd

TALES & SKETCHES.

V. 2

Melrose.

BLACKIE & SON

LONDON EDINBURGH & GLASGOW

THE WORKS

OF

THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

Centenary Edition.

REVISED AT THE INSTANCE OF THE AUTHOR'S FAMILY,

BY THE

REV. THOMAS THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF "THE COMPREHENSIVE HISTORY OF ENGLAND," "HISTORY OF SCOTLAND," EDITOR OF THE "BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF EMINENT SCOTSMEN," ETC.

TALES AND SKETCHES.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIVE ENGRAVINGS.

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PREFACE.

On the Ettrick Shepherd and his Writings much comment is no longer necessary: his name has become a household word, and his works are known not only in his native Scotland, but wherever the English language or the Scottish dialect is understood. Next to Burns himself, who stands alone as our great national bard, no poet has so nearly approached him in his own peculiar walk, or won so high a reputation as James Hogg; while the merits of both are enhanced by the original lowliness of their station, and the difficulties that stood in their way to such high distinction. The one was only a ploughman, and the other a shepherd. But from the Thames to the Ganges, from the Clyde to the Neva, their songs are sung as the commemorations of social and domestic worth, or the incentives to patriotic and public nobleness; while prince and peasant cordially unite in applauding their productions and honouring their memory.

But while Burns stands so proudly alone, and Hogg occupies a considerably lower pedestal, it must not be forgot, that the latter possessed excellencies of his own which are wanting in the former. If in deep emotion and correspondent power of language the songs of Burns have hewn for themselves an indelible imprint into the living rock of time—if in the vivid brilliancy with which, by a single line, he could reveal an unnoticed sentiment as with a flash of lightning, the Ettrick Shepherd cannot be compared with his great prototype,—this deficiency in power is all but compensated by the superior wideness of his range. His faculties expanded over a more ample field than that of the Bard of Coila, and in this way acomplished more than Burns could have effected. In the imaginative of poetry, could the latter have pictured such a union of the supernaturally bright and beautiful as that of Kilmeny? Could he have sustained himself so long upon the wing as Hogg has done in his larger productions? And in that inventiveness which is so essential an attribute in poetry, could he have created so wide and so varied a world of scenery and incident as has been done by the Ettrick Shepherd?

But abandoning such questions, which may be deemed too captious, we would now observe, that the fame of Hogg does not rest solely upon his merits as a poet. He was also a prose writer; and in this department the fervour of his imagination, and his originality, are almost as conspicuous as in his poetry. While the force of circumstances compelled him to adopt this course of authorship, the same necessity obliged him to write upon those subjects with which he was best acquainted, and which he had already so well illustrated in his poems. And hence his Tales, his Essays, and Sketches were conceived and expressed in the same poetical spirit, while they chiefly touch upon the same subjects. The short and simple annals of the poor—their social and domestic joys and sorrows—their daily occupations and stated festivals—their wild and wondrous legends and superstitions—their adventures as Scottish emigrants in search of wealth or occupation—these have all found in him an able, faithful, and sympathizing recorder: his

stories of mirth and glee describe events in which he had been an actor; while his narratives of fearful *diablerie*, or the mysteries of Fairyland, are told in the *con amore* spirit of one who was more than half persuaded of their truth. Hence the freshness and air of sincerity with which they are invested, and which impart to fiction the charms of reality. Even had Hogg written nothing more than these, he would have been entitled to a high place among the prose writers of our country.

It is gratifying to think that such genuine excellence has obtained a correspondent recognition. The productions of the Ettrick Shepherd, by their own intrinsic excellence, have won their way, and secured their proper place among the lasting literary achievements of our countrymen. While they excited the admiration of the bygone period, and made the public to wonder that they could have been written by any one under such adverse circumstances as his, their popularity was not, like that of so many contemporaneous works, confined to their own day. They have stood the severest ordeal of criticism, and every year has only added to their reputation.

This edition of the ETTRICK SHEPHERD'S WORKS is, in some respects, a reproduction, in a cheaper and more popular form, of the collection of his writings in poetry and prose, partly prepared by the Author himself, issued by the publishers in eleven volumes, foolscap 8vo. A new Life of the Shepherd has been supplied, in addition to the former Autobiography, and a fresh arrangement has been made of the larger Poems, while the smaller have been classed into distinct and appropriate groups. Hogg's own contributions to the *Forest Minstrel*, many of which were omitted in the earlier edition of his works, are now included, so that this edition is, more than any other, full and complete. To each of the larger poems a brief critical, explanatory, or analytical notice has been prefixed. While these re-arrangements and additions have been made in the Poetical works, those in prose have been carefully revised, but chiefly for the purposes of a slight occasional pruning and verbal emendation, such as the Author, had he lived, would himself most probably have made.

In the work of revision, and in the preparation of the Memoir, the Editor has enjoyed the advantage of the co-operation of the Author's widow, and the surviving members of his family. The Memoir and Autobiography accompany the volume containing the Poems.

NOTE TO CENTENARY EDITION.

In this Centenary Edition the Pictorial Illustrations are more numerous than in any previous edition, being now augmented by a series of engravings illustrative of the writings of the author, from designs by Keeley Halswelle, A.R.S.A., W. Small, and J. Lawson; and also by an engraving of the monumental statue of the Ettrick Shepherd erected at St. Mary's Loch. An Appendix to the Author's Life is also added, containing an account of the inauguration of the statue, the celebration of the centenary of his birth, a notice of his family, and other matters of interest.

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TALES AND SKETCHES

BY THE

ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

THE BROWNIE OF BODSBECK.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a range of high mountains bordering on Annandale, Ettrick Forest, and Tweeddale, that are by many degrees the wildest, the most rugged, and inaccessible in the south of Scotland. They abound with precipitous rocks, caverns, and water-falls, besides interminable morasses, full of deep ruts, which are nevertheless often green and dry in the bottom, with perhaps a small rill tinkling along each of them. No superior hiding-place can be conceived. With means of subsistence, thousands of men might remain there in safe concealment, with the connivance of one single shepherd. To that desolate and unfrequented region did the shattered remains of the routed fugitives from the field of Bothwell Bridge, as well as the broken and persecuted whigs from all the western districts, ultimately flee as to their last refuge.

They being however all Westland men, were consequently utterly unacquainted with the inhabitants of the country in which they had taken shelter. They neither knew their religious principles, nor the opinions which they held regarding the measures of government, and therefore durst not trust them with the secret of their retreat. They had watches set all around; certain calls of different birds for signals, and conformable to these they skulked away from one hiding-place to another, alike at the approach of the armed troop, the solitary shepherd, or the careless fowler.

It was a season of calamity and awful interest. From the midst of that inhospitable wilderness, from those dark morasses and unfrequented caverns, the prayers of the persecuted race nightly rose to the throne of the Almighty; prayers, as all testified who heard them, fraught with the most simple pathos, as well as bold and vehement sublimity. In the solemn gloom of the evening, after the last rays of day had disappeared, and again in the morning before the ruddy streaks began to paint the east; yea, often at the deepest hours of midnight, songs of praise were sung to that BEING under whose fatherly chastisement they were patiently suffering. These hymns, always chanted with ardour and wild melody, and borne afar on the light breezes of the twilight, were often heard at a great distance, causing no little consternation to the remote dwellers of that mountain region. The heart of the shepherd grew chill, and his hairs stood on end, as he hasted home to alarm the cottage circle with a tale of horror. For, besides this solemn and unearthly music, he perceived lights moving about by night in wilds and in caverns where human thing had never resided, and where foot of man had never trod, and he deemed that legions of spiritual creatures had once more taken possession of his solitary dells.

At length the hiders became so numerous that it was impracticable to keep themselves altogether concealed from the people of the country. Chance brought them in contact with the men, while sickness and utter necessity often drove the sufferers to make their appeal to the tender heart of women. Never were those appeals refused, although the favours granted were bestowed at the hazard of life; and in no one instance on record was the confidence of the sufferer betrayed: even though the circumstances were partially known to two or three of the same family, they were often puzzled to the last to conceal them from one another. Of such a dilemma the following Tale is a pleasant instance. The general part is taken from Wodrow, and the local part from the relation of my own father, who had the best possible traditionary account of the incidents. On the publication of the first edition, I was griev-

ously blamed, by a certain party, for having drawn an unfair character of Clavers. I can only say that it is the character I had heard drawn of him all my life, and the character of him which was impressed upon my mind since my earliest remembrance, which all his eulogists can never erase. Moreover, I have not contrived one incident in order to make his character blacker than it was: I may have taken a few of the worst, and condensed them, and that is all, and perfectly fair. If, through all the histories of that suffering period, I had discovered one redeeming quality about Clavers, I would have brought it forward, but I found none. He had the nature of a wolf, and the bravery of a bull-dog.

CHAPTER I.

"It will be a bloody night in Gemsop this," said Walter of Chapelhope, as he sat one evening by the side of his little parlour fire, and wrung the rim of his wet bonnet into the grate. His wife sat by his side, airing a pair of clean hosen for her husband, to replace his wet ones. She looked stedfastly in his face, but uttered not a word;—it was one of those looks that cannot be described, but it bespoke the height of curiosity, mingled with a kind of indefinite terror. She loved and respected her husband, and sometimes was wont to tease or cajole him from his purpose; but one glance of his eye, or scowl of his eyebrow, was a sufficient admonition to her when she ventured to use such freedom.

The anxious stare that she bent on his face at this time was inquiry enough, what he meant by the short and mysterious sentence he had just uttered; but from the fulness of his heart he had said that which he could not recall, and had no mind to commit himself farther. His eldest son, John, was in the room too, which he had not remarked before he spoke, and therefore he took the first opportunity to change the subject. "Gudewife," said he, tartly, "what are ye sittin glowrin like a bendit wulcat there for? Gae away and get me something to eat; I'm like to fa' atwae wi' sheer hunger."

"Hunger, father!" said the lad; "I'm sure I saw ye take as muckle meat to the hill with you as might have served six."

Walter looked first over the one shoulder at him, and then over the other, but, repressing his wrath, he sat silent about the space of two minutes, as if he had not heard what the youth said. "Callant," then said he, with the greatest seeming composure, "rin away to the hill, an' see after the eild nowt; ca' them up by the Quave Burn, an' bide wi' them till they lie down, gin that sudna be till twal o'clock at night—Gae away when I bid ye—What are ye mungin at?" And saying so, he gave him such a thwack on the neck and shoulders with the wet bonnet as obliged him to make the best of his way to the door. Whether he drove the young cattle as far as the Quave Burn, or whether he looked after them that night or not, Walter made no further inquiry.

He sat still by his fire wrapt in deep thought, which seemed to increase his uneasy and fretful mood. Maron Linton (for that was the goodwife of Chapelhope's name), observing the bad humour of her husband, and knowing for certain that something disagreeable had befallen him, wisely forbore all intermeddling or teasing questions respecting the cause. Long experience had taught her the danger of these. She bustled about, and set him down the best fare that the house afforded; then, taking up her tobacco pipe, she meditated an escape into the kitchen. She judged that a good hearty meal by himself might somewhat abate his chagrin; and, besides, the ominous words were still ringing in her ears—"It will be a bloody night in Gemsop this"—and she longed to sound the shepherds that were assembled around the kitchen fire, in order to find out their import. Walter, however, perceiving her drift, stopped her short with—"Gudewife, whar are ye gaun sae fast? Come back an' sit down here, I want to speak t'ye."

Maron trembled at the tone in which these words were spoken, but nevertheless did as she was desired, and sat down again by the fire. "Weel, Watie, what is't?" said she, in a low and humble tone.

Walter plied his spoon for some time, without deigning any reply; then turning full upon her, "Has Kate been in her bed every night this week?" asked he seriously.

"Dear gudeman, whaten a question's that to speer at me? What can hae put sic a norie i' your head as that?"

"That's no answering my question, Maron, but speerin ither twa instead o't:—I ask ye gin Kate hasna been out o' her bed for some nights bygane."

"How sude I ken ony thing about that, gudeman?—ye may gang an' speer at her—Out o' her bed, quotha!—Na—there'll nae young skempy amang them wile her out o' her bed i' the night-time.—Dear gudeman, what has put it i' your head that our bairn stravaigs i' the night-time?"

"Na, na, Maron, there's nae mortal soul will ever gar ye answer to the point."

"Dear gudeman, wha heard ever tell o' a *mortal* soul?—the soul's no mortal at a'—Didna ye hear our ain worthy curate-clerk say"——

"O, Maron! Maron! ye'll aye be the auld woman, if the warld sude turn upside-down!—Canna ye answer my question simply, ay or no, as far as ye ken, whether our daughter has been out o' her bed at midnight for some nights bygane or no?—If ye ken that she has, canna ye tell me sae at ainee, without ganging about the bush? it's a thing that deeply concerns us baith."

"Troth, gudeman, gin she has been out o' her bed, mony an honest man's bairn has been out o' her bed at midnight afore her, an' nae ill in her mind nouther—the thing's as common as the rising o' the se'en sterns."

Walter turned towards his meal, after casting a look of pity and despair upon his yokefellow, who went on at great length defending the equivocal practice of young women who might deem it meet and convenient to leave their beds occasionally by night; and at length, with more sagacity than usual, concluded her arguments with the following home remark:—"Ye ken fu' weel, gudeman, ye courtit me i' the howe o' the night yoursel; an' Him that kens the heart kens weel that I hae never had cause to rue our bits o' trysts i' the dark—Na, na! mony's the time an' aft that I hae blest them, an' thought o' them wi' pleasure! We had ae kind o' happiness then, Watie; we hae another now, an' we'll hae another yet."

There was something in this appeal that it would have been unnatural to resist. There is a tenderness in the recollection of early scenes of mutual joy and love, that invariably softens the asperity of our nature, and draws the heart by an invisible bond toward the sharer of them; but when these scenes are at one view connected with the present and the future, the delight receives a tinge of sublimity. In short, the appeal was one of the most happy that ever fell from the lips of a simple and ignorant, though a well-meaning woman. It was not lost upon Walter; who, though of a rough exterior and impatient humour, was a good man. He took his wife's hand and pressed it fervently.

"My gude auld wife," said he, "God bless ye!—Ye hae bits o' queer gates whiles, but I wadna part wi' ye, or see ane o' your gray hairs wranged, for a' the ewes on the Hermon Law."—Maron gave two or three sobs, and put the corner of her check-apron upon the eye that was next Walter.—"Fair fa' your heart, Maron," said he, "we'll say nae mair about it; but, my woman, we maun crack about our bits o' hame affairs, an' I had the strongest reasons for coming to the truth o' yon; however, I'll try ither means.—But, Maron Linton, there's anither thing, that in spite o' my heart is like to breed me muckle grief, an' trouble, an' shame.—Maron, has the Brownie o' Bodsbeck been ony mair seen about the town?"

"Troth, gudeman, ye're aye sae hard i' the belief—wi' a' your kindness to me and mine, ye hae a dour, stiff, unbowsome kind o' nature in ye—it'll hardly souple whan steepit i' yer ain e'esight. But I can tell ye for news, ye'll no hae a servant about yer house, man, woman, nor boy, in less than a fortnight, if this wicked and malevolent spirit canna be put away—an' I may say i' the language o' Scripture, 'My name is Legion, for we are many.' It's no ae Brownie, nor twa, nor half-a-score, that's about the house, but a great multitude—they say they're ha'f deils ha'f fock—a thing that I dinna weel understand. But how many bannocks think ye I hae baken in our house these eight days, an' no a crust o' them to the fore but that wee bit on your timber trencher? Half a dizen o' dizens, gudeman!—a' the meal girnels i' the country wadna stand it, let abee the wee bit meal ark o' Chapelhope."

"Gudewife, I'm perfectly stoundit. I dinna ken what to say, or what to think, or what to do; an' the mair sae o' what I have heard sin' I gaed to the hill. Auld John o' the Muchrah, our herd, wha I ken wadna tell a lee for the Laird o' Drummelzier's estate, saw an unco sight the night afore last."

"Mercy on us, gudeman! what mair has been seen about this unlucky place?"

"I'll tell ye, gudewife. On Monanday night he cam yont to stop the ewes aff the hogg-fence, but or it was lang he saw a white thing an' a black thing comin' up the Houm close thegither. They cam by within three cat loups o' him—he gripped his cudgel firm, an' was aince gaun to gie them strength o' arm, but his power failed him an' a' his sinnens grew like dockans; there was a kind o' glamour cam o'er his een too, for a' the 'Hope an' the heaven grew as derk as tar an' pitch—but the settin moon shone even in their faces, and he saw them as weel as it had been fore-day. The tane was a wee bit hurklin crile of an unearthly thing, as shrinkit an' wan as he had lien seven years i' the grave; the tither was like a young woman—an' what d'ye think? he says he'll gang to death wi't that it was outher our dochter or her wraith."

Maron lifted up her eyes and her clasped hands toward the ceiling, and broke out with the utmost vehemence into the following raving ejaculation;—"O mercy, mercy! Watie Laidlaw!—O, may Him that dwalls atween the cherubims be wi' us and preserve us and guide us, for we are undone creatures!—O, Watie Laidlaw, Watie Laidlaw! there's the wheel within the wheel, the mystery o' Babylon, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth."

"Maron Linton!—What are ye sayin'?—Haud your tongue, Maron Linton."

"O gudeman, I thought it was the young fallows ye jaloosed her wi'—I wish it had. I wad rather hae seen her i' the black stool, in the place where repentance is to be hoped for; but now she's i' the deil's ain hands. I jaloosed it, Watie—I kend it—I was sure o't lang syne. Our bairn's changed—she's transplanted; she's no Keaty Laidlaw now, but an unearthly creature. We might weel hae kend that flesh an' bluid could never be sae bonny. Gudeman, I hae an awsome tale to tell you—Wha think ye was it that killed Clavers' Highlanders?"

"That, I suppose, will remain a mystery till the day when a' secrets will be cleared up, an' a' the deeds o' darkness brought to light."

"Sae may it be, Watie! Sae may it be! But it was neither ane nor ither but our ain only dochter Kate."

"Ye're ravin, Maron—troth, ye're gaun daft. A bit sklendry lassie o' aughteen kill sae mony armed Highlanders!—Hout, fye! keep within bounds, Maron."

"I heard her wi' thir lugs it's i' my ain head—stannin on that very room floor, I heard her gie the orders to her Brownie. She was greetin whan I cam in—I listened and heard her saying, while her heart was like to loup, 'Wae's me! O wae's me! or mid-day their blood will be rinnin like water!—the auld an' the young, the bonny an' the gude, the sick an' the woundit. That bluid may cry to Heaven, but the cauld earth will drink it up; days may be better, but waur they canna be! Down wi' the clans, Brownie, and spare nae ane.' In less than ten minutes after that, the men were found dead. Now, Watie, this is a plain an' positive truth."

Walter's blood curdled within him at this relation. He was superstitious, but he always affected to disbelieve the existence of the Brownie, though the evidences were so strong as not to admit of any doubt; but this double assurance, that his only daughter, whom he loved above all the world besides, was leagued with evil spirits, utterly confounded him. He charged his wife, in the most solemn manner, never more, during her life, to mention the mysterious circumstance relating to the death of the Highland soldiers. It is not easy to conceive a pair in more consummate astonishment than Walter and his spouse were by the time the conversation had reached this point. The one knew not what to think, to reject, or believe—the other believed all, without comprehending a single iota of what she did believe; her mind endeavoured to grasp a dreadful imaginary form, but the dimensions were too ample for its reasoning powers; they were soon dilated, burst, and were blown about, as it were, in a world of vision and terror.

CHAPTER II.

Before proceeding with the incidents as they occurred, which is the common way of telling a story in the country, it will be necessary to explain some circumstances alluded to in the foregoing chapter.

Walter Laidlaw rented the extensive bounds of Chapelhope from the Laird of Drummelzier. He was a substantial, and even a wealthy man, as times went then, for he had a stock of 3000 sheep, cattle, and horses; and had, besides, saved considerable sums of money, which he had lent out to neighbouring farmers who were not in circumstances so independent as himself.

He had one only daughter, his darling, who was adorned with every accomplishment which the country could then afford, and with every grace and beauty that a country maiden may possess. He had likewise two sons, who were younger than she, and a number of shepherds and female servants.

The time in which the incidents here recorded took place was, I believe, in the autumn of the year 1685, the most dismal and troublous time that these districts of the south and west of Scotland ever saw, or have since seen. The persecution for religion then raged in its wildest and most unbridled fury: the Covenanters, or the Whigs, as they were then called, were proscribed, imprisoned, and at last hunted down like wild beasts. Graham, Viscount of Dundee, better known by the detested name of Clavers, let loose his savage troopers upon those peaceful districts, with peremptory orders to plunder, waste, disperse, and destroy the conventiclers, wherever they might be found.

The shepherds knew, or thought they knew, that no human being frequented these places. They lived in terror and consternation. Those who had no tie in the country left it, and retreated into the vales, where the habitations of men are numerous, and where the fairy, the Brownie, or the walking ghost, is rarely seen. Such as had friends whom they could not leave, or sheep and cattle upon the lands, as the farmers and shepherds had, were obliged to remain, but their astonishment and awe continued to increase. They knew there was but one Being to whom they could apply for protection against these unearthly visitants; family worship was begun both at evening and morning in the farmer's hall and the most remote hamlet; and that age introduced a spirit of devotion into those regions, which one hundred and thirty years' continuance of the utmost laxity and indecision in religious principles has not yet been able wholly to eradicate.

It is likewise necessary to mention here, though perfectly well known, that every corner of that distracted country was furnished with a gownsman, to instruct the inhabitants in the *mild* and *benignant* principles of Prelacy, but chiefly to act as spies upon the detested Whigs. In the fulfilment of this last task they were not remiss; they proved the most inveterate and incorrigible enemies that the poor Covenanters had.

The officiating priest at the kirk of St. Mary of the Lowes had been particularly active in this part of his commission. The smallest number could not be convened for the purposes of public devotion—two or three stragglers could not be seen crossing the country, but information was instantly sent to Clavers, or some one of his officers; and, at the same time, these devotional meetings were always described to be of the most atrocious and rebellious nature. The Whigs became grievously incensed against this ecclesiastic; for, in the bleakest mountain of their native land, they could not enjoy a lair in common with the foxes and the wild goats in peace, nor worship their God without annoyance in the dens and

A RETREAT OF THE COVENANTERS

caves of the earth. Their conventicles, though held in places ever so remote, were broken in upon and dispersed by armed troops, and their ministers and brethren carried away to prisons, to banishment, and to death. They waxed desperate, and what will not desperate men do? They waylaid, and seized upon one of the priest's emissaries by night, a young female, who was running on a message to Grierson of Lag. Overcome with fear at being in custody of such frightful-looking fellows, with their sallow cheeks and long beards, she confessed the whole, and gave up her despatches. These were of the most aggravated nature. Forthwith two or three of the most hardy of the Whigs, without the concurrence or knowledge of their brethren, posted straight to the Virgin's chapel that very night, shot the chaplain, and buried him at a small distance from his own little solitary mansion; at the same time giving out to the country, that he was a sorcerer, an adulterer, and a character every way evil. His name has accordingly been handed down to posterity as a most horrid necromancer.

This was a rash and unpremeditated act; and, as might well have been foreseen, the cure proved worse than the disease. It brought the armed troops upon them both from the east and the west. Clavers came to Traquair, and stationed companies of troops in a line across the country. The Laird of Lag placed a body of men in the narrowest pass of Moffatdale, in the only path by which these mountains are accessible. Thus all communication was cut off between the mountain-men and the western counties; for every one who went or came by that way, these soldiers took prisoner, searched, and examined; and one lad, who was coming from Moffat, carrying more bread than they thought he could well account for, they shot dead on the spot just as he had dropped on his knees to pray.

A curate, named Clerk, still remained, to keep an eye upon the Whigs and pester them. He had the charge of two chapels in that vicinity; the one at a place now called Kirkhope, which was dedicated to St. Irene, a saint of whom the narrator of this story could give no account. The other was dedicated to St. Lawrence; the remains of it are still to be seen at Chapelhope, in a small circular inclosure on the west side of the burn. Clerk was as malevolent to the full against the proscribed party as his late brother, but he wanted the abilities of the deceased; he was ignorant, superstitious, and had assumed a part of that fanaticism in religion by which many of the adverse party were distinguished. By this principally he had gained some influence among his hearers, on whom he tried every stimulant to influence them against the Whigs. The goodwife of Chapelhope was particularly attached to him and his tenets; he held her completely in leading-strings; her conscience approved of everything, or disapproved, merely as he directed; he flattered her for her deep knowledge in true and sound divinity and the Holy Scriptures, although of both she was grossly ignorant. But she had learned from her preceptor a kind of cant—a jargon of religious terms and sentences of Scripture mixed, of which she had great pride but little understanding. She was just such a character as would have been a Whig, had she ever had an opportunity of hearing or conversing with any of that sect. Few things could be so truly ludicrous as some of her exhibitions in a religious style. The family and servants were in general swayed by their mistress, who took a decided part with Clerk in all his schemes against the Whigs, and constantly despatched one of her own servants to carry his messages of information to the king's officers. This circumstance soon became known to the mountain-men, and though they were always obliged to take refuge on the lands of Chapelhope by day, they avoided carefully all communication with the family or shepherds (for several of the shepherds on that farm lived in cottages at a great distance from one another and from the farm-house).

Walter despised Clerk and his tenets most heartily; he saw that he was a shallow, hypocritical, and selfish being, and that he knew nothing of the principles in which he pretended to instruct them; therefore he sorely regretted the influence that he had gained over his family. Neither did he approve of the rigid and rebellious principles which he believed the Covenanters professed. When he met with any man, or community of men, who believed firmly in anything, and held it sacred, Walter revered that, and held it sacred likewise; but it was rather from a deference to the belief and feelings of his fellow-creatures than his own conviction. In short, Walter was an honest, conscientious, good, old-fashioned man, but he made no great fuss about religion, and many supposed that he did not care a pin who was right or who was wrong.

On the 23d of August, Clavers despatched nineteen men from Traquair, under the command of one Copland, a gentleman volunteer in his troop, and a very brave young man, to gain intelligence concerning the murder of the curate, and use every means to bring the perpetrators to justice. Copland and his men came to the mansion of the late chaplain, where they remained all the night, and made every inquiry that they could concerning the murderers. Several witnesses were brought in and examined, and among others the very identical girl whom the Whigs took prisoner, and robbed of the despatches. She had heard the letter read by one of the gang who seized her, while the rest stood and listened. It bore, "that great numbers of the broken and rebellious traitors kenneled in the wilds around Loch Skene, from whence they committed depredations on all the countries about; that they likewise made religious incursions into those districts, where great multitudes attended their inflammatory harangues." It also stated, "that a noted incendiary was to preach on such a day in Riskinhope Linn, where the whole

group might easily be surrounded and annihilated; that many of them were armed with guns, bludgeons, and broadswords, but that they were the most cowardly, heartless dogs alive; and that he himself, who had private and certain information of all their hiding places, would engage to rid the country of them in a few days, if Lag would allow him but one company of soldiers."

Copland now began to suspect that his force was too small to accomplish anything of moment; he determined, however, to make a dash into the wild next morning, and, if possible, to seize some prisoners, and thereby gain more accurate information. On the morning of the 24th, having procured two trusty guides, he proceeded on his expedition. He and nine of his followers went up by a place called Sheilhope, the other nine by Chapelhope—they were to scour the broken ground, take all those prisoners whom they found skulking, fire upon such as refused to stand, and meet on a certain height at noon. Copland and his party reached the appointed place without making any reprisal; they perceived some stragglers on the heights and rocks at a great distance, who always vanished away, like beings not of this world. Three of the other party took one poor lad prisoner, who was so spent and emaciated that he had been unable to fly at the signal-sound; but so intent were they on blood that he was not even brought before their leader, who never so much as knew of the capture.

The guide was wont to relate the circumstances of this poor man's trial and execution, for, but for him, no such thing would ever have been known; the death of a Whig, or a straggler of any kind, was then a matter of no concern. They were three Braemar Highlanders who took him; like the most part of his associates, he answered their questions in a surly manner, and by the most cutting retorts, which particularly enraged a Donald Farquharson, one of the party, against him. "Weel, I'll pe pitting you to 'e test, and tat fery shun, my coot freen," said Donald, "and I'll just pe telling you, eince for a', tat ye haif ne meer but twa meenets and a half to leef."

The poor forlorn wight answered, "that he expected no better at their hands—that he desired no longer time, and he hoped they would bear patiently with him for that short space." He then kneeled down and prayed most fervently, while Donald, who wanted only a hair to make a tether of, as the saying is, seemed watching diligently for a word at which to quarrel. At length he spoke words to the following purport:—"Father, forgive these poor misled creatures, as I forgive them; they are running blindly upon a wrong path, and without the power of thy grace they shall never gain the right one more." Donald who did not well understand the dialect in which the prisoner prayed, looked shrewdly at his companions. "Dugald More," said he—"Dugald More, fat's 'e man saying?"

"He is praying," replied the other, "that we may lose our way, and never find it more."

"Plast 'e soul o' 'e tief, is he?" said Donald, and shot him through the body.

The wounded man groaned, and cried most piteously, and even called out "murder," but there was none to rescue or regard him. The soldiers, however, cut the matter short, by tossing him into a deep hole in the morass, where he sunk in the mire and was seen no more.

When Copland arrived at the place of rendezvous, five out of his ten associates were nowhere to be seen, nor did they make their appearance, although he tarried there till two in the afternoon. The guide then conducted him by the path on which those missing should have come, and on arriving at a narrow pass in Chapelhope, he found the bodies of the four soldiers and their guide mangled and defaced in no ordinary way; and judging from this that he had been long enough in that neighbourhood, he hasted back to Traquair with the news of the loss. Clavers is said to have broke out into the most violent rage, and to have sworn that night by the Blessed Virgin and all the Holy Trinity, utterly to extirpate the seed of the whining psalm-singing race from the face of the earth, and that ere Beltein there should not be as much Whig blood in Scotland as would make a dish of soup to a dog. He, however, concealed from the privy council the loss of these five men, nor did they ever know of it to this day.

CHAPTER III.

Things were precisely in this state, when the goodman of Chapelhope, taking his plaid and staff, went out to the heights one misty day in autumn to drive off a neighbour's flock from his pasture; but, as Walter was wont to relate the story himself, when any stranger came there on a winter evening, as long as he lived, it may haply be acceptable to the curious, and the lovers of rustic simplicity, to read it in his own words, although he drew it out to an inordinate length, and perhaps kept his own personal feelings and prowess too much in view for the fastidious or critical reader to approve.

"It was on a mirk misty day in September," said Walter, "I mind it weel, that I took my plaid about me and a bit gay steeve aik stick in my hand, and away I sets to turn aff the Winterhopeburn sheep. The wind had been east about a' that hairst, I hae some sma' reason ne'er to forget it, and they had amaist gane wi' a' the gairs i' our North Grain. I weel expected I wad find them a' in the scaithe that dark day, and I was just amind to tak them hame in a drove to Aidie Andison's door, and say, 'Here's yer sheep for ye, lad; ye maun outher keep

them better, or else, gude faith, I'll keep them for ye.'—I had been crost and put about wi' them a' that year, and I was just gaun to bring the screw to the neb o' the mire-snipe.—Weel, off I sets; I had a special dog at my foot, and a bit gay fine stick in my hand, and I was rather cross natured that day. 'Auld Wat's no gaun to be o'er-trampit wi' nane o' them, for a' that's come and gane yet,' quo' I to mysel as I gaed up the burn. Weel, I slings aye on wi' a gay lang step; but, by the time that I had won the Forkings, I gat collied amang the mist, sae derk, that fient a spark I could see; stogs aye on through cleuch and gill, and a' the gairs that they used to spounge, but, to my great mervel, I can nouther see a hair of a ewe's tail, nor can I hear the bleat of a lamb, or the bell of a wether—no ane, outher of my ain or ither folks! 'Ay,' says I to mysel, 'what can be the meaning o' this? od, there has been somebody here afore me the day!' I was just standin looking about me amang the lang hags that lead out frae the head o' the North Grain, and considering what could be wort of a' the sheep, when I noticed my dog, Reaver, gaun couring away forrit as he had been setting a fox. What's this? thinks I. On he gangs very angry like, cocking his tail, and setting up his birses, till he wan to the very brink of a deep hag; but when he gat there, my certy, he wasna lang in turning. Back he comes by me, an' away, as the deil had been chasing him; as terrified a beast I saw never—od sir, I fand the very hairs o' my head begin to creep, and a prinkling through a' my veins and skin like needles and preens. 'God guide us!' thinks I, 'what can this *be?*' The day was derk, derk; for I was in the very stamoch o' the cludd, as it were; still it was the day time, an' the e'e o' Heaven was open. I was as near turned an' run after my tike as ever I'll miss, but I just fand a stound o' manheid gang through my heart, an' forrit I sets wi' a' the vents o' my head open. 'If it's flesh an' bluid,' thinks I, 'or it get the owrance o' auld Wat Laidlaw, od it sal get strength o' arm for ainee.' It was a deep hag, as deep as the wa's o' this house, and a strip o' green sward alang the bottom o't; and when I came to the brow, what does I see but twa lang liesh chaps lying sleeping at ither's sides, baith happit wi' the same maud. 'Hallo!' cries I, wi' a stern voice, 'wha hae we here?' If ye had but seen how they lookit when they stertit up; od, ye wad hae thought they were twa scoundrels wakened frae the dead; I never saw twa mair hemp-looking dogs in my life.

"'What are ye feared for, lads? Whaten twa blades are ye? Or what are ye seeking in sic a place as this?'

"'This is a derk day, gudeman.'

"'This is a derk day, gudeman! That's sic an answer as I heard never. I wish ye wad tell me something I dinna ken—and that's wha ye are, and what ye're seeking here?'

"'We're seeking nought o' yours, friend.'

"'I dinna believe a word o't—ye're nae folk o' this country—I doubt ye ken o'er weel what stealing o' sheep is—But if ye winna tell me plainly and honestly your business here, see gin I winna knock your twa heads thegither.'

"'There is a gude auld say, honest man, *It is best to let sleeping dogs lie; they may rise and bite you.*'

"'Bite *me*, lad!—Rise an' bite *me!*—I wad like to see a dog on a' the heights o' Chapelhope that wad snarl at me, let be to bite!'

"I had a gay steeve dour aik stick in my hand, an' wi' that I begoud to heave't up—no to strike them, but just to gi'e them a glisk o' the coming-on that was in't. By this time they were baith on their feet; and the ane that was neist me he gi'es the labbie of his jockey-coat a fling back, and out he pu's a braid sword frae aneath it—an' wi' the same blink, the ither whups a sma' spear out o' the heart o' his aik stick: 'Here's for ye then, auld camstary,' says they; 'an unlucky fish gets an unlucky bait.' Od sir, I was rather stoundid; I began to look o'er my shouther, but there was naething there but the swathes o' mist. What wad I hae gien for twa minutes of auld John o' the Muchrah! However, there was nae time to lose—it was come fairly to the neb o' the mire-snipe wi' me. I never was gude when taken by surprise a' my life—gie me a wee time, an' I turn quite foundemental then—sae, to tell the truth, in my hurry I took the flier's part, flang the plaid frae me, and ran off up the hag as fast as my feet could carry me, an' a' the gate the ragamuffian wi' the sword was amaist close at my heels. The bottom o' the hag was very narrow, twa could hardly rin abreast. My very bluid began to rise at being chased by twa skebels, and I thought I heard a voice within me, crying, 'Dinna flee, Wat Laidlaw! dinna flee, auld Wat; ye hae a gude cause by the end!' I wheeled just round in a moment, sir, and drew a desperate straik at the foremost, an' sae little kend the haniel about fencing, that instead o' sweeing aff my downcome wi' his sword, he held up his sword-arm to save his head. I gart his arm just snap like a pipe-stapple, and down fell his bit whittle to the ground, and he on aboon it. The tither, wi' his sma' spear, durstna come on, but ran for it; I followed, and was mettler o' foot than he, but I dursna grip him, for fear he had run his bit spit through my sma-fairns i' the struggle, for it was as sharp as a lance, but I keepit a little back till I gat the end o' my stick just i' the how o' his neck, and then I gae him a push that soon gart him plew the flow with his nose. On aboon him I gets, and the first thing I did was to fling away his bit twig of a sword—I gart it shine through the air like a fiery dragon—then I took him by the cuff o' the neck, and lugged him back to his neighbour, wha was lying graning in the hag. 'Now, billies,' says I, 'ye shall answer face to face, it wad hae been as good soon as syne; tell me directly wha ye are, and what's your business here,

or, d'ye hear me, I'll tye ye thegither like twa tikes, and tak ye to them that will gar ye speak.'

"'Ah! lack-a-day, lack-a-day!' said the wounded man, 'ye're a rash, foolish, passionate man, whaever ye be.'

"'Ye're maybe no very far wrang there,' quo' I; 'but for aince, I trow, I had gude reason. Ye thought to kill *me* wi' your bits o' shabbles o' swords!'

"'In the first place, then,' said he, 'ken that we wadna hae shed ae drap o' your blood, nor wranged a hair o' your head—all that we wanted was to get quit of ye, to keep ye out o' danger an' scaith. Ye hae made a bonny day's wark on't truly! We had naething in view but your ain safety—but sin' ye will ken, ye maun ken; we belang to a poor proscribed remnant, that hae fled from the face of a bloody persecution. We have left all, and lost all, for the cause of our religion, and are driven into this dismal wilderness, the only miserable retreat left us in our native land.'

"'Od, sir! he hadna weel begun to speak, till the light o' the truth began to dawn within me like the brek o' the day-sky, an' I grew as red too, for the devil needna hae envied me my feelings at that time. I couldna help saying to mysel, 'Whow, whow, Wat Laidlaw! but ye hae made a bonny job o't this morning!—Here's twa puir creatures, worn out wi' famine and watching, come to seek a last refuge amang your hags and mosses, and ye maun fa' to and be pelting and threshing on them like an incarnate devil as ye are.—Oh, wae's me! wae's me!'—Truly, sir, I thought my heart wad burst. There was a kind o' yuke came into my een that I could hardly bruke; but at length the muckle tears wan out wi' a sair faught, and down they came ower my beard, dribble for dribble. The men saw the pliskie that I was in, and there was a kind o' ruefu' benevolence i' their looks; I never saw onything like it.'

"'Dinna be wae for us, honest man,' said they; 'we hae learned to suffer—we hae kend nought else for this mony a lang and bloody year, an' we look for nought else for the wee while we hae to sojourn in this weary world; we hae learned to suffer patiently, and to welcome our sufferings as mercies.'

"'Ye've won a gude length, man,' quo' I; 'but they're mercies that I'm never very fond o'—I wish ye had suffered under ony hand but mine, sin' it be your lot.'

"'Dinna be sorry for us, honest man; there never was an act o' mair justice than this that ye hae inflicted. Last night there were fifteen o' us met at evening worship—we hadna tasted meat for days and nights; to preserve our miserable lives, we stole a sheep, dressed, and ate it; and wi' this very arm that you hae disabled, did I grip and kill that sheep. It was a great sin, nae doubt, but the necessity was also great—I am sae far punished, and I hope the Lord will forgie the rest.'

"Then he began a lang serious harangue about the riches o' free grace, and about the wickedness o' our nature; and said that we could do naething o' oursells *but* sin. I said it was a hard construction, but I couldna argy the point ava wi' him—I never was gude at these lang-winded stories. Then they cam on about Prelacy and heresies, and something they ca'd the act of abjuration. I couldna follow him out at nae rate; but I says, 'I pit nae doubt, callants, but ye're right, for ye hae proven to a' the warld that ye think sae; and when a man feels conscious that he's right, I never believe he can be far wrang in sic matters. But that's no the point in question; let us consider what can be done for ye e'en now. Poor souls! God kens, my heart's sair for ye; but this land's mine, an' a' the sheep around ye, and ye're welcome to half-a-dozen o' the best o' them in sic a case.'

"'Ah! lack-a-day, lack-a-day! If ye be the gudeman o' the Chapelhope, ye'll rue the day that ever ye saw us. If it's kend that ye countenanced us in word or deed, ye're a ruined man; for the blood-hounds are near at hand, and they'll herry you out and in, but and ben. Lack-a-day! lack-a-day! in a wee while we may gang and come by the Chapelhope, and nouther see a lum reek, nor hear a cock craw; for Clavers is on the one hand and Lag on the other, and they're coming nearer and nearer us every day, and hemming us in sairer and sairer—renounce us and deny us, as ye wish to thrive.'

"'Na, na, lads, let them come—let them come their ways! Gin they should take a' the ewes and kye on the Chapelhope, I can stock it o'er again. I dinna gie a bawbee about your leagues, and covenants, and associations, for I think aye there's a good deal o' faction and dourness in them; but or I'll desert a fellow-creature, that's oppressed, if he's an honest man, and lippens to me, od, I'll gie them the last drap o' my heart's bluid.'

"When they heard that, they took me out to the tap of a knowe, and began to whistle like plovers—nae herd alive could hae kend but they were plovers—and or ever I wist, ilka hag, and den, and tod-hole round about, seemed to be fu' o' plovers, for they fell a' to the whistling an' answering ane another at the same time. I had often been wondering how they staid sae lang on the heights that year, for I heard them aye whewing e'en an' morn; but little trowed I they were a' twa-handed plovers that I heard. In half an hour they had sic a squad gathered thegither as e'e never glimed on. There ye might hae seen auld gray-bearded ministers, lairds, weavers, and poor hinds, a' sharing the same hard fate. They were pale, ragged, and hungry, and several o' them lame and wounded; and they had athegither sic a haggard severity i' their demeaner, Lord forgie me, gin I wasna feared to look at them! There was ane o' them a doctor blade, wha soon set the poor chield's arm; and he said, that after a' it wasna broken, but only dislockit and sair brizzed. That doctor was the gabbiest body ever I

met wi'; he spake for them a', and I whiles feared that he sclented a wee. He tried a' that he could to make me a Cameronian, but I wadna grip; and when I was coming away to leave him, 'Laidlaw,' quo' he, 'we ken ye to be an honest, honourable man; here you see a remnant of poor, forlorn, misrepresented creatures, who have thrown themselves on your mercy; if ye betray us, it will be the worse for ye both here and hereafter; if you save and protect us, the prayers of the just win their way to heaven, though fiends should be standing by to oppose them.—Ay, there's naething can stop *their* journey, Laidlaw! The winds canna blaw them aside, the clouds canna drown them, and the lights o' heaven canna burn them; and your name will stand at that bar where there's nae cruel and partial judge. What you gie to us, ye gie to your Maker, and he will repay you seven-fold.' Od, the body was like to gar me play the bairn and greet even out. Weel, I canna mind the half that he said, but he endit wi' this:—'We have seen our friends all bound, banished, and destroyed; they have died on the field, on the scaffold, and at the stake; but the reek o' their blood shall drive the cruel Stuarts frae the land they have disgraced, and out of it a church of truth and liberty shall spring. There is still a handfu' remaining in Israel that have not yet bowed the knee to Baal, nor yet kissed him. That remnant has fled here to escape the cruelty of man; but a worse fate threatens us now—we are all of us perishing with famine. For these three days we have tasted nothing but the green moss, save a few wretched trouts, eels, and adders.' 'Ethers, man!' quo' I; 'for the love o' God take care how ye eat the ethers—ye may as weel cut your throats at ance as eat them. Na, na, lad, that's meat that will never do.' I said nae mair, but gae just a wave to my dog. 'Reaver,' quo' I, 'yon's away.' In three minutes he had ten score o' ewes and wedders at my hand. I grippit twa o' the best I could wale, and cut aff their heads wi' my ain knife. 'Now, doctor,' quo' I, 'take these and roast them, and part them amang ye the best way ye can—ye'll find them better than the ethers—Lord, man, it will never do to eat ethers.'"

After a hearty laugh, in which his guests generally joined, Walter concluded thus: "That meeting cost me twa or three hunder round bannocks, and mae gude ewes and wedders than I'll say; but I never missed them, and I never rued what I did. Folk may say as they like, but I think aye the prayers out amang the hags and rash-bushes that year did me nae ill. It is as good to hae a man's blessing as his curse, let him be what he may."

Walter never went farther with his story straight onward than this; for it began to involve family concerns, which he did not much like to recount. He had a number of abstract stories about the Covenanters and their persecutors; but as I must now proceed with the narrative as I gathered it from others, these will be interwoven in their due course.

CHAPTER IV.

Walter visited them next day at the time and place appointed, taking with him a dozen of bannocks and a small cheese. These he was obliged to steal out of his own pantry, for he durst not by any means trust his wife and family with the discovery he had made, knowing that he might as well have confided it to the curate himself, the sworn enemy of his motley protegés. They gathered around him with protestations of gratitude and esteem; for the deserted and oppressed generally cling to the first symptoms of friendship and protection with an ardour that too often overshoots its aim. Walter naturally felt an honest pride, not so much in that he had done, as that he intended to do; but before he produced his repast, he began in a most serious way to question them relating to some late incidents already mentioned.

They all with one assent declared, and took God to witness, that they knew nothing at all about the death of the five soldiers; that it was not perpetrated by them, nor any connected with them; nor could they comprehend, in the least degree, how it was effected, if not by some supernatural agency—a judgment sent down from heaven for their bloody intent. With regard to the murder of the priest, they were sorry that they knew so much. It was perpetrated by a few rash men of their number, but entirely without their concurrent assent, as well as knowledge; that though his death might have been necessary to the saving of a great number of valuable lives, they had nevertheless unanimously protested against it; that the perpetrators had retired from their body, they knew not whither; and that at that very time the Rev. Messrs. Alexander Shiels and James Renwick were engaged in arranging for publication a general protest against many things alleged against them by their enemies, and this among others.[1]

There was a candour in this to which Walter's heart assented. He feasted them with his plentiful

[1] This curious protest is still extant, and shows the true spirit of the old Covenanters or Cameronians, as they have since been called, better than any work remaining. It is called in the title page, "*An Informatory Vindication of a poor, wasted, misrepresented Remnant of the suffering Anti-popish, Anti-prelatic, Anti-erastian, Anti-sectarian, true Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland.*" It is dated at Leadhills in 1687, and is the conjoint work of Mr. James Renwick and Mr. Alexander Shiels, author of *The Hind let Loose*. The following is an extract from it, p. 107:—

"And in like manner we do hereby disclaim all unwarrantable practices committed by any few persons reputed to be of us, whereby the Lord hath been offended, his cause wronged, and we all made to endure the scourge of tongues; for which things we have desired to make conscience of mourning before the Lord, both in public and private. As the unwarrantable manner of killing that curate at the Corsephairn, though he was a man of death both by the laws of God and man, and the fact not materially murder; it being gone about contrary to our declaration, common or competent consent (the con-

and homely cheer, promised to visit them every day, and so to employ his shepherds that none of them should come into that quarter to distress them. Walter was as good as his word. He visited them every day, told them all the news that he could gather of the troops that beleaguered them, of the executions that were weekly and daily taking place, and of everything else relating to the state of the country. He came laden with food to them daily; and when he found it impossible to steal his own bread, butter, and cheese, he supplied their wants from his flock. The numbers of the persecuted increased on his hands incalculably. The gudewife of Chapelhope's bannocks vanished by scores, and the unconscionable, insatiable Brownie of Bodsbeck was blamed for the whole.

Some time previous to this, a young vagrant, of the name of Kennedy, chanced to be out on these moors shooting grouse, which were extremely plentiful. He tarried until the twilight, for he had the art of calling the heath-fowl around him in great numbers, by imitating the cry of the hen. He took his station for this purpose in one of those moss-hags formerly described; but he had not well begun to call ere his ears were saluted by the whistling of so many plovers that he could not hear his own voice. He was obliged to desist, and he lay for some time listening, in expectation that they would soon cease crying. When lying thus, he heard distinctly the sound of something like human voices, that spoke in whispers hard by him; he likewise imagined that he heard the pattering of feet, which he took for those of horses, and, convinced that it was a raid of the fairies, he became mortally afraid; he crept closer to the earth, and in a short time heard a swell of the most mellifluous music that ever rose on the night. He then got up, and fled with precipitation, away, as he thought, from the place whence the music seemed to arise; but ere he had proceeded above a hundred paces, he met with one of the strangest accidents that ever happened to man.

That same night, about or a little before the hour of midnight, two of Laidlaw's men, who happened to be awake, imagined that they heard a slight noise without; they arose and looked cautiously out at a small hole that was in the end of the stable where they slept, and beheld to their dismay the appearance of four men, who came toward them carrying a coffin. On their coming close to the corner of the stable where the two men stood, the latter heard one of them say distinctly, in a whisper, "Where shall we lay him?"

"We must leave him in the barn," said another.

"I fear," said a third, "the door of that will be locked," and they passed on.

The men were petrified; they put on their clothes, but they durst not move, until, in a short time thereafter, a dreadful bellowing and noise burst forth about the door of the farm-house. The family was alarmed, and gathered out to see what was the matter, and behold there lay poor Kennedy in a most piteous plight, and, in fact, stark staring mad. He continued in a high fever all the night and the next morning, but a little after noon he became somewhat more calm, and related to them a most marvellous tale indeed.

He said that by the time he arose to flee from the sound of the music, the moor was become extremely dark, and he could not see with any degree of accuracy where he was running, but that he still continued to hear the sounds, which, as he thought, came still nigher and nigher behind him. He was, however, mistaken in this conjecture, for in a short space he stumbled on a hole in the heath, into which he sunk at once, and fell into a pit which he described as being at least fifty fathom deep; that he there found himself immediately beside a multitude of hideous beings, with green clothes and blue faces, who sat in a circle round a small golden lamp, gaping and singing with the most eldritch yells. In one instant all became dark, and he felt a weight upon his breast that seemed heavier than a mountain. They then lifted him up, and bore him away through the air for hundreds of miles, amid regions of utter darkness; but on his repeating the name of Jesus three times, they brought him back, and laid him down in an insensible state at the door of Chapelhope.

The feelings depicted in the features of the auditors were widely different on the close of this wonderful relation. The beauteous Katharine appeared full of anxious and woful concern, but no marks of fear appeared in her lovely face. The servants trembled every limb, and declared with one voice that no man about Chapelhope was now sure of his life for a moment, and that nothing less than double wages should induce them to remain there another day. The goodwife lifted up her eyes to heaven, and cried, "O the vails, the vails!—the vails are poured, and to pour!"

Walter pretended to laugh at the whole narration, but when he did, it was with an altered countenance, for he observed, what none of them did, that Kennedy had indeed been borne through the air by some means or other, for his shoes were all covered with moss, which, if he had walked, could not have been there, for the grass would have washed it off, from whatever quarter he had come.

Kennedy remained several days about Chapelhope in a thoughtful, half-delirious frame, but no en-

clusion and deed being known only to three or four persons), in a rash and not a Christian manner, and also other offences being committed at the time; which miscarriages have proven a mean to stop and retard lawful, laudable, and warrantable proceeding, both as to matter and manner."

These *other offences committed at the time*, unquestionably refer to the slaughter of the Highland soldiers, about which there was great stir and numerous conjectures in the country; although, owing to the revolution that immediately followed, the perpetrators were never taken, nor the cause tried in a court of justice, nor indeed was the incident ever generally known.

treaties could prevail with him at that time to accompany the men of the place to where he supposed the accident had happened, nor yet to give them any account where it was situated, for he averred that he heard a voice say to him in a solemn tone, "If you wish to live long, never tell what you have seen to-night, nor ever come this way again." Happy had it been for him had he attended all along to this injunction. He slipped away from Chapelhope in a few days, and was no more seen until the time that Copland and his men appeared there. It was he who came as guide to the soldiers that were slain, and he fell with them in the strait linn of the South Grain of Chapelhope.

These mysterious and unaccountable incidents by degrees impressed the minds of the inhabitants with terror that cannot be described; no woman or boy would go out of doors after sunset on any account whatever, and there was scarcely a man who durst venture forth alone after the fall of evening. If they could have been sure that brownies and fairies had only power to assume the human shape, they would not have been nearly in such peril and perplexity, but there was no form of anything animate or inanimate, save that of a lamb, that they were sure of; they were of course waylaid at every turn, and kept in continual agitation. An owl was a most dangerous and suspicious-looking fellow—a white glede made them quake, and keep a sharp look-out upon his course in the air—a hare, with her large intelligent eyes and equivocal way of walking, was an object of general distrust—and a cat squalling after dark was the devil. Many were the ludicrous scenes that occurred, among which I cannot help mentioning those that follow, as being particularly whimsical.

Jasper, son to old John of the Muchrah, was the swiftest runner of his time; but of all those whose minds were kept in continual agitation on account of the late inundation of spirits into the country, Jasper was the chief. He was beset by them morning and evening; and even at high noon, if the day was dark, he never considered himself as quite safe. He depended entirely upon his speed in running to avoid their hellish intercourse; he essayed no other means; and many wonderful escapes he effected by this species of exertion alone. He was wont to knit stockings while tending his flock on the mountains, and happening to drop some yarn one evening, it trailed after him in a long ravelled coil along the sward. It was a little after the sun had gone down that Jasper was coming whistling and singing over the shoulder of the Hermon Law, when, chancing to cast a casual glance behind him, he espied something in shape of a horrible serpent, with an unequal body, and an enormous length of tail, coming stealing along the bent after him. His heart leaped to his mouth (as he expressed it), and his hair bristled so that it thrust the bonnet from his head. He knew that no such monster inhabited these mountains, and it momently occurred to him that it was the Brownie of Bodsbeck come to seize him in that most questionable shape. He betook him to his old means of safety in great haste, never doubting that he was well qualified to run from any object that crawled on the ground with its belly, but after running a considerable way, he perceived his adversary coming at full stretch along the hill after him. His speed was redoubled, and as he noted now and then that his inveterate pursuer gained no ground on him, his exertion was beyond that of man. There were two shepherds on an opposite hill who saw Jasper running without plaid and bonnet, and with a swiftness which they described as quite inconceivable. The cause set conjecture at defiance, but they remarked that though he grew more and more spent, whenever he glanced behind he exerted himself anew, and strained a little harder. He continued his perseverance to the last, as any man would do who was running for bare life, until he came to a brook called the Ker Cleuch, in the crossing of which he fell down exhausted; he turned on his back to essay a last defence, and, to his joyful astonishment, perceived that the serpent likewise lay still and did not move. The truth was then discovered, but many suspected that Jasper never overcame that heat and that fright as long as he lived.

Jasper, among many encounters with the fairies and brownies, had another that terminated in a manner not quite so pleasant. The Brownie of Bodsbeck, or the Queen of the Fairies (he was not sure which of them it was), came to him one night as he was lying alone, and wide awake, as he conceived, and proffered him many fine things, and wealth and honours in abundance, if he would go away to a very fine country, which Jasper conjectured must have been Fairyland. He resisted all these tempting offers in the most decided manner, until at length the countenance of his visitant changed from the most placid and bewitching beauty to that of a fiend. The horible form grappled with him, laid hold of both his wrists, and began to drag him off by force, but he struggled with all the energy of a man in despair, and at length, by a violent exertion, he disengaged his right hand. The enemy still continuing, however, to haul him off with the other, he was obliged to have recourse to a desperate expedient. Although quite naked, he reached his clothes with the one hand, and drew his knife; but in endeavouring to cut off those fingers which held his wrist so immoveably fast, he fairly severed the thumb from his own left hand.

This was the very way that Jasper told the story to his dying day, denying stoutly that he was in a dream; and singular as it may appear, I can vouch for the truth of it. Jasper Hoy died at Gattonside at a good old age, in the year 1739; and they are yet alive who have heard him tell those stories, and seen him without the thumb of the left hand.

Things went on in this distracted and doubtful manner until the time when Walter is first intro-

duced. On that day, at the meeting-place, he found no fewer than one hundred and thirty of the poor wanderers, many of them assembled to see him for the last time, and take an affectionate leave of him; for they had previously resolved to part, and scatter themselves again over the west country, even though certain death awaited them, as they could not in conscience longer remain to be the utter ruin of one who was so generous and friendly to them. They saw that not only would his whole stock be wasted, but he would himself be subjected to confiscation of goods and imprisonment, if to nothing worse. Walter said the case seemed hard either way, but he had been thinking that perhaps if they remained quiet and inoffensive in that seclusion, the violence of the government might in a little relax, and they might then retire to their respective homes in peace. Walter soon heard with vexation that they made conscience of *not living in peace*, but of proclaiming aloud to the world the grievous wrongs and oppression that the church of Christ in Scotland laboured under. The *doctor chap*, as Walter always called him, illustrated at great length the sin that would lie to their charge should they remain quiet and passive in a time like that, when the church's all was at stake in these realms. "We are but a remnant," added he, "a poor despised remnant; but if none stand up for the truth of the Reformed religion, how are ever our liberties, civil or ecclesiastical, to be obtained? There are many who think with us and who feel with us, who yet have not the courage to stand up for the truth; but the time must ere long come, when the kingdoms of the land will join in supporting a reformation, for the iniquity of the Amorite is wearing to the full."

Walter did not much like disputing about these matters, but in this he felt that his reason acquiesced, and he answered thus: "Ye speak like a true man, and a clever man, Doctor, and if I had a desperate cause by the end, and wanted ane to back me in't, the deil a step wad I gang ayont this moss-hag to find him; but, Doctor, there's a time for every thing. I wadna hae ye to fling away a gude cause as I would do a rotten ewe, that winna haud ony langer. Dinna ye think that a fitter time may come to make a push? Ye'll maybe sell mae precious lives for nae end wi' your declarations; take care that you and the like o' you haena these lives to answer for. I like nae desperate broostles. Od, man, it's like ane that's just gaun to turn dyvour, taking on a' the debt he can."

"Dinna fear, gudeman! dinna fear! There's nae blood shed in sic a cause that can ever be shed in vain. Na, na; that blood will argue better at the bar o' heaven for poor distressed Scotland than all the prayers of all the living. We hae done muckle, but we'll do mair yet. Muckle blood has been wantonly and diabolically shed, and ours may rin wi' the rest: we'll no throw't wantonly and exultingly away, but, when our day comes, we'll gie it cheerfully—as cheerfully, gudeman, as ever ye paid your mail to a kind landlord, even though the season had been hard and stormy. We had aince enough of this warld's wealth, and to spare; but we hae naething now but our blood, and we'll part wi' that as cheerfully as the rest. And it will tell some day! and ye may live to see it yet. But enough, gudeman; we have all resolved, whatever the consequence may be, to live no more on your bounty, therefore do not urge it, but give us all your hand. Farewell! and may God bless you in all your actings and undertakings! There is little chance that we shall ever meet again. We have no reward to give but our blessing and good wishes; but whenever a knee here present is bowed at the footstool of grace, you will be remembered."

Walter could not bear thus to part with them, and to give them up, as it were, to certain destruction. He argued as well as he could on the imprudence of the step they were going to take, of the impossibility of their finding a retreat so inaccessible in all the bounds of the south of Scotland, and the prospect that there was of the persecution soon relaxing. But when he had said all that he could say, a thin, spare old man, with gray, dishevelled locks, and looks, Walter said, as stern as the adders that he had lately been eating, rose up to address him. There was that in his manner which commanded the most intense attention.

"Dost thou talk of our rulers relaxing?" said he. "Blind and mistaken man! thou dost not know them. No; they will never relax till their blood shall be mixed with their sacrifices. That insatiate, gloomy, papistical tyrant and usurper, the Duke of York, and his commissioner, have issued laws and regulations more exterminating than ever. But yesterday we received the woful intelligence that within these eight days one hundred and fifty of our brethren have suffered by death or banishment, and nearly one-half of these have been murdered, even without the sham formality of trial or impeachment, nor had they intimation of the fate that awaited them. York had said in full assembly, 'that neither the realm nor the mother church can ever be safe until the south of Scotland is again made a hunting forest;' and his commissioner hath sworn by the living God, 'that never a Whig shall again have time or warning to prepare for heaven, and that hell is too good for them.' Can we hope for these men relaxing? No! The detestable and bloody Clavers, that wizard! that eater of toads! that locust of the infernal pit! hems us in closer and closer on one side, and that Muscovite beast, Dalziel, on the other! They thirst for our blood; and our death and tortures are to them matter of great sport and amusement. My name is Mackail. I had two brave and beautiful sons, and I had but two; one of these had his brains shot out on the moss of Monyhive without a question, charge, or reply. I gathered up his brains and shattered skull with these hands,

tied them in my own napkin, and buried him alone, for no one durst assist me. His murderers stood by and mocked me, cursed me for a dog, and swore if I howled any more that they would send me after him. My eldest son, my beloved Hew, was hung like a dog at the market-cross of Edinburgh. I conversed with him, I prayed with him in prison, kissed him, and bade him farewell on the scaffold. My brave, my generous, my beautiful son! I tell thee, man, thou who preachest up peace and forbearance with tyrants, should ever the profligate Charles or his diabolical brother—should ever the murderer Clavers, or any of his hell-hounds of the north, dare set foot in heaven, one look from the calm benignant face of my martyred son would drive them out howling!"

All this time the old man shed not a tear; his voice was wildly solemn, but his looks were mixed with madness. He had up his hand to swear, to pray, or to prophesy, Walter knew not which, but he was restrained by his associates, and led aside, so that Walter saw no more of him; but he said he could not get him out of his mind for many a day, for sic another desperate auld body he had never seen.

These harangues took up much of the time that they had to spare, but ere they parted Walter persuaded them, probably by his strong homely reasoning, to remain where they were. He said, since they persisted in refusing to take more of his flock, there was an extensive common beyond the height, called Gemsop, which had been a royal forest, where many gentlemen and wealthy farmers had sheep that fed promiscuously, and considering their necessitous circumstances, he thought it no evil, and he advised them to go and take from that glen as many as would serve to support nature for a time; that for his part he had many a good wedder and dinmont there, and was willing to run his risk, which would then fall equal on a number, and only on such as were rich, and could well bear it. In this plan, after some scruples which were overborne by the majority, they at length fully and thankfully acquiesced.

That same day, on his way homeward, Walter heard the wonderful relation of the apparition of his beloved daughter in the 'Hope at midnight; he learned that Clavers would be there in a few days, and he had sent above one hundred men to steal sheep —all these things made him thoughtful and uneasy after he had reached his home, wet and fatigued. "It will be a bloody night in Gemsop this," he said, sighing, not recollecting what he said or to whom he said it. He could trust his wife with any of his family concerns, but as long as she continued to be so much influenced by the curate Clerk, the sworn enemy of his poor persecuted flock, he durst not give her a hint of their retreat.

Walter became still more and more perplexed from all that he heard from his wife, as well as from every one else. He found that, in truth, there was some mysterious thing about his house—the whole family seemed convinced of it—there were many things seen, heard, and done there that he could in nowise account for in a rational way; and though he resisted the general belief for a good while, that the house was haunted, circumstances at length obliged him to yield to the torrent, and he believed as faithfully in the Brownie of Bodsbeck as any of them all.

CHAPTER V.

The house which Walter occupied was on the very spot where a remnant of an old house still stands about a bow-shot above the new elegant farm-house of Chapelhope, but it was twice as long; indeed, a part of the house that is still standing, or was lately so, is the very one that was built for Laidlaw when he first entered that large farm. There was likewise an outshot from the back of the house, called the Old Room, which had a door that entered from without, as well as one from the parlour within. The end of this apartment stood close to the bottom of the steep bank behind the house, which was then thickly wooded, as was the whole of the long bank behind; so that, consequently, any one, with a little caution, might easily have gone out or come in there without being seen by any of the family. It contained a bed, in which any casual vagrant or itinerant pedler slept, besides a great deal of lumber; and as few entered there, it had altogether a damp, mouldy, dismal appearance. There was likewise a dark closet in one corner of it, with an old rusty lock, which none of the family had ever seen opened.

The most part of the family soon grew suspicious of this place. Sounds, either real or imaginary, were heard issuing from it, and it was carefully shunned by them all. Walter had always, as I said, mocked at the idea of the Old Room being haunted, until that very night when we began with him, and where, after many round-abouts, we have now found him again.

It will be recollected that the conversation between Walter and his wife, which is narrated in the first chapter of this book, terminated with a charge from him never more to mention the mysterious story relating to their daughter and these five men that were destroyed. After this she retired about some housewife business, and left Walter by himself, to muse on what he had seen and heard. He was sitting musing, and that deeply, on the strange apparition of his daughter that old John had seen, when he thought he heard something behind him making a sound as if it growled inwardly. He looked around and saw that it was his dog Reaver, who was always an inmate of every place that his

master entered. He was standing in an attitude of rage, but at the same time there was a mixture of wild terror in his appearance. His eyes, that gleamed like red burning coals, were pointed directly to the door that opened from the corner of the parlour into the Old Room. Walter was astonished, for he well knew his acuteness, but he kept his eyes on him, and said not a word. The dog went forward with a movement scarce perceptible, until he came close to the door, but on putting his nose and ear to the bottom of it, he burst out with such a bay and howl as were truly frightful, and ran about the apartment as if mad, trying to break through the walls and window boards. Walter was fairly overcome; there is nothing frightens a shepherd so much as the seeing of his dog frightened. The shepherd's dog of the true breed will boldly attack any animal on earth in defence of his master, or at his command; and it is no good sign indeed when he appears terrified, for the shepherd well knows that his dog can discover spirits by the savour of the wind, when he himself is all unconscious that any such beings are near.

Walter fled into the kitchen with precipitation; he found all the family standing in alarm, for they had heard the hideous uproar in the room.

"What's the matter?" said half-a-dozen at once.

"What's the matter!" said Walter, churlishly; "nothing at all is the matter; tell me who of you were in the Old Room, and what you were seeking there?"

No—none of them had been in the Old Room; the whole of the family were present, nor had one of them been away.

Walter's countenance changed; he fixed his eyes on the ground for the space of a minute.

"Then I am sure," said he, emphatically, "something worse is there."

A breathless silence ensued, save that some groans and muttered prayers issued from the lips of the goodwife, who sat in a posture of deep humility, with her brow leaning on both hands.

"Some of you go and see," added Walter, "what it *is* that is in the Old Room."

Every eye in the house turned on another, but no one spoke or offered to move. At length Katharine, who seemed in great anxiety lest any of them should have had the courage to go, went lightly up to her father, and said, "I will go, sir, if you please."

"Do, my dear, and let some of the men go with you."

"No, sir; none of the men shall go with me."

"Well, then, Katie, make haste; light a candle, and I will go with you myself."

"No—with your leave, father, if I go, I go alone; no one shall go with me."

"And why, my love, may not I, your father, accompany you?

"Because, should you go with me into the Old Room just now, perhaps you might never be yourself again."

Here the goodwife uttered a smothered scream, and muttered some inarticulate ejaculations, appearing so much affected, that her daughter, dreading she would fall into a fit, flew to support her; but on this she grew ten times worse, screaming aloud, "Avoid thee, Satan! avoid thee, Satan! avoid thee, imp of darkness and despair! avoid thee, avoid thee!" And she laid about her violently with both hands. The servants, taking it for granted that she was bewitched or possessed, fled aloof; but Walter, who knew better how matters stood with her mind than they, ran across the floor to her in such haste and agitation, that they supposed he was going to give her *strength of arm* (his great expedient when hardly controlled), but in place of that, he lifted her gently in his arms, and carried her to her bed, in the further end of the house.

He then tried to soothe her by every means in his power; but she continued in violent agitation, sighing, weeping, and praying alternately, until she wrought herself into a high nervous fever. Walter, growing alarmed for her reason, which seemed verging to a dangerous precipice, kept close by her bedside. A little before midnight she grew calm; and he, thinking she had fallen asleep, left her for a short time. Unfortunately, her daughter, drawn toward her by filial regard and affection, softly then entered the room. Maron Linton was not so sound asleep as was supposed; she instantly beheld the approach of that now dreaded sorceress, and sitting up in her bed, she screamed as loud as she was able. Katharine, moved by a natural impulse, hasted forward to the couch to calm her parent; but the frenzied matron sprung from her bed, threw up the window, and endeavoured to escape; Katharine flew after her, and seized her by the waist. When Maron found that she was fairly in her grasp at such an hour, and no help at hand, she deemed all over with her, both body and soul; which certainly was a case extreme enough. She hung by the sash of the window, struggled, and yelled out, "Murder! murder! murder!—O Lord! O Lord!—Save! save! save! save! —Murder! murder!" &c. At length Walter rushed in and seized her, ordering his weeping daughter instantly to bed.

Maron thanked heaven for this wonderful and timely deliverance, and persuaded now that Providence had a special and peculiar charge over her, she became more calm than she had been since the first alarm; but it was a dreadful certainty that she now possessed, that unearthly beings inhabited the mansion along with her, and that her daughter was one of the number, or in conjunction with them. She spent the night in prayer, and so fervent was she in her devotions, that she seemed at length to rest in the hope of their final accomplishment. She did not fail, however, to hint to Walter that something decisive ought to be done to their daughter. She did not actually say that she should be burned alive at a stake, but she spake of the trial by fire, or that

it might be better to throw her into the lake, to make the experiment whether she would drown or not; for she well expected, in her own mind, that when the creature found itself in such circumstances, it would fly off with an eldritch laugh and some unintelligible saying to its own clime; but she was at length persuaded by her husband to intrust the whole matter to her reverend monitor, both as to the driving away the herd of brownies, and the exorcism of her daughter.

Never was man in such a predicament as Walter now found himself with regard to his family. Katharine had never been a favourite with her mother, who doated on her boys, to the detriment of the girl, but to him she was all in all. Her demeanour of late completely puzzled him. The words that she had said to him the preceding evening had no appearance of jocularity; besides, seriousness and truth formed her natural character, and she had of late become more reserved and thoughtful than she had ever been before.

The bed that she slept in faced into the parlour before mentioned; that which Walter and his spouse occupied entered from another apartment; their backs, however, were only separated by a thin wooden partition. Walter kept awake all that night, thoughtful, and listening to every sound. Everything remained quiet till about the second crowing of the cock; he then heard something that scratched like a rat, but more regularly, and in more distinct time. After the noise had been repeated three times at considerable intervals, he thought he heard his daughter rising from her bed with extraordinary softness and caution; he laid his ear to a seam, and distinctly heard the sound of words uttered in a whisper, but of their import he could make nothing. He then heard his daughter return to her bed with the same caution that she left it, utter some sighs, and fall sound asleep.

After serious deliberation, Walter thought his best expedient was to remove his daughter from home for some time; and next morning he proposed to her to go and spend a week or two with her maternal uncle, Thomas Linton, farmer at Gilmanscleuch. To this she objected, on several pretences; but at length, when urged to it, positively refused to leave her father's house at that time. He never in his life could say a harsh word to her, but that day he appeared chagrined, and bade her, with some asperity, keep away from her mother's presence, as her malady, which was a nervous complaint, required the utmost quietness. This she promised with her accustomed cheerfulness, and they parted. During the day she was absent for several hours, none knowing whither she went, or by what way she returned.

On the same day, the servants, who had spent a sleepless night, packed up bag and baggage, and went off in a body, all save one elderly woman, who had lately come to the house, and was a stranger to them all. Her name, she said, was Agnes Alexander, but she was better known by the familiar one of Nanny Elshinder. Her former history and connections were doubtful, but she was of a cheerful complaisant temper, and always performed what she was ordered to do without any remarks. Walter had hired her at Moffat, in the fair called *the Third Friday;* and told Maron when he came home that "he had hired a wastlin auldish queen, wha, he believed, was a wee crackit i' the head, but, poor thing, she wasna like to get a place, and was sic a good soul he couldna think to leave her destitute; and whanever he begoud to parley wi' her, od, she brought him to the neb o' the mire-snipe directly." Saving this good woman, all the house-servants, man, woman, and boy, deserted their service, and neither promises nor threats could induce them to stay another night about the town. They said "they might as weel bide i' hell; they wad gang afore Gibby Moray, the king's shirra, whanever he likit, about it; or, gin he buid rather hae brawer burlymen, they wad meet him face to face in the Parliament Close."

Walter was now obliged to bring Jasper, his young shepherd, down from the Muchrah, to assist him in the labour of the farm—the most unfit man in the world for a haunted house. He knew that the Old Room was frequented by his old adversary, the Brownie of Bodsbeck. He likewise knew that his young mistress was a witch, or something worse, for the late servants had told him, so that he had now a dangerous part to act. Nevertheless, he came determined to take the bull by the horns; for as he and his father had stocks of sheep upon the farm, they could not leave their master, and he was never wont to disobey him. He had one sole dependence—his swiftness of foot—that had never yet failed him in eschewing evil spirits, save in the solitary instance of the serpent.

On the first day of his noviceship as a labourer, he and his master were putting some ropes on the dwelling-house, to keep on the thatch. Jasper wanting something whereon to stand, for that purpose, and being within a few yards of the door of the Old Room, and knowing that the tubs stood there, thoughtlessly dashed into it to bring out one to stand on; but he had not taken two steps within the door till he beheld a human face, and nothing but a face and a head, looking deliberately at him. One would have thought that such a man, seeing such a sight, would have cried out, fled to his master on the other side of the house, or into the kitchen to old Nanny. Jasper did none of them all. He turned round with such velocity that he fell, hasted out at the door on all fours, and took to the Papper-hill like a wild deer, praying fervently all the way. His master saw him from the ladder where he stood, and called aloud after him, but he deigned not to heed or look behind him—the head without the body, and that at an ordinary distance from the ground, was alone

impressed on his mind, and refused a share to any other consideration. He came not back to the Chapelhope that night.

Katharine, the young and comely friend of the Brownie, having discovered that Jasper had been introduced to her familiar, and knowing his truth and simplicity of heart, earnestly desired to sound him on the subject. She knew he would return to assist her father and brothers with the farm labour in their present strait, by a certain hour next morning, and she waited on him by the way. He came accordingly; but he knew her and her connections better than she imagined. He tried to avoid her, first by going down into the meadow, then by climbing the hill; but seeing that she waylaid him both ways, and suspecting her intentions to be of the very worst nature, he betook him to his old expedient—fled with precipitation, and returned to the Muchrah.

Katharine could by no means comprehend this, and was particularly concerned about it at this time, as she had something she wished to reveal to him. Walter appeared gloomy and discontented all that day. The corn was ripe, but not a sheaf of it cut down; the hay was still standing on the meadow, the lint was to pull, the potatoes to raise, the tar to bring home, and the sheep to smear; and there was no one left to do all this but he and his two boys. The gudewife, who used to bustle about and do much household work, was confined to her room. His daughter's character, her demeanour, and even her humanity, were become somewhat doubtful. Walter was truly in what he termed *a pickled primineary*.

Katharine, being still debarred all access to her mother, began to dread that she would be obliged to leave her father's house; and, in case of a last extremity, she bethought her of sounding the disposition of old Nanny. She was a character not easily to be comprehended. She spoke much to herself, but little to any other person; worked so hard that she seldom looked up, and all the while sung scraps of old songs and ballads, the import of which it was impossible to understand; but she often chanted these with a pathos that seemed to flow from the heart, and that never failed to affect the hearer. She wore a russet worsted gown, clouted shoes, and a quoif or mutch upon her head, that was crimped and plaited so close around her face that very little of the latter was visible. In this guise was Nanny, toiling hard and singing her mournful ditty, when Katharine came in and placed herself on a seat by her side.

"Nanny, this seems to be more than ordinary a busy day with you; pray, what is all this baking and boiling for?"

"Dear bairn, dear bairn, what do I ken; the like o' me maun do as we're bidden; guests are coming, my bairn. O, ay, there's mony a braw an' bonny lad coming this way—mony a ane that will gaur a young thing's e'en stand i' back water—

"They are coming! they are coming!
Alak! an' wae's me!
Though the sword be in the hand,
Yet the tear's in the e'e.
I look to yon mountain,
And I look to yon muir,
For the shield that they trust in
Is mighty and sure.

Is there blood in the moorlands
Where the wild burnies rin?
Or what gars the water
Wind reid down the linn?
O billy, dear billy,
Your boding let be,
For it's nought but the reid lift
That dazzles your e'e.

For I ken by yon bright beam,
That follows the sun,
That our Covenant heroes
The battle shall won.
Then away with your bodings
Of sorrow and scorn,
For the windows of heaven
Stand open this morn.

Let them rear their proud standard
Of vengeance and wrath,
And pour on their columns
Of darkness and death;
Yet around our poor number
Stand hosts in array,
Unseen by our foemen,
But stronger than they."

"Prithee go on, Nanny; let me hear what it was that reddened the water?"

"Dear bairn, wha kens; some auld thing an' out o' date; but yet it is sae like the days that we hae seen, ane wad think the poeter that made it had the second sight. Mony a water as weel as the Clyde has run reid wi' blude, and that no sae lang sin' syne!—ay, an' the wild burnies too! I hae seen them mysel leave a reid strip on the sand an' the gray stanes—but the hoody craw durstna pick there! Dear bairn, has the Chapelhope burn itsel never had the hue?"

Here Katharine's glance and Nanny's met each other, but were as quickly withdrawn, for they dreaded one another's converse; but they were soon relieved from that dilemma by Nanny's melancholy chime:—

"In yon green houm there sat a knight,
An' the book lay open on his knee,
An' he laid his hand on his rusty sword,
An' turned to heaven his watery e'e.

But in yon houm there is a kirk,
An' in that kirk there is a pew,
An' in that pew there sat a king,
Wha sign'd the deed we maun ever rue.

He wasna king o' fair Scotland,
Though king o' Scotland he should hae been,
And he lookit north to the land he loved,
But aye the green leaves fell atween.

The green leaves fell, an' the river swell'd,
An' the brigg was guardit to the key;
O ever alak! said Hamilton,'
That sic a day I should ever see!

As ever ye saw the rain down fa',
Or yet the arrow gae from the bow,
Our Scottish lads fell even down,
And they lay slain on every knowe.

As ever ye saw the drifting snaw
Drive o'er the ripe flower on the lea,
Our Scottish lads fell even down,
An' wae to Scotland an' to me."

"No, that's not it; my memory is gane wi' my last warldly hope. Hech! dear bairn, but it is a sad warld to live in, without hope or love for ony that's in't. I had aye some hope till now! but sic a dream as I had last night! I saw him since again. Yes, I saw him bodily, or may I never steer aff this bit." Here Nanny sobbed hard, and drew her arms across her eyes. "Come, come," continued she, "gie me a bit sang, dear bairn, an' let it be an auld thing—they do ane's heart gude, thae bits o' auld sangs."

"Rather tell me, Nanny—for we live in ignorance in this wild place—what you think of all that blude that has been shed in our country since the killing-time began? Do you think it has been lawfully and rightfully shed?"

"Wha doubts it, dear bairn? Wha doubts that? But it will soon be ower now; the traitors will soon be a' strappit and strung. Ay, ay, the last o' them will soon be hackit and hewed, an' his bloody head stanin ower the Wast Port; an' there will be braw days than—we'll be a' right than."

Katharine sat silent and thoughtful, eyeing old Nanny with fixed attention; but the expression of her contracted face and wild unstable eye was unsatisfactory. She therefore, with a desponding mien, went out, and left the crazy dame to discourse and sing to herself. Nanny ceased her baking, stood upright, and listened to the maid's departing steps, till she concluded her to be out of hearing; she then sung out, in what is now termed the true *bravura* style—

"Then shall the black gown flap
O'er desk and true man;
Then shall the horny cap
Shine like the new moon;
An' the kist fu' o' whistles
That maks sic a cleary,
Lool away, bool away,
Till we grow weary.
Till we grow weary, &c.

Charlie, the cypher-man,
Drink till ye stew dame;
Jamie, the wafer-man,
Eat till ye spue them;
Lick-spittle Lauderdale,
Binny and Geordie,
Leish away, link away,
Hell is afore ye.
Hell is afore ye, &c.

Graeme will gang ower the brink,
Down wi' a slaughter;
Legg an' Drumlandrick
Will soon follow after;
Johnston and Lilligow,
Bruce and Macleary,
Scowder their harigalds,
Deils, wi' a bleery.
Till ye grow weary," &c.

In the meantime Katharine, on hearing the loud notes of the song, had returned within the door to listen, and heard the most part of the lines and names distinctly. She had heard it once before, and the singer reported it to be a new song, and the composition of a young man who had afterwards been executed in the Grassmarket. How Nanny came to sing such a song, with so much seeming zest, after the violent prelatic principles which she had so lately avowed, the maid could not well comprehend, and she began to suspect that there was more in Nanny's mind than had yet been made manifest. Struck with this thought, and ruminating upon it, she continued standing in the same position, and heard Nanny sometimes crooning, and at other times talking rapidly and fervently to herself. After much incoherent matter, lines of psalms, &c., Katharine heard with astonishment the following questions and answers, in which two distinct voices were imitated:—

"Were you at the meeting of the traitors at Lanark on the 12th of January?"

"I never was amang traitors that I was certain of till this day. (Let them take that! bloody gruesome beasts.)"

"Were you at Lanark on that day?"

"If you had been there you would have seen."

"Confound the old witch! Burn her with matches, squeeze her with pincers as long as there's a whole piece of her together, then throw her into prison, and let her lie till she rot, the old wrinkled hag! Good woman, I pity you; you shall yet go free if you will tell us where you last saw Hamilton and your own goodman."

"Ye sall hing me up by the tongue first, and cut me a' in collops while I'm hingin."

"Burn her in the cheek, cut baith her lugs out, and let her gae down head foremost her own way."

After this strange soliloquy, the speaker sobbed aloud, spoke in a suppressed voice for some time, and then began a strain so sweet and melancholy, that it thrilled the hearer, and made her tremble where she stood. The tune was something like the Broom of Cowdenknows, the sweetest and most plaintive of the ancient Scottish airs, but it was sung so slow as to bear with it a kind of solemnity:—

"The kye are rowting in the lone,
The ewes bleat on the brae,
O, what can ail my auld gudeman,
He bides sae lang away!

An' aye the robin sang by the wud,
An' his note had a waesome fa';
An' the corbie croupit in the clud,
But he durstna light ava;

Till out cam the wee grey moudiwort
Frae neath the hollow stane,
An' it howkit a grave for the auld gray head,
For the head lay a' its lane!

But I will seek out the robin's nest,
An' the nest of the ouzel shy,
For the siller hair that is beddit there
Maun wave aboon the sky."[1]

[1] It seems necessary here to premise, that all the songs put

The sentiments of old Nanny appeared now to her young mistress to be more doubtful than ever. Fain would she have interpreted them to be such as she wished, but the path which that young female was now obliged to tread required a circumspection beyond her experience and discernment to preserve, while danger and death awaited the slightest deviation.

CHAPTER VI.

Next morning Clavers, with fifty dragoons, arrived at Chapelhope, where they alighted on the green, and putting their horses to forage, he and Sir Thomas Livingston, Captain Bruce, and Mr. Adam Copland, before mentioned, a gentleman of Clavers' own troop, went straight into the kitchen. Walter was absent at the hill. The goodwife was sitting lonely in the east room, brooding over her trials and woes in this life, and devising means to get rid of her daughter, and with her of all the devouring spirits that haunted Chapelhope; consequently the first and only person whom the gentlemen found in the kitchen was old Nanny. Clavers, who entered first, kept a shy and sullen distance, for he never was familiar with any one; but Bruce, who was a jocular Irish gentleman, and well versed in harassing and inveigling the ignorant country people to their destruction, made two low bows (almost to the ground) to the astonished dame, and accosted her as follows: "How are you to-day, mistress? I hope you are very well?"

"Thank ye kindly, sir," said Nanny, curtseying in return, "deed I'm no sae weel as I hae been; I hae e'en seen better days, but I keep aye the heart aboon, although the achings and the stitches hae been sair on me the year."

"Lack-a-day! I am so very sorry for that! Where do they seize you? about the heart, I suppose? Oh, dear soul! to be sure you do not know how sorry I am for your case, it must be so terribly bad! You should have the goodness to consult your physician, and get blood let."

"Dear bairn, I hae nae blude to spare, an' as for doctors, I haena muckle to lippen to them. To be sure, they are whiles the means, under Providence"—

"O ho!" said he, putting his finger to his nose, and turning to his associates with a wry face, "O ho! the means under Providence! a Whig, I avow! Tell me, my dear and beautiful Mistress Stitch-aback, do you really believe in that blessed thing, Providence?"

"Do I believe in Providence! did ever ony body hear sic a question as that? Gae away, ye muckle gouk—d'ye think to make a fool of a puir body?"

So saying, she gave him a hearty slap on the cheek, at which his companions laughing, Bruce became somewhat nettled, and, drawing out his sword, he pointed at the recent stains of blood upon it. "Be so good as to look here, my good lady," said he, "and take very good note of all that I say, and more; for harkee, you must either renounce Providence, and all that I bid you renounce, and you must, beside that, answer all the questions that I shall ever be after asking, or, do you see, I am a great doctor; this is my very elegant lancet, and I'll draw the blood that shall soon ease you of all your stitches and pains."

"I dinna like your fleem ava, man; 'tis rather ower grit for an auld body's veins. But ye're surely some silly skemp of a fallow, to draw out your sword on a puir auld woman. Dinna think, howanabee, that I care for outher you or it. I'll let you see how little I mind ye, for weel I ken your comrades wadna let ye fash me, e'en though ye were sae silly as to offer. Na, na; d'ye ever think that little bonny, demure-looking lad there wad suffer ye to hurt a woman? I wat wad he no! He has mair discreation in his little finger than you hae i' your hale bouk. Now try me, master doctor, I'll nouther renounce ae thing that ye bid me, nor answer ae question that ye speer at me."

"In the first place, then, my good hearty dame, do you acknowledge or renounce the Covenant?"

"Aha! he's wise wha wats that, an' as daft that speers."

"Ay or no, in a moment—no juggling with me, old Mrs. Skinflint."

into the mouth of old Nanny, relate to events of that period; this to a most painful one, at which the heart shudders to this day. It is supposed to have been sung by Mrs. Finlay of Lathrisk, on finding that her husband did not return from the hill.—"As Thomas Dalziel, of Binns, was once pursuing some Covenanters on the braes above Kilmarnock, being completely baffled by them and in extremely bad humour, he quitted the pursuit, and returned so far on his way, cursing the Whigs most dreadfully. While in this querulous humour he came upon Mr. John Finlay, tenant of a place called Upper Lathrisk. He was an old man, and though a sincere Christian, was never in any of the risings on account of religion. When Dalziel came upon him, he was setting stakes in the field whereat to milk his cows; for the place was not at his own house, but at a wild sheiling to which he drove his cows and calves in summer. When Dalziel came down the hill, Finlay was in custody of two soldiers, who said to their general, 'Sir, here is an old fellow, who, though he says he has never been up in any rebellion, yet acknowledges he has been at several sermons in the fields.'

"'Well then,' said Dalziel, 'that at all events subjects him to banishment.'

"'Alas! sir,' said Finlay, 'it is scarcely worth your while to banish me for all the time I have to live. I am too old for banishment.'

"'Then I am sure you are not too old for being hanged,' said Dalziel, 'or shot—either of the two: suppose then we should make the experiment on an old hypocritical rebel for once!' And without one further interrogatory, he caused him to be tied to one of his own cow-stakes and shot. He then cut off his head, which some of his men kicked away to a distance.

"The judgment of heaven was very visibly executed upon these men; for that same evening, as Dalziel was drinking a cup of wine to a profane and blasphemous toast, he fell down and expired. This was on the night of the 22d of August, and on the 24th one of the soldiers who seized, accused, and shot the old farmer, died in great terror of mind, exclaiming to the last, 'O for the life of John Finlay!'"—Wodrow, vol. ii. p. 63.

"I'll tell ye what ye do, master; if ony body speer at ye gin auld Nanny i' the Chapelhope renounces the Covenant, shake your head, and say ye dinna ken."

"And pray, my very beautiful girl, what do you keep this old tattered book for?"

"For a fancy to gar fools speer, an' ye're the first. Come on now, sir, wi' your catechis. Wally-dye man! gin ye be nae better a fighter than ye're an examiner, ye may gie up the craft."

Bruce here bit his lip, and looked so stern that Nanny, with a hysterical laugh, ran away from him, and took shelter behind Clavers.

"You are a fool, Bruce," said he, "and constantly blundering. Our business here, mistress, is to discover, if possible, who were the murderers of an honest curate, and some of our own soldiers that were slain in this neighbourhood while discharging their duty; if you can give us any information on that subject, you shall be well rewarded."

"Ye'll hear about the curate, sir; ye'll hear about him. He was found out to be a warlock, and shot dead. But ah, dear bairn! nane alive can gie you information about the soldiers! It was nae human hand did that deed, and there was nae e'e out o' heaven saw it done; there wasna a man that day in a' the Hope up an' down. That deed will never be fund out, unless a spirit rise frae the dead an' tell o't. Muckle fear an' muckle grief it has been the cause o' here! But the men war a' decently buried—what mair could be done?"

"Do you say that my men were all decently buried?"

"Ay, troth, I wat weel, were they, sir, and wi' the burial-service too. My master and mistress are strong king's folk."

"So you are not the mistress of this house?"

"A bonny like mistress I wad be, forsooth. Na, na, my mistress is sittin be hersel ben the house there." With that Nanny fell a working and singing full loud:—

"Little wats she wha's coming,
Little wats she wha's coming,
Strath and Correy's ta'en the bent,
An' Terriden an' a's coming;
Knock and Craigen Shaw's coming,
Keppoch an' Macraw's coming,
Clan-Mackinnon's ower the Kyle,
An' Donald Gun an' a's coming."

Anxious now to explore the rest of the house, they left Nanny singing her song, and entered the little parlour hastily, where finding no one, and dreading that some escape might be effected, Clavers and Livingston burst into the Old Room, and Bruce and Copland into the other. In the Old Room they found the beautiful witch Katharine, with the train of her snow-white joup drawn over her head, who looked as if taken in some evil act by surprise, and greatly confounded when she saw two gentlemen enter her sanctuary in splendid uniforms. As they approached she made a slight curtsey, to which they deigned no return, but going straight up to her, Clavers seized her by both wrists. "And is it indeed true," said he, "my beautiful shepherdess, that we have caught you at your prayers so early this morning?"

"And what if you have, sir?" returned she.

"Why, nothing at all, save that I earnestly desire and long exceedingly to join with you in your devotional exercises," laying hold of her in the rudest manner.

Katharine screamed so loud that in an instant old Nanny was at their side, with revenge gleaming from her half-shaded eyes, and heaving over her shoulder a large green-kale gully, with which she would doubtless have silenced the renowned Dundee for ever, had not Livingston sprung forward with the utmost celerity, and caught her arm just as the stroke was descending. But Nanny did not spare her voice; she lifted it up with shouts on high, and never suffered one yell to lose hearing of another.

Walter, having just then returned from the hill, and hearing the hideous uproar in the Old Room, rushed into it forthwith to see what was the matter. Katharine was just sinking, when her father entered, within the grasp of the gentle and virtuous Clavers. The backs of both the officers were towards Walter as he came in, and they were so engaged amid bustle and din, that neither of them perceived him until he was close at their backs. He was at least a foot taller than any of them, and nearly as wide round the chest as both of them. In one moment his immense fingers grasped both their slender necks, almost meeting behind each of their windpipes. They were rendered powerless at once; they attempted no more struggling with the women, for so completely had Walter's gripes unnerved them, that they could scarcely lift their arms from their sides, neither could they articulate a word, or utter any other sound than a kind of choked gasping for breath. Walter wheeled them about to the light, and looked alternately at each of them, without quitting or even slackening his hold.

"Callants, wha ir ye ava? or what's the meanin' o' a' this unmensefu' rampaging?"

Sir Thomas gave his name in a hoarse and broken voice, but Clavers, whose nape Walter's right hand embraced, and whose rudeness to his daughter had set his mountain blood a-boiling, could not answer a word. Walter slackening his hold somewhat, waited for an answer, but none coming—

"Wha ir ye, I say, ye bit useless weazel-blawn like urf that ye're?"

The haughty and insolent Clavers was stung with rage, but seeing no immediate redress was to be had, he endeavoured to pronounce his dreaded name, but it was in a whisper scarcely audible, and stuck in his throat—"Jo—o—o Graham," said he.

"Jock Graham do they ca' ye?—Ye're but an unmannerly whalp, man. And ye're baith king's officers too!—Weel, I'll tell ye what it is, my denty clever callants; if it warna for the blood that's i'

your master's veins, I wad nolt your twa bits o' pows thegither."

He then threw them from him; the one the one way, and the other the other, and lifting his huge oak staff, he strode out at the door, saying, as he left them,—"Hech! are free men to be guidit this gate?—I'll step down to the green to your commander, an' tell him what kind o' chaps he keeps about him to send into folk's houses. Dirty unmensefu' things!"

Clavers soon recovering his breath, and being ready to burst with rage and indignation, fell a cursing and fuming most violently; but Sir T. Livingston could scarcely refrain from breaking out into a convulsion of laughter. Clavers had already determined upon ample revenge, for the violation of all the tender ties of nature was his delight, and wherever there was wealth to be obtained, or a private pique to be revenged, there never was wanting sufficient pretext in those days for cutting off individuals, or whole families, as it suited. On the very day previous to that, the Earl of Traquair had complained, in company with Clavers and his officers, of a tenant of his, in a place called Bold, who would neither cultivate his farm nor give it up. Captain Bruce asked if he prayed in his family. The earl answered jocularly, that he believed he did nothing else. Bruce said that was enough; and the matter passed over without any farther notice. But next morning, Bruce went out with four dragoons, and shot the farmer as he was going out to his work. Instances of this kind are numerous, if either history or tradition can be in aught believed; but in all the annals of that age, there is scarcely a single instance recorded of any redress having been granted to the harassed country people for injuries received. At this time, the word of Argyle's rising had already spread, and Clavers actually traversed the country more like an exterminating angel, than a commander of a civilized army.

Such were the men with whom Walter had to do; and the worst thing of all, he was not aware of it. He had heard of such things, but he did not believe them; for he loved his king and country, and there was nothing that vexed him more than hearing of aught to their disparagement; but unluckily his notions of freedom and justice were far above what the subjects of that reign could count upon.

When Clavers and Livingston entered the Old Room, it will be remembered that Bruce and Copland penetrated into the other. There they found the goodwife of Chapelhope, neatly dressed in her old-fashioned style, and reading on her Bible, an exercise in which she gloried, and of which she was very proud.

Bruce instantly desired her "to lay that very comely and precious book on the hottest place of all the beautiful fire, that was burning so pleasantly with long crackling peat; and that then he would converse with her about things that were, to be sure, of far greater and mightier importance."

"Hout, dear sir, ye ken that's no consistent wi' natural reason. Can anything be o' greater importance than the tidings o' grace an' salvation, an' the joys o' heaven?"

"Oho!" cried Bruce, and straddled around the room with his face turned to the joists. "My dear Copland, did you ever hear such a thing in all the days that ever you have to live? Upon my soul, the old woman is talking of grace, and salvation, and the joys of heaven too, by Saint George and the Dragon. My dearest honey and darling, will you be so kind as stand up upon the soles of your feet, and let me see what kind of a figure you will be in heaven. Now, by the cross of Saint Patrick, I would take a journey there to see you go swimming through heaven in that same form, with your long waist, and plaited quoif, and that same charming face of yours. Och! och! me! what a vile she Whig we have got in this here corner!—Copland, my dear soul, I foresee that all the ewes and kine of Chapelhope will soon be rouped at the cross of Selkirk, and then what blessed lawings we shall have! Now my dear mistress Grace and Salvation, you must be after renouncing the joys of heaven immediately; for upon my honour, the very sight of your face would spoil the joys of any place whatever, and the first thing you must do is to lay that delightful old book with the beautiful margin along the side of it, on the coals; but before you do that we shall sing to his praise and glory from the 7th verse of the 149th Psalm."

He then laid aside his helmet and sung the psalm, giving out each line with a whine that was truly ludicrous, after which he put the Bible into the goodwife's hand, and desired her, in a serious tone, instantly to lay it on the fire. The captain's speech to his companions about the ewes and kine of Chapelhope was not altogether lost on the conscience of Maron Linton. It was not, as she afterwards said, like water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. "Why, dear sir," said she, "ye ken, after a', that the beuk's naething but paper an' ink, an' three shillings an' aughtpence will buy as gude a ane frae Geordy Dabson the morn, an' if there be ony sin in't it will lye at your door, an' no at mine. I'll ne'er haigel wi' my king's officer about three and aughtpence."

So saying, Maron laid the Bible on the fire, which soon consumed it to ashes.

"Now, may the devil take me," said Bruce, "if I do not believe that you are a true woman after all, and if so, my purse is lighter by one half than it was; but, my dear honey, you have the very individual and genuine seeds of whiggism in your constitution—you have, I will swear, been at many a harmless and innocent conventicle."

"Ye ken little about me, sir. Gude forbid that ever I countenanced sic traitors to the kirk and state!"

"Amen! say I; but I prophesy and say unto thee, that the first field-meeting into which thou

goest in the beauty of holiness, thou shalt be established for ever with thy one foot in Dan and the other in Beersheba, and shalt return to thy respective place of abode as rank a Whig as ever swung in the Grassmarket."

A long dialogue next ensued, in which the murder of the priest, Mass John Binram, was discussed at full length, and by which Bruce and Copland discerned, that superstitious as Maron was, she told them what she deemed to be the truth, though in a strange round-about way. Just as they were beginning to talk over the mysterious murder of the soldiers, Claverhouse and Sir Thomas joined them, and Bruce, turning round to them, said, "My lord, this very honest woman assures me, that she believes the two principal murderers of the curate are lying concealed in a linn not far hence, and there seems to be little doubt but that they must likewise have been concerned in the murder of our soldiers."

Clavers, the horrors of whose execrations are yet fresh in the memory of our peasants, burst out in oaths and curses, to the astonishment of Bruce, who was not aware of his chagrin, or of aught having befallen him; while Maron Linton, hearing herself called a good woman, and finding that she was approven of, could not refrain from interfering here.

"Dear sir, my lord, ye sudna swear that gate, for it's unco ill-faur'd, ye ken—an' at ony rate, the deil canna damn naebody—if ye will swear, swear sense."

The rage of the general, and the simplicity of the goodwife, was such an amusing contrast, that the three attendants laughed aloud. Clavers turned his deep gray eye upon them, which more than the eye of any human being resembled that of a serpent—offence gleamed in it.

"Gentlemen," said he, "do you consider where you are, and what you are about? *Sacre!* am I always to be trysted with boys and fools?"

He then began and examined the goodwife with much feigned deference and civility, which so pleased her that she told him everything with great readiness. She was just beginning to relate the terrible, but unfortunate story of the Brownie of Bodsbeck, and his train of officious spirits; of the meat which they devoured, and in all probability would have ended the relation with the woeful connection between the Brownie and her daughter, and the part that she had taken in the murder of the soldiers, when Walter entered the room with a discomposed mien, and gave a new turn to the conversation. But that eventful scene must be left to the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

Walter, on coming to the troopers and asking for their leader, soon discovered how roughly he had treated Clavers; and it being so much the reverse of the reception he meant to have given him, he was particularly vexed about it. Still he was conscious that he had done nothing that was wrong, nor anything that it did not behove a parent and a master of a family to have done in the same circumstances; therefore there was nothing farther from his intention than offering any apology. He entered his own room, as he supposed he had a good right to do, bluntly enough. He indeed touched the rim of his bonnet as he came in; but, seeing all the officers covered, he stalked into the midst of them with that immense circle of blue woollen on his head, which moved over their helmets like a black cloud as he advanced. Bruce, who was well used to insult the peasantry with impunity, seeing Walter striding majestically by his general in this guise, with his wonted forwardness and jocularity lifted up his sword, sheathed as it was, and with the point of it kicked off Walter's bonnet. The latter caught it again as it fell, and with his fist, he made Bruce's helmet ring against the wall; then again fitting on his bonnet, he gave him such an indignant and reproving look, that Bruce, having no encouragement from the eye of Clavers, resented it no farther than by saying good-humouredly, "'Pon my body and shoul, but the carle keeps his good-looking head high enough."

"Copland," said Clavers, "desire Sergeant Daniel Roy Macpherson, with eleven troopers, to attend." They were instantly at the door. "Seize and pinion that haughty rebel, together with all his family," said he, "and then go and search every corner, chest, and closet in the house; for it is apparent that this is the nest and rendezvous of the murdering fanatics who infest this country. Let the rest of the soldiers guard the premises that none escape to the mountains with tidings of our arrival. This good dame we will first examine privately, and then dispose of her as shall seem most meet."

The command was promptly obeyed. Walter and all his family were taken into custody, pinioned, and a guard set on them; the house was ransacked; and in the meantime the general and his three associates continued the examination of the goodwife. Clavers observed that, on the entrance of Walter before, she seemed to be laid under some restraint, stopped short in her narration, and said, "But there's the gudeman; he'll tell ye it wi' mair precesion nor me;" and he had no doubt, if she were left to herself, of worming as much out of her as would condemn her husband, or at least furnish a pretext sufficient for the forfeiture of his wealth. Clavers had caused to be sold, by public roup, the whole stock on the farm of Phillhope, which belonged to Walter's brother-in-law, merely because it was proven that the farmer's wife had once been at a conventicle.

In the present instance, however, Clavers was mistaken, and fairly overshot his mark; for poor

Maron Linton was so overwhelmed with astonishment when she saw her husband and family taken prisoners and bound, that her speech lost all manner of coherence. She sobbed aloud—complained one while, entreated another; and then muttered over some ill-sorted phrases from the Scripture. When Clavers pressed his questions, she answered him, weeping, "O dear sir, my lord, ye ken I canna do naething, nor think naething, nor answer naething, unless ye let Watie loose again; I find as I war naebody, nor nae soul, nor naething ava wantin' him, but just like a vacation or a shadow. O my lord, set my twa bits o' callants an' my puir auld man loose again, and I'll say onything that ever ye like."

Threats and proffers proved alike in vain. Maron's mind, which never was strong, had been of late so much unhinged by the terrors of superstition, that it wavered in its frail tenement, threatening to depart, and leave not a wreck behind. Clavers told her that her husband's life depended on the promptness and sincerity of her answers, he having rendered himself amenable to justice by rescuing his daughter by force, whom they had taken prisoner on their arrival, having found her engaged in a very suspicious employment. This only increased Maron's agony; and at length Clavers was obliged to give up the point, and ordered her into custody.

The soldiers had by this time taken old John of the Muchrah and another of Laidlaw's shepherds prisoners, who had come to assist their master with the farm-work that day. All these Clavers examined separately; and their answers, as taken down in short-hand by Mr. Adam Copland, are still extant, and at present in my possession. The following are some of them, as deciphered by Mr. J. W. Robertson, whose acquaintance with ancient manuscripts is well known.

John Hoy, shepherd in Muchrah, aged fifty-six, sworn and examined.

"Do you know such a man as the Rev. James Renwick?"

"Yes. I once heard him pray and preach for about the space of two hours."

"Was it on your master's farm that he preached?"

"No, it was in a linn on the Earl Hill, in the march between two laird's lands, that he preached that day."

"How durst you go to an unlawful conventicle?"

"I didna ken there was a law against it till after—it's a wild place this—we never hear ony o' the news, unless it be twice a year frae the Moffat fairs. But as soon as I heard him praying and preaching against the king I cam aff an' left him, an' brought a' my lads an' lasses wi' me; but my wife wadna steer her fit—there she sat, shaking her head and glooming at me; but I trow I cowed her for't after."

"What did he say of the king?"

"O, I canna mind—he said nae muckle gude o' him."

"Did he say that he was a bloody perjured tyrant?"

"Ay, he said muckle waur nor that. He said some gayan ill-faur'd things about him. But I cam away and left him; I thought he was saying mair than gude manners warrantit."

"Were you in the 'Hope, as you call it, on that day that the king's soldiers were slain?"

"Ay, that I was; I was the first wha came on them whan they war just new dead, an' a' reeking i' their warm blude—Gude keep us a' frae sic sights again!—for my part, I never gat sic a confoundit gliff sin' I was born o' my mother."

"Describe the place where the corpses were lying."

"It is a deep cleuch, wi' a sma' sheep rodding through the linn not a foot wide; and if ye war to stite aff that, ye wad gang to the boddom o' the linn wi' a flaip."

"Were the bodies then lying in the bottom of that linn?"

"Od help ye, whar could they be lying else?—D'ye think they could lie on the Cleuch-brae? Ye might as weel think to lie on the side o' that wa' gin ye war dead."

"How did it appear to you that they had been slain? were they cut with swords, or pierced with bullets?"

"I canna say, but they war sair hashed."

"How do you mean when you say they were hashed."

"Champit like; a' broozled and jurmummled, as it war."

"Do you mean that they were cut, or cloven, or minced?"

"Na, na—no that ava. But they had gotten some sair doofs. They had been terribly paiket and daddit wi' something."

"I do not in the least conceive what you mean."

"That's extrordnar, man—can ye no understand folk's mother-tongue? I'll mak it plain to ye. Ye see, whan a thing comes on ye that gate, that's a dadd—sit still now. Then a paik, that's a swap or a skelp like—when a thing comes on ye that way, that's a paik. But a doof's warst ava—it's"—

"Prithee hold; I now understand it all perfectly well. What, then, is your opinion with regard to these men's death? How, or what way do you think they were killed?"

"O, sir, there's naebody can say. It was some extrordnar judgment, that's out of a' doubt. There had been an unyerdly raid i' the 'Hope that day."

"What reason have you for supposing such a thing?"

"Because there wasna a leevin soul i' the hale 'Hope that day but theirsels—they wadna surely hae felled ane another. It's, by an' attour, an awsome bit where they war killed; there hae been things baith seen and heard about it; and I saw an apparition there mysel on the very night before."

"You saw an apparition at the place the night before, did you? And, pray, what was that apparition like?"

"It was like a man and a woman."

"Had the figure of the woman no resemblance to any one you had ever seen before? Was it in any degree, for instance, like your master's daughter?"

"No unlike ava."

"Then I think I can guess what the other form was like. Had it a bonnet on its head?"

"Not a bonnet certainly, but it had the shape o' ane."

"I weened as much. And was it a tall gigantic figure?"

"Na, na, sir; the very contrair o' that."

"Are you certain of that you say? Was it not taller than the apparition of the woman?"

"No half sae tall, sir."

"Had it not some slight resemblance to your master, little as it was? Did that not strike you?"

"Na, na, it was naething like my master, nor nae yerdly creature that ever was seen—indeed it was nae creature ava."

"What then do you suppose it was?"

"Wha kens? A wraith, I hae little doubt. My e'en rins a' wi' water whan I think about it yet."

"Wraiths are quite common here, are they?"

"O yes, sir! oure common. They appear aye afore death, especially if the death be to be sudden."

"And what are they generally like?"

"Sometimes like a light—sometimes like a windin-sheet—sometimes like the body that's to dee, gaen mad—and sometimes like a coffin made o' moonlight."

"Was it in the evening you saw this apparition?"

"It was a little after midnight."

"And pray, what might be your business in such a place at that untimely hour? Explain that fully to me, if you please."

"I sall do that, sir, as weel as I can. Our ewes, ye see, lie up in the twa Grains an' the middle a' the harst. Now, the Quave Brae again, it's our hogg-fence, that's the hained grund like; and whenever the wind gangs easterly about, then whan the auld luckies rise i' the howe o' the night to get their rug, aff they come, snouckin a' the way to the Lang Bank, an' the tither end o' them round the Papper Snout, and into the Quave Brae to the hained grund, an' very often they think naething o' landing i' the mids o' the corn. Now I never mindit the corn sae muckle, but for them to gang wi' the hogg-fence, I coudna bide that ava, for ye ken, sir, how could we turn our hand wi' our pickle hoggs i' winter if their bit foggage war a' riven up by the auld raikin hypalts ere ever a smeary's clute clattered on't?"

Though Clavers was generally of an impatient temper, and loathed the simplicity of nature, yet he could not help smiling at this elucidation, which was much the same to him as if it had been delivered in the language of the Moguls, but seeing the shepherd perfectly sincere, he suffered him to go on to the end.

"Now, sir, ye ken the wind very often taks a swee away round to the east i' the night-time whan the wather's gude i' the hairst months, an' whanever this was the case, and the moon i' the lift, I had e'en aye obliged to rise at midnight, and gang round the hill an' stop the auld kimmers—very little did the turn—just a bit thraw yont the brae, an' they kend my whistle, or my tike's bark, as weel as I did mysel; still they wadna do wantin't. Weel, ye see, sir, I gets up an' gangs to the door: it was a bonny night—the moon was hingin o'er the derk brows o' Hopertoody, an' the lang black scaddows had an eiry look. I turned my neb the tither gate, an' I fand the air was gane to the eissel; the se'en starns had gaen oure the lum, an' the tail o' the king's elwand was just pointin to the Muchrah cross. It's the very time, quo' I to mysel, I needna think about lying down again; I maun leave Janet to lie doverin by hersel for an hour or twa—Keilder, my fine dog, where are ye? He was as ready as me—he likes a ploy i' the night-time brawly, for he's aye gettin a broostle at a hare, or a tod, or a foumart, or some o' thae beasts that gang snaiken about i' the derk. Sae to mak a lang tale short, sir, off we sets, Keilder an' me, an' soon comes to the place. The ewes had been very mensefu' that night, they had just comed to the march and nae farther; sae, I says, puir things, sin' ye hae been sae leifu', we'll sit down an' rest a while, the dog an' me, an' let ye tak a pluck an' fill yoursels or we turn ye back up to your cauld lairs again. Sae down we sits i' the scaddow of a bit derksome cleuch-brae—naebody could hae seen us, and ere ever I wats, I hears by the grumblin o' my friend, that he outher saw or smelled something mair than ordinar. I took him in aneath my plaid for fear o' some grit brainyell of an outbrik, thinkin it some sheepstealer—but whan I lookit, there was a white thing and a black thing new risen out o' the solid yird! They cam' close by me, and whan I saw the moon shinin on their cauld white faces, I lost my sight an swarfed clean away. Wae be to them for droichs, or ghaists, or whatever they war, for aye sin' syne the hogg-fence o' the Quave Brae has been harried an' traisselled till its little better nor a drove road. I darna gang an' stop the ewes now for the saul that's i' my bouk, an' little do I wat what's to come o' the hoggs the year."

"Well now, you have explained this much I believe to your own satisfaction—remember then, you are upon oath: Who do you think it was that killed these men?"

"I think it was outher God or the deil, but whilk o' them I coudna say."

"And this is really your opinion?"

"Yes, it is."

"Have you seen any strangers about your master's house of late?"

"I saw one not long ago."

"What sort of a man was he?"

"A douse-looking man wi' a brown yaud; I took him for some wool-buyer."

"Was he not rather like a preacher?"

"The man might hae preached for aught contrair till't in his appearance—I coudna say."

"Are you certain it was not Mr. Renwick?"

"I am certain."

"Is your master a very religious man?"

"He's weel eneugh that way—no that very reithe ont; but the gudewife hauds his neb right sair to the grindstane about it."

"Does he perform family worship?"

"Sometimes."

"Is he reckoned a great and exemplary performer of that duty?"

"Na, he's nae great gun, I trow, but he warstles away at it as weel as he can."

"Can you repeat any part, or any particular passage of his usual prayer?"

"I'm sure I might, for he gangs often aneuch oure some o' them. Let me see—there's the still waters, and the green pastures, and the blood of bulls and of goats; and then there's the gos-hawk, and the slogy riddle, and the tyrant an' his lang neb; I hae the maist o't i' my head, but then I canna mouband it."

"What does he mean by the tyrant and his lang neb?"

"Aha! But that's mair nor ever I could find out yet. We whiles think he means the Kelpy, him that raises the storms an' the floods on us, ye ken, and gars the waters an' the burns come roarin down wi' bracks o' ice an' snaw, an' tak away our sheep. But whether it's Kelpy, or Clavers, or the Deil, we can never be sure, for we think it applies gay an' weel to them a'."

"Repeat the passage as well as you can?"

"Bring down the tyrant an' his lang neb, for he has done muckle ill this year, and gie him a cup o' thy wrath, an' gin he winna tak that, gie him kelty."

"What is meant by kelty?"

"That's double, it means twa cups—ony body kens that."

"Does he ever mention the king in his prayer?"

"O yes: always."

"What does he say about him?"

"Something about the sceptre of righteousness, and the standard of truth. I ken he has some rhame about him."

"Indeed! And does he likewise make mention of the Covenant?"

"Ay, that's after—that's near the end, just afore the resurrection. O yes, he harls aye in the Covenant there. 'The bond o' the everlasting Covenant,' as he ca's it, 'weel ordered in all things, and sure.'"

"Ay, that's very well; that's quite sufficient. Now, you have yourself confessed that you were at an unlawful and abominable conventicle, holding fellowship with intercommuned rebels, along with your wife and family. You *must* be made an example of to the snarling and rebellious dogs that are lurking in these bounds, but as you have answered me with candour, though I might order you instantly to be shot, I will be so indulgent as to give you your choice, whether you will go to prison in Edinburgh, and be there tried by the council, or submit to the judgment which I may pronounce on you here?"

"O, sir, I canna win to Edinbrough at no rate, that's impossible. What think ye wad come o' the sheep? The hogg-fence of the Quave Brae is maistly ruined already, and war I to gae to the prison at Edinbrough, it wad be mair loss than a' that I'm worth. I maun just lippen to yoursel; but ye mauna be very sair on me. I never did ony ill designedly; and as for ony rebellion against the Bruce's blood, I wad be hangit or I wad think o' sic a thing."

"Take the old ignorant animal away; burn him on the cheek, cut off his ears, and do not part with him till he pay you down a fine of two hundred merks, or value to that amount. And, do you hear, make him take all the oaths twice, and a third oath, that he is never to repent of these. If either Monmouth or Argyle get him, they shall have a perjured dog of him."

As John was dragged off to this punishment, which was executed without any mitigation, he shook his head and said, "Ah, lak-a-day! I fear things are muckle waur wi' us than I had ony notion o'! I trowed aye that even-down truth and honesty bure some respect till now; I fear our country's a' wrang thegither." Then looking back to Clavers, he added, "Gude sooth, lad, but ye'll make mae Whigs wherever ye show your face, than a' the hill preachers o' Scotland put thegither."

CHAPTER VIII.

It has been remarked by all the historians of that period, that the proceedings of Clavers about this time were severe in the extreme. The rising, both in the north and south at the same time, rendered the situation of affairs somewhat ticklish. Still the Lowlands were then perfectly peaceable, but he seemed determined, lest he should be called away, to destroy the Covenanters, and all that hankered after civil and religious liberty, root and branch. Certainly his behaviour at Chapelhope that morning was sufficient to stamp his character for ever in that district, where it is still held in at least as great detestation as that of the arch-fiend himself.

When the soldiers, by his order, seized and manacled Walter, he protested vehemently against such outrage, and urged the general to prove his

fidelity to his sovereign by administering to him the test oath, and the oath of abjuration, but this Clavers declined, and said to him with a sneer, that "they had other ways of trying dogs beside that."

When those who had been appointed to search the house came before him, and gave in their report, among other things, they said they had found as much bread new baked, and mutton newly cooked, as would be a reasonable allowance for a hundred men for at least one whole day. Clavers remarked, that in a family so few in number, this was proof positive that others were supported from that house. "But we shall disappoint the Whigs of one hearty meal," added he, and with that he ordered the meat to be brought all out and set down upon the green, bid his troopers eat as much as they could, feed their horses with the bread which they left, and either destroy the remainder of the victuals or carry them away.

It was in vain that Walter told him the honest truth, that the food was provided solely for himself and his soldiers, as he knew they were to come by that road, either on that day or the one following; nay, though all the family avouched it, as they well might, he only remarked, with a look of the utmost malignity, that "he never in his life knew a Whig who had not a lie ready on his tongue, or some kind of equivocation to save his life, but that they must necessarily all be taught who they were dealing with." He then made them all swear that they were to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and to utter the most horrid imprecations on themselves and their souls for ever, if they deviated in one single item; and beginning with old John, as before related, he examined them all separately and out of hearing of one another.

The interrogations and answers are much too long to be inserted here at full length; but the only new circumstances that came to light were these two. One of the young men deponed, that, when the bodies of the soldiers were found in the 'Hope, their muskets were all loaded, which showed that they had not fallen in a regular skirmish; and the other boy swore that he had lately seen eighty large thick bannocks baked in one day in his father's house, for that he had counted them three times over as they stood cooling. This was another suspicious circumstance, and Clavers determined to search it to the bottom. He sifted the two youths backward and forward, trying to get the secret out of them by every wile in his power; and because they were unable to give him any satisfactory account who consumed all that store of bread, he caused his dragoons to take hold of the youngest and gird his head with a cord, twisting it with a horse pistol, until in some places it cut him to the skull. The eldest he hung up to the beam by the thumbs until he fainted through insufferable pain; but he could get nothing more out of them, for they had at first told him all that they knew, being quite unconscious of any evil.

Still bent, as it seemed, on the full conviction and ruin of the family, he told the boys that they were two of the most consummate knaves and rebels that he had in all his life seen; and that if they had any hopes at all of going to heaven, they should say their prayers, for in a few minutes he would order them both to be shot.

John, the eldest, who possessed a good deal of his mother's feebleness of character, and was besides but newly recovered from a fainting fit, was seized with a stupor, appeared quite passive, and acted precisely as they bade him, without seeming to know what he did; but the youngest, whose name was William, preserved an interesting firmness, in such a trial, for a considerable time. On being advised by Clavers to tell all he knew rather than die, and asked if he was not afraid of death, he answered, with the tear in his eye, "I'm nouther feared for you nor death, man. I think if fock may be guidit this way at their ane hames, the sooner they're dead the better." Then turning his looks to his brother, who kneeled according to the general's order on the green beside him, he added, with convulsive sobs, "But poor Jock's gaun to be shot too! I wonder what ye need kill him for—What ill hae we ever done t'ye? Jock's a very good callant; I canna pray weel, but if ye'll let my billy Jock gang, I'll pray for ye as I can, and kiss ye too."

Happy was it for the wits of poor Maron that she saw nothing of this touching scene; she, as well as Walter, being then with the rest under a strong guard in the Old Room. Clavers paid no regard to the kneeling boy's request. He caused his troopers to draw up around them, present their firelocks, and then an executioner, who was always one of his train, tied up both their eyes. He gave the word himself, and instantly ten or twelve carabines were discharged on them at once. John fell flat on the earth; but William, with a violent start, sprung to his feet, and being blindfolded, ran straight on the files of soldiers.

Clavers laid hold of him. "My brave little fellow," said he, "the soldiers have all missed you, bungling beasts that they are! and since so wonderful a thing hath befallen you, you shall yet have your life, though a most notorious rebel, if you will tell me what people frequent your father's house."

"What's comed o' Jock?" said the boy, "O tell me, what's comed o' Jock, for I canna see."

"Jock is lying dead on the green there, all bathed in his blood," said Clavers; "poor wretch! it is over with him, and unless you instantly tell me who it was that consumed all that store of bread that has been baked in your father's house for the last month, you must be sent after him."

William withdrew backward a few paces, and kneeling a second time down on the sward with great decency and deliberation, "Shoot again," said he; "try me aince mair; an' oh see to airch a wee better

this time. I wad rather dee a hunder times or I saw poor Jock lying a bloody corp."

Clavers made a sign to one of his dragoons, who unbound William, and took the bandage from his eyes. Regardless of all else, he looked wildly around in search of his brother, and seeing his only companion lying flat on his face, he at first turned away, as if wishing to escape from a scene so dismal; but his helpless and forlorn situation staring him in the face, and the idea doubtless recurring that he was never to part with his brother, but forthwith to be slaughtered and carried to the grave with him, he returned, went slowly up to the body, kneeled down beside it, and pulling the napkin farther down over the face to keep the dead features from view, he clasped his arms about his brother's neck, laid his cheek to his, and wept bitterly.

The narrator of this part of the tale was wont to say, that the scene which followed had something more touching in it than any tongue could describe, although Clavers and his troops only laughed at it. William had now quite relinquished all sensations of fear or danger, and gave full vent to a flood of passionate tenderness and despair. He clasped his brother's neck closer and closer, steeped his cheek with his tears, and seemed to cling and grow to the body with a miserable fondness. While he was giving full scope in this manner to the affections of his young heart, his brother made a heave up with his head and shoulder, saying at the same time, like one wakening from a dream, "Little Will, is that you?—Haud aff—What ails ye?"

William raised up his head—fixed his eyes on vacancy—the tears dried on his cheek, and his ruby lips were wide apart; the thing was beyond his comprehension, and never was seen a more beautiful statue of amazement. He durst not turn his eyes towards his brother; but he uttered in words scarcely articulate, "Eh! I believe they hae missed Jock too!"

Clavers had given private orders to his dragoons to fire over the heads of the two boys, his intent being to intimidate them so much as to eradicate every principle of firmness and power of concealment from their tender minds; a scheme which he often practised upon young people with too sure effect. When William found that his brother was really alive, and that both of them were to be spared on condition that he gave up the names and marks of all the people that had of late been at Chapelhope; he set himself with great earnestness to recount them, along with every mark by which he remembered them, determined that every hidden thing should be brought to light, rather than that poor Jock should be shot at again.

"Weel, ye see, first there was Geordie the flesher, him that took away the crocks and the paulies, and my brockit-lamb, and gae me a penny for setting him through atween the lochs. Then there was Hector Kennedy the tinkler, him that the bogles brought and laid down at the door i' the night-time—he suppit twa bickerfu's o' paritch, an' cleekit a hantle o' geds an' perches wi' his toum out o' the loch. Then there was Ned Huddersfield the wooman, wi' the leather bags and the skeenzie thread—him that kissed our byre-woman i' the barn in spite o' her teeth; he had red cheeks, and wasna unlike a glutton; he misca'd my father's woo, an' said aye, 'Nay, it's nane clean, howsomever—it's useless, that's its worse fault.' Then there was wee Willie the nout-herd, him that had the gude knife and the duddy breeks; but the brownies put him daft, an' his mither had to come an' tak him away upon a cuddy."

In this manner went he on particularizing every one he remembered, till fairly cut short with a curse. John continued perfectly stupid, and when examined, answered only *Yes* or *No*, as their way of asking the question dictated.

"Are there not great numbers of people who frequent your father's house during the night?"

"Yes."

"Do you see and hear them, after you go to bed?"

"Yes."

"What are they generally employed in when you hear them? Do they read, and pray, and sing psalms?"

"Yes."

"Do your father and mother always join them?"

"Yes."

Here William could restrain himself no longer. "Gude faith, Jock, man," said he, "ye're just telling a hirsel o' eindown lees. It canna be lees that the man wants, for that maks him nae the wiser; an' for you to say that my father rises to pray i' the night-time beats a', when ye ken my mither has baith to fleitch an' fight or she can get him eggit on till't i' the Sabbath e'enings. He's ower glad to get it foughten decently by, to rise an' fa' till't again. O fye, Jock! I wad stand by the truth; an', at ony rate, no just gaung to hell open mouth."

When the volley of musketry went off, all the prisoners started and stared on one another; even the hundred veterans that guarded them appeared by their looks to be wholly at a loss. Macpherson alone ventured any remark on it. "Fat she pe pluff pluffing at now? May the teal more pe her soul's salvation, if she do not believe te man's pe gone out of all reason."

The women screamed; and Maron, whose tongue was a mere pendulum to the workings of the heart within, went on sighing and praying; asking questions, and answering them alternately; and, at every pause, looked earnestly to her husband, who leaned against the corner of the room, ashamed that his bound hand should be seen.

"Och! Aigh me!" cried Maron. "Dear sirs, what's the fock shootin at? Eh! I'm sure they hae nae battlers to fight wi' there?—No ane—I wat, no ane. Aigh-wow, sirs! the lives o' God's crea-

tures!—They never shoot nae callants, do they? Oh, na, na, they'll never shoot innocent bairns, puir things! They'll maybe hae been trying how weel they could vizy at the wild ducks; there's a hantle o' cleckins about the saughs o' the lake. Hout ay, that's a'. He hasna forgotten to be gracious, nor is his mercy clean gane."

Thus poor Maron went on, and though she had but little discernment left, she perceived that there was a tint of indignant madness in her husband's looks. His lips quivered—his eyes dilated—and the wrinkles on his brow rolled up to the roots of his dark grizzled hair. "Watie," cried she, in a shrill and tremulous voice—"Watie, what ails ye?—Oh! tell me what ails ye, Watie?—What's the folk shooting at? Eh! Ye'll no tell me what they're shooting at, Watie?—Oh, oh, oh, oh!"

Walter uttered no word, nor did his daughter, who sat in dumb astonishment, with her head almost bent to her feet; but old Nanny joined in full chorus with her mistress, and a wild unearthly strain the couple raised, till checked by Sergeant Roy Macpherson.

"Fat too-whooing pe tat? Do you tink that should the leanmh beg pe shot trou te poty, tat is te son to yourself? Do you tink, you will too-whoo him up akain?—Hay?—Oohm! pe holding your paice."

CHAPTER IX.

Upon the whole, there was no proof against Walter. Presumption was against him, but the evidence was rather in his favour. Military law, however, prevailed; and he found that there was no redress to be had of any grievance or insult, that this petty tyrant, in his caprice, thought fit to inflict. His drivers were ordered to take the whole stock from the farms of Riskinhope, belonging to David Bryden, who lived at a distance, because it was proven, that Mr. Renwick had preached and baptized some children on the bounds of that farm. That stock he caused to be taken to Selkirk, and sent orders to the sheriff to sell it by public roup, at the cross, to the highest bidder; but with Walter's stock he did not meddle at that time; so far did justice mark his proceedings. He strongly suspected him, and wished to have him convicted; and certainly would have taken all the family with him prisoners, had not the curate Clerk arrived at that critical time. Him Clavers consulted apart, and was soon given to understand the steadfast loyalty of the gudewife, daughter, and all the family, save Walter, whom he said, he suspected of a secret connivance with the Cameronians. This was merely to serve a selfish purpose, for Clerk suspected no such thing at that time. It had the desired effect. Clavers set all the rest of the family free, but took the goodman with him prisoner; put two of his best horses in requisition; mounted himself on a diminutive pony, with the thumbikins on his hands, and his feet chained below its belly. In this degrading situation, he was put under the care of Sergeant Roy Macpherson and five troopers; and Clavers, with the rest of his company, hasted, with great privacy and celerity, into that inhospitable wild, which forms the boundary between Drummelzier's ancient property and the Johnstons of Annandale. The greater part of the fugitives had taken shelter there at that time, it being the most inaccessible part in the south of Scotland, and that where, of all others, they had been the least troubled. No troops could subsist near them; and all that the military could do was to set watches near every pass to and from these mountains, where a few stragglers were killed, but not many in proportion to the numbers that had there sought a retreat.

The Covenanters knew that Clavers would make a sweeping and exterminating circuit about that time; incidents which were not to be overlooked, had been paving the way for it—incidents with which the main body of that people were totally unconnected. But it was usual at that time, and a very unfair practice it was, that whatever was said, or perpetrated, by any intemperate, fanatical individual, or any crazy wight, driven half mad by ill usage—whatever was said or done by such, was always attributed to the whole sect as a body. It is too true that the privy council chose invariably, men void of all feeling or remorse to lead these troops. A man had nothing to study but to be cruel enough, to rise in the army in those days; yet, because there was a Dalziel, a Graham, a Creighton, and a Bruce among the king's troops, it would be unfair to suppose all the rest as void of every principle of feeling and forbearance as they. In like manner, because some of the Covenanters said violent and culpable things, and did worse, it is hard to blame the whole body for these; for, in the scattered prowling way in which they were driven to subsist, they had no control over individuals.

They had been looking for the soldiers appearing there for several days, and that same morning had been on the watch; but the day was now so far advanced that they were waxen remiss, and had retired to their dens and hiding places. Besides, he came so suddenly upon them that some parties, as well as several stragglers, were instantly discovered. A most determined pursuit ensued. Clavers exerted himself that day in such a manner, galloping over precipices, and cheering on his dragoons, that all the country people who beheld him believed him to be a devil, or at least mounted on one. The marks of that infernal courser's feet are shown to this day on a steep hill nearly perpendicular, below the Bubbly Craig, along which he is said to have ridden at full speed, in order to keep sight of a party of the fleeing Covenanters. At another place,

called the Blue Sklidder, on the Merk side, he had far outrode all his officers and dragoons in the pursuit of five men, who fled straggling athwart the steep. He had discharged both his pistols without effect; and just as he was making ready to cleave down the hindmost with his sabre, he was attacked by another party, who rolled huge stones at him from the precipice above, and obliged him to make a hasty retreat.

Tradition has preserved the whole of his route that day with the utmost minuteness. It is not easy to account for this. These minute traditions are generally founded on truth; yet though two generations have scarcely passed away since the date of this tale,[1] tradition, in this instance, relates things impossible, else Clavers must indeed have been one of the infernals. Often has the present relater of this tale stood over the deep green marks of that courser's hoof, many of which remain on that hill, in awe and astonishment, to think that he was actually looking at the traces made by the devil's foot, or at least by a horse that once belonged to him.

Five men were slain that day; but as they were all Westland men, very little is known concerning them. One of them was shot at a distance by some dragoons who were in pursuit of him, just as he was entering a morass, where he would certainly have escaped them. He is buried on a place called the Watch Knowe, a little to the south-east of Loch Skene, beside a cairn where he had often sat keeping watch for the approach of enemies, from which circumstance the height derived its name. When he fell, being rough broken ground, they turned and rode off without ever going up to the body. Four were surprised and taken prisoners on a height called Ker-Cleuch Ridge, who were brought to Clavers and shortly examined on a little crook in the Erne Cleuch, a little above the old steading at Hopertoudy.

Macpherson kept the highroad, such as it was, with his prisoner; but travelled no faster than just to keep up with the parties that were scouring the hills on each side; and seeing these unfortunate men hurled in from the hill, he rode up with his companions and charge to see the issue, remarking to Walter, that "he wools not pe much creat deal te worse of seeing fwat te fwigs would pe getting."

How did Walter's heart smite him when he saw that one of them was the sensible, judicious, and honourable fellow with whom he fought, and whose arm he had dislocated by a blow with his stick! It was still hanging in a sling made of a double rush rope.

They would renounce nothing, confess nothing, nor yield, in the slightest degree, to the threats and insulting questions put by the general. They expected no mercy, and they cringed for none; but seemed all the while to regard him with pity and contempt. Walter often said that he was an ill judge of the cause for which these men suffered; but whatever might be said of it, they were heroes in that cause. Their complexions were sallow, and bore marks of famine and other privations; their beards untrimmed; their apparel all in rags, and their hats slouched down about their ears with sleeping on the hills. All this they had borne with resignation and without a murmur; and, when brought to the last, before the most remorseless of the human race, they showed no symptoms of flinching, or yielding up an item of the cause they had espoused.

When asked if they would pray for the king,

They answered, "that they would with all their hearts; they would pray for his forgiveness, in time and place convenient, but not when every profligate bade them, which were a loathful scurrility, and a mockery of God."

Would they acknowledge him as their right and lawful sovereign?'

"No, that they would never do! He was a bloody and designing Papist, and had usurped a prerogative that belonged not to him. To acknowledge the Duke of York for king, would be to acknowledge the divine approbation of tyranny, oppression, usurpation, and all that militates against religion or liberty, as well as justifying the abrogation of our ancient law relating to the succession; and that, besides, he had trampled on every civil and religious right, and was no king for Scotland, or any land where the inhabitants did not choose the most abject and degrading slavery. For their parts, they would never acknowledge him; and though it was but little that their protestations and their blood could avail, they gave them freely. They had but few left to mourn for them, and these few might never know of their fate; but there was *One* who knew their hearts, who saw their sufferings, and in Him they trusted that the days of tyranny and oppression were wearing to a close, and that a race yet to come might acknowledge that they had not shed their blood in vain."

Clavers ordered them all to be shot. They craved time to pray, but he objected, sullenly alleging, that he had not time to spare. Mr. Copland said,—"My lord, you had better grant the poor wretches that small indulgence." On which Clavers took out his watch, and said he would grant them two minutes, provided they did not howl. When the man with the hurt arm turned round to kneel, Walter could not help crying out to him in a voice half stifled with agony—

"Ah! lack-a-day, man! is it come to this with you, and that so soon? That is a sad sight!"

The man pretended to put on a strange and astonished look towards his benefactor.

"Whoever you are," said he, "that pities the sufferings of a hapless stranger, I thank you. May

[1] One of the women baptized in the Linn of Riskinhope by Renwick that year, has several children yet alive, not very aged people.

[illegible]

CLAVERHOUSE AND [illegible] PLANTERS.

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God requite you! but think of yourself, and apply for mercy where it is to be found, for you are in the hands of those whose boast it is to despise it."

Walter at first thought this was strange, but he soon perceived the policy of it, and wondered at his friend's readiness at such an awful hour, when any acknowledgment of connection would have been so fatal to himself. They kneeled all down, clasped their hands together, turned their faces to heaven, and prayed in a scarce audible whisper. Captain Bruce, in the meantime, kneeled behind the files, and prayed in mockery, making a long face, wiping his eyes, and speaking in such a ludicrous whine, that it was impossible for the gravest face to retain its muscles unaltered. He had more to attend to him than the miserable sufferers. When the two minutes were expired, Clavers, who held his watch all the time, made a sign to the dragoons who were drawn up, without giving any intimation to the sufferers, which perhaps was merciful, and in a moment all the four were dismissed into eternity.

The soldiers, for what reason Walter never understood, stretched the bodies all in a straight line on the brae, with their faces upwards, and about a yard distant from one another, and then rode off as fast as they could to get another hunt, as they called it. These four men were afterwards carried away by the fugitives, and some country people, and decently interred in Ettrick churchyard. Their graves are all in a row a few paces from the southwest corner of the present church. The goodman of Chapelhope, some years thereafter, erected a head-stone over the grave of the unfortunate sufferer, whose arm he had broken, which, with its rude sculpture, is to be seen to this day. His name was Walter Biggar. A small heap of stones is raised on the place where they were shot.

The last look which Walter took of the four corpses, as they lay stretched on the brae, with the blood streaming from them, had nearly turned his brain. His heart sunk within him. For days and years the scene never left his mind's eye, sleeping nor waking. He always thought he saw them lying on the green sloping brae, with their pale visages, blue open lips, clasped hands, and dim steadfast eyes still fixed on the heavens. He had heard Clavers and his officers called heroes: he wished those who believed so had been there that day, to have judged who were the greatest heroes.

"There! let them take that!" said Captain Bruce, as he mounted his horse.

"Poor misled unfortunate beings!" said Copland, and mounted his.

"Huh! ohone!" said Roy Macpherson, in a voice that seemed to struggle for an outlet; and Walter, to his astonishment, saw a tear glistening on his rough weather-beaten cheek, as he turned to ride away!

The pursuit continued unabated for the whole of that day. There was a great deal of firing, but the hills of Polmoody were inaccessible to cavalry. There was no more blood shed. They lodged that night at a place called Keppelgill, where they put everything in requisition about the house, and killed some of the cattle. Clavers was in extremely bad humour, and Walter had no doubt that he once intended to have sacrificed him that night, but seemed to change his mind, after having again examined him. He was very stern, and threatened him with the torture, swearing that he knew him to be the supporter of that nest of miscreants that harboured around him, and that though he should keep him prisoner for a dozen years, he would have it proven on him. Walter made oath that there had never one of them been within his door, consistent with his knowledge; that he had never been at a conventicle; and proffered to take the test, and oath of abjuration, if allowed to do so. All this would not satisfy Clavers. Walter said he wondered at his discernment, for, without the least evil or disloyal intent, he found he had rendered himself liable to punishment, but how *he* could be aware of that he knew not.

That night Walter was confined in a cowhouse, under the same guard that had conducted him from Chapelhope. The soldiers put his arms round one of the stakes for the cattle, and then screwed on the thumbikins, so that he was fastened to the stake without being much incommoded. When Macpherson came in at a late hour (for he was obliged likewise to take up his abode in the cowhouse over night), the first word he said was,—

"She no pe liking to see an honest shentleman tied up to a stake, as she were peing a poollock."

He then began to lecture Walter on the magnitude of folly it would be in him to run away, "when he took it into consideration that he had a ponny fhamily, and sheeps, and horses, and bheasts, that would all pe maide acchountable."

Walter acknowledged the force of his reasoning; said it was sterling common sense, and that nothing would induce him to try such a dangerous experiment as attempting to make his escape. Macpherson then loosed him altogether, and conversed with him until he fell asleep. Walter asked him, what he thought of his case with the general. Macpherson shook his head. Walter said there was not the shadow of a proof against him! "No?" said Macpherson; "but there surely is! There is very much deal of proof. Was not there my countrymen and sholdiers murdered on your grhounds? Was not there mhore scoans, and prochin, and muttons in your house, than would have peen eaten in a mhonth by the fhamily that pelongs to yourself. By the pode more of the ould deol, but there is more proof than would hang twenty poor peoples."

"That's but sma' comfort, man! But what think ye I should do?"

"How can I know! Who is it that is your chief?"

"Chief! What's that?"

"Tat is te head of te clan. Te pig man of your name and fhamily."

"In troth, man, an' there isna ane o' my name aboon mysel."

"Fwat? Pless me! are you te chief of te clan, M'Leadle? Then, sir, you are a shentleman indeed. Though your clan should pe never so poor, you are a shentleman; and you must pe giving me your hand; and you need not think any shame to pe giving me your hand; for hersel pe a shentleman pred and porn, and furst coosin to Cluny Macpherson's sister-in-law. Who te deol dha more she pe this clan, M'Leadle? She must pe of Macleane. She once pe prhother to ourselves, but fell into great dishunity by the preaking off of Finlay Gorm More Machalabin Macleane of Ilanterach and Ardnamurchan."

Walter having thus set Daniel Roy Macpherson on the saddle of his hobby-horse by chance, there was no end of the matter. He went on with genealogies of uncouth names, and spoke of some old freebooters as the greatest of all kings. Walter had no means of stopping him, but by pretending to fall asleep, and when Macpherson weened that no one was listening farther to him, he gave up the theme, turned himself over, and uttered some fervent sentences in Gaelic, with heavy moans between.

"What's that you are saying now?" said Walter, pretending to rouse himself up.

"Pe sad works this," said he. "Huh! Cot in heaven, aye! Hersel would be fighting te Campbells, sword in hand, for every inch of the Moor of Rhanoch; but she does not like to pe pluffing and shooting through te podies of te poor helpless insignificant crheatures. Foolish ignorant people! They have not cot the good sense and prhudence of a bheast."

Walter commended his feeling, and again asked his advice with regard to his own conduct.

"Who is te great man tat is te laird to yourself?" asked he.

"Mr. Hay of Drummelzier," was answered.

"Then lose not a mhoment in getting his very good report or security. All goes by that. It will do more ghood than any stock of innocence; and you had need to look very sharp, else he may soon cut you short. It's a very good and a very kind man, but she pe caring no more for the lives of peoples, tan I would do for as many ptarmigans."

Walter pondered on this hint throughout the night; and the more he did so the more he was convinced, that, as the affairs of the country were then conducted, Macpherson's advice was of the first utility. He sent for one of the shepherds of Keppelgill next morning, charged him with an express to his family, and unable to do anything further for himself, submitted patiently to his fate.

Clavers having been informed that night that some great conventicles had been held to the southward, he arose early, crossed the mountains by the Pennera Corse, and entered that district of the south called Eskdale. He had run short of ammunition by the way, and knowing of no other supply, despatched Bruce with twenty men by the way of Ettrick, to plunder the aisle where the ancient and noble family of the Scotts of Thirlstane were enshrined in massy leaden chests. From these he cut the lids, and otherwise damaged them, scattering the bones about in the aisle; but the Scotts of Daventon shortly after gathered up the relics of their ancestors, which they again deposited in the chests—closed them up with wooden lids, and buried them deep under the aisle floor, that they might no more be discomposed by the hand of wanton depravity.

At a place called the Steps of Glenderg, Clavers met with Sir James Johnston of Westeraw, with fifty armed men, who gave him an exaggerated account of the district of Eskdale, telling him of such and such field-meetings, and what inflammatory discourses had there been delivered, insinuating all the while that the whole dale ought to be made an example of. Clavers rejoiced in his heart at this, for the works of devastation and destruction were beginning to wear short. The Covenanters were now so sorely reduced, that scarcely durst one show his face, unless it were to the moon and stars of heaven. A striking instance of this I may here relate by the way, as it happened on the very day to which my tale has conducted me.

A poor wanderer, named, I think, Matthew Douglas, had skulked about these mountains, chiefly in a wild glen called the Caldron, ever since the battle of Bothwell Bridge. He had made several narrow, and, as he thought, most providential escapes, but was at length quite overcome by famine, cold, and watching; and finding his end approaching, he crept by night into a poor widow's house at Rennelburn, whose name, if my informer is not mistaken, was Ann Hyslop. Ann was not a Cameronian, but being of a gentle and humane disposition, she received the dying man kindly—watched, and even wept over him, administering to all his wants. But the vital springs of life were exhausted and dried up; he died on the second day after his arrival, and was buried with great privacy, by night, in the churchyard at Westerkirk.

Sir James Johnston had been a zealous Covenanter, and at first refused the test with great indignation; but seeing the dangerous ground on which he stood, and that his hand was on the lion's mane, he renounced these principles; and to render his apostacy effective, became for a time a most violent distresser of his former friends. He knew at this time that Clavers was coming round; and in order to ingratiate himself with him, he had for several days been raging up and down the country like a roaring lion, as they termed it. It came to his ears what Ann Hyslop had done; whereon, pretending great rage, he went with his party to the burial ground, digged the body out of the grave, and threw

it over the churchyard wall for beasts of prey to devour. Forthwith he proceeded to Rennelburn, plundered the house of Ann Hyslop, and then burned it to ashes; but herself he could not find, for she had previously absconded. Proceeding to the boundary of the county, he met and welcomed Clavers to his assistance, breathing nothing but revenge against all nonconformists, and those of his own district in particular.

Clavers knew mankind well. He perceived the moving cause of all this, and did not appear so forward and hearty in the business as Sir James expected. He resolved to ravage Eskdale, but to manage matters so that the whole blame might fall on Johnston. This he effected so completely, that he made that knight to be detested there as long as he lived, and his memory to be abhorred after his decease. He found him forward in the cause; and still the more so that he appeared to be, the more shy and backward was Clavers, appearing to consent to everything with reluctance. They condemned the stocks of sheep on Fingland and the Caseways on very shallow grounds. Clavers proposed to spare them, but Sir James swore that they should not be spared, that their owners might learn the value of conventicles.

"Well, well," said Clavers, "since you will have it so, let them be driven off."

In this manner they proceeded down that unhappy dale, and at Craikhaugh, by sheer accident, lighted on Andrew Hyslop, son to the widow of Rennelburn above-mentioned. Johnston apprehended him, cursed, threatened, and gnashed his teeth at him with perfect rage. He was a beautiful youth, only nineteen years of age. On his examination, it appeared that he had not been at home, nor had any hand in sheltering the deceased; but he knew, he said, that his mother had done so, and in doing it, had done well, and he was satisfied that act of her's would be approven of in the eye of the Almighty.

Clavers asked, "Have you ever attended the field conventicles?"

"No."

"Have you ever preached yourself?"

"No."

"Do you think that you could preach?"

"I am sure I could not."

"I'll be bound but you can pray then," said he.

He then proffered him his liberty if he would confess that his mother had done wrong, but this he would in no wise do; for, he said, it would be a sinful and shameful lie, he being convinced that his mother had done what was her duty, and the duty of every Christian to do towards his fellow-creatures.

Johnston swore he should be shot. Clavers hesitated, and made some objections; but the other persisting, as Clavers knew he would, the latter consented as formerly, saying, "Well, well, since you will have it so, let it be done; his blood be on your head, I am free of it. Daniel Roy Macpherson, draw up your file, and put the sentence in execution."

Hyslop kneeled down. They bade him put on his bonnet and draw it over his eyes; but this he calmly refused, saying, "He had done nothing of which he was ashamed, and could look on his murderers and to heaven without dismay."

When Macpherson heard this, and looked at him as he kneeled on the ground with his hands pinioned, his beautiful young face turned toward the sky, and his long fair ringlets hanging waving backward, his heart melted within him and the great tears had for some time been hopping down his cheeks. When Clavers gave the word of command to shoot the youth, Macpherson drew up his men in a moment, wheeled them off at the side, presented arms, and then answered the order of the general as follows, in a voice that was quite choked one while, and came forth in great volleys at another:—"Now, now, sh—sh—she'll rather pe fighting Clavers and all her draghoons, pe—pe—pefore she'll pe killing tat dear good lhad."

Captain Bruce burst out into a horse-laugh, leaping and clapping his hands on hearing such a singular reply; even Clavers had much ado to suppress a smile, which, however, he effected by uttering a horrible curse.

"I had forgot, Sir James," said he; "Macpherson is as brave a man as ever strode on a field of battle; but in domestic concerns, he has the heart of a chicken."

He then ordered four of his own guards to shoot him, which they executed in a moment. Some of his acquaintances being present, they requested permission of Clavers to bury him, which he readily granted, and he was interred on the very spot where he fell. A grave-stone was afterwards erected over him, which is still to be seen at Craikhaugh, near the side of the road, a little to the north of the church of Eskdale-muir.

Clavers and his prisoner lodged at Westeraw that night. Johnston wanted to have him shot; but to this Clavers objected, though rather in a jocular manner.

Walter said, he was sure if Sir James had repeated his request another time, that Clavers' answer would have been, "Well, well, since you will have it so," &c.; but, fortunately for Walter, he desisted just in time.

These two redoubted champions continued their progress all next day; and on the third, at evening, Clavers crossed Dryfe, with nine thousand sheep, three hundred goats, and about as many cattle and horses in his train, taken from the people of Eskdale alone. He took care to herry Sir James's tenants, in particular, of everything they possessed, and apparently all by their laird's desire, so that very little of the blame attached to the general. He was heard to say to Sir Thomas Livingston that night, "I trow, we hae left the silly turncoat a pirn to wind."

But we must now leave them to continue their route of rapine and devastation, and return to the distressed family of Chapelhope, in order that we may watch the doings of the Brownie of Bodsbeck.

CHAPTER X.

For all Maron Linton's grievous distresses, the arrival of Clerk, the curate, proved an antidote of no small avail. It was a great comfort to her, in the midst of her afflictions; and after she had been assured by him of Walter's perfect safety, she became apparently more happy, and certainly more loquacious than she had been for a great while byegone. She disclosed to him the dreadful secret, that her child was possessed of an evil spirit, and implored his influence with heaven, and his power with hell, for its removal. This he readily undertook, on condition of being locked up with the maiden for a night, or two at most. She was to be left solely to his management; without the interference of any other human being; and with the help only of the Bible, the lamp, and the hour-glass, he declared that he would drive the unclean spirit from its tabernacle of clay.

To these conditions Maron Linton gladly assented; and, with grateful and fond acknowledgments, called him their benefactor and spiritual guide, their deliverer and shield; but he checked her, and said, there was still one condition more on which she behoved to condescend. It was likely that he might be under the hard necessity of using some violent measures in exorcising her, for it would be hard to drive the malignant spirit from so sweet a habitation; but whatever noises might be heard, no one was to interfere, or even listen, upon pain of being delivered up to the foul spirit, soul and body; and it was ten to one that any, who was so imprudent as to intrude on these awful and mysterious rites, might be torn in pieces.

Maron blest herself from all interference, and gave Nanny directions to the same purport; as for the two boys, they slept out of hearing. She likewise gave him the key, that he might lock both the doors of the Old Room in the inside, and thus prevent all intrusions, should any be offered. He said prayers in the family, to which Katharine was admitted, and then taking the lamp and the hour-glass in his hand, and the Bible below his arm, he departed into the Old Room, where, in about half an hour afterwards, the maiden was summoned to attend him. He took her respectfully by the hand, and seated her on a chair at the side of the bed, saying that he was commissioned by her worthy mother to hold a little private conversation with her. Then locking the door, and putting the key in his pocket, he added, "You are my prisoner for this night, but be not alarmed; I have undertaken to drive an evil spirit away from you, but both my exorcisms and orisons shall be adapted to the feelings of a young maiden, and as agreeable to one whom I so much admire, as it is in my power to make them."

Katharine grew as pale as death as he uttered these words, placing himself at the same time cordially by her side.

It is unmeet to relate the conversation that ensued, but the worthy curate soon showed off in his true colours, and with unblushing front ventured a proposal that shocked the innocent and modest Katharine so much, that she could only reply to it by holding up her hands, and uttering a loud exclamation of astonishment. His further procedure soon convinced her, that she was in the hands of a man who was determined to take every advantage of the opportunity thus unwarrantably afforded him, and to stick at no atrocity for the accomplishment of his purposes.

She neither descended to tears nor entreaties, but resisted all his approaches with a firmness and dignity that he never conceived to have formed any part of her character, and, when continuing to press her hand, she said to him, "You had better keep your distance, Mass John Clerk, and consider what befits your character, and the confidence reposed in you by my unsuspecting parent; but I tell you, if you again presume to touch me, though it were but with one of your fingers, I will, in a moment, bring those out of the chink of the wall, or from under that hearth, that shall lay you motionless at my feet in the twinkling of an eye, or bear you off to any part of the creation that I shall name."

He smiled as she said this, and was about to turn it into a jest, but on looking at her face, he perceived that there was not one trait of jocularity in it. It beamed with a mystical serenity which sent a chillness through his whole frame, and, for the first time, he deemed her deranged, or possessed in some manner, he wist not how. Stanch, however, to his dishonourable purpose, he became so unequivocal, that she was obliged to devise some means of attaining a temporary cessation, and feigning to hesitate on his proposal, she requested a minute or two to speak.

"I am but young, Mass John," said she, "and have no experience in the ways of the world, and it seems, from what you have advanced, that I attach more importance to some matters than they deserve. But I beg of you to give me a little time to reflect on the proposal you have made. See that hour-glass is half run out already; I only ask of you not to disturb or importune me until it run out a second time."

"And do you then promise to do as I request?" said he.

"I do," returned she, "provided you still continue of the same mind as you are now."

"My mind is made up," said he, "and my resolu-

tion taken in all that relates to you; nevertheless, it would be hard to refuse a maid so gentle and modest a request. I grant it, and should you attempt to break off your engagement at the expiry of the time, it shall be the worse for you."

"Be it so," replied she, "in the meantime let me be undisturbed till then." And so saying, she arose and went aside to the little table where the Bible and the lamp were placed, and began with great seriousness to search out, and peruse parts of the sacred volume.

Clerk liked not this contemplative mood, and tried every wile in his power to draw her attention from the Scriptures. He sought out parts which he desired her to read, if she would read, but from these she turned away without deigning to regard them, and gently reminded him that he had broken one of his conditions. "Maids only impose such conditions on men," said he, "as they desire should be broken." At this she regarded him with a look of ineffable contempt, and continued to read on in her Bible.

The hour of midnight was now passed, the sand had nearly run out for the second time since the delay had been acceded to, and Clerk had been for a while tapping the glass on the side, and shaking it, to make it empty its contents the sooner. Katharine likewise began to eye it with looks that manifested some degree of perturbation; she clasped the Bible, and sat still in one position, as if listening attentively for some sound or signal. The worthy curate at length held the hour-glass up between her eye and the burning lamp—the last lingering pile of sand fell reluctantly out as he shook it in that position. Anxiety and suspense settled more deeply on the lovely and serene face of Katharine, but instead of a flexible timidity, it assumed an air of sternness. At that instant the cock crew—she started, heaved a deep sigh, like one that feels a sudden relief from pain, and a beam of joy shed its radiance over her countenance. Clerk was astonished—he could not divine the source or cause of her emotions, but judging from his own corrupt heart, he judged amiss. True however to his point, he reminded her of her promise, and claimed its fulfilment. She deigned no reply to his threats or promises, but kept her eye steadfastly fixed on another part of the room. He bade her remember that he was not to be mocked, and in spite of her exertions, he lifted her up in his arms, and carried her across the room towards the bed. She uttered a loud scream, and in a moment the outer door that entered from the bank was opened, and a being of such unearthly dimensions entered, as no pen may ever wholly define. It was the Brownie of Bodsbeck, sometimes mentioned before, small of stature, and its whole form utterly misshaped. Its beard was long and gray, while its look, and every lineament of its face, were indicative of agony; its locks were thin, dishevelled, and white, and its back haunched up behind its head. There seemed to be more of the same species of haggard beings lingering behind at the door, but this alone advanced with a slow majestic pace. Mass John uttered two involuntary cries, somewhat resembling the shrill bellowings of an angry bull, mixed with inarticulate mumblings, sunk powerless on the floor, and, with a deep shivering groan, fainted away. Katharine, stretching forth her hands, flew to meet her unearthly guardian; "Welcome, my watchful and redoubted Brownie," said she, "thou art well worthy to be the familiar to an empress, rather than an insignificant country maiden."

"Brownie's here, Brownie's there,
Brownie's with thee everywhere,"

said the dwarfish spirit, and led her off in triumph.

Having bethought herself after she went out, she returned lightly, took the keys from the pocket of the forlorn priest, extinguished the lamp, and again disappeared, locking the door on the outside.

Mass John's trance threw him into a heavy and perturbed slumber, which overpowered him for a long space, and even after he awaked, it was long before he could fathom the circumstances of his case; for he imagined he had only been in a frightful and oppressive dream, till beginning to grope about, he discovered that he was lying on the damp floor with his clothes on; and at length, without opening his eyes, he recovered by degrees his reasoning faculties, and was able to retrace the circumstances that led to his present situation. He arose in great dismay; the daylight had begun to shine into the room, and finding that both doors were locked, he deemed it unadvisable to make any noise, and threw himself upon the bed. The retrospect of his adventure was fraught with shame and astonishment. He had acted a considerable part in it, but he had dreamed of a great deal more, and with all his ingenuity he could not separate in his mind the real incidents from those that were imaginary. He arose with the sun, and rapped gently at the inner door, which, to his still further astonishment, was opened by Katharine, in her usual neat and cleanly morning dress. He stared in her face, to mark if he could read any meaning in it; he could distinguish none that spoke a language to him either good or bad: it was a face of calm decent serenity, and wore no shade of either shame nor anger, somewhat paler than it was the evening before, but still as lovely as ever. The curate seemed gasping for breath, but not having courage to address her, he walked forth to the open air.

It was a beautiful morning in September—the ground was covered with a slight hoar frost, and a cloud of light haze (or, as the country people call it, *the blue ouder*) slept upon the long valley of water, and reached nearly midway up the hills. The morning sun shone full upon it, making it appear like an ocean of silvery down. It vanished by imper-

ceptible degrees into the clear blue firmament, and was succeeded by a warm sun and a southerly breeze. It was such a morning as could not fail to cheer and reanimate every heart and frame, not wholly overcome by guilt and disease—Clerk's were neither; he was depraved of heart, but insensible to the evil of such a disposition; he had, moreover, been a hanger-on from his youth upward, and had an effrontery not to be outfaced. Of course, by the time he had finished a three hours' walk, he felt himself so much refreshed and invigorated in mind, that he resolved not to expose himself to the goodwife, who was his principal stay and support among his straggled and dissatisfied flock, by a confession of the dreadful fright he had gotten, but to weather out the storm with as lofty and saintly a deportment as he could.

He had not well gone out when the lad of Keplegill arrived, and delivered to Katharine her father's letter. She saw the propriety of the injunction which it bore, and that an immediate application to their laird, Drummelzier, who was then high in trust and favour with the party in power, was the likeliest of all ways to procure her father's relief, neither durst she trust the mission to any but herself. But ah! there was a concealed weight that pressed upon her spirit—a secret circumstance that compelled her to stay at home, and which could not be revealed to mortal ear. Her father's fate was at present uncertain and ticklish, but that secret once revealed, tortures, death, and ruin were inevitable—the doom of the whole family was sealed. She knew not what to do, for she had none to advise with. There was but one on earth to whom this secret could be imparted; indeed there was but one in whose power it was to execute the trust which the circumstances of the case required, and that was old Nanny, who was crazed, fearless, and altogether inscrutable. Another trial, however, of her religious principles, and adherence to the established rules of church government in the country, was absolutely necessary; and to that trial our young and mysterious heroine went with all possible haste, as well as precaution.

Whosoever readeth this must paint to themselves old Nanny, and they must paint her aright, with her thin fantastic form and antiquated dress, bustling up and down the houses. Her fine stock of bannocks had been all exhausted—the troopers and their horses had left nothing in her master's house that could either be eaten or conveniently carried away. She had been early astir, as well as her sedate and thoughtful young dame; had been busy all the morning, and the whole time her tongue never at rest. She had been singing one while, speaking to herself another, and every now and then intermixing bitter reflections on Clavers and his troops.

"Wae be to them for a pack o' greedy gallayniels—they haena the mence of a miller's yaud; for though she'll stap her nose into everybody's pock, yet when she's fou she'll carry naething wi' her. Heichow! wae's me, that I sude hae lived to see the day! That ever I sude hae lived to see the colehood take the laverock's place; and the stanchel and the merlin chatterin' frae the cushat's nest! Ah! wae's me! will the sweet voice o' the turtle-doo be nae mair heard in our land! There was a time when I sat on the bonny green brae an' listened to it till the tears dreepit frae my een, an' a' the hairs o' my head stood on end! The hairs o' my head? Ay, that's nae lie! They're gray now, an' will soon be snaw-white if heart's care can alter them; but they will never be sae white as his war. I saw the siller-gray lock o' age, an' the manly curls o' youth wavin' at my side that day! But where are they now? A' mouled! a' mouled! But the druckit blood winna let them rot! I'll see them rise fresh an' bonny! I'll look round to my right hand and ane will say, 'Mother! my dear mother, are you here with us?' I'll turn to my left hand, another will say, 'Nanny! my dear and faithful wife, are you too here with us?' I'll say, 'Ay, John, I'm here; I was yours in life; I have been yours in death; an' I'll be yours in life again.' Dear bairn, dear bairn, are you there," continued she, observing Katharine standing close behind her; "what was I saying, or where was I at? I little wat outher what I was saying or doing. Hout ay; I was gaun ower some auld things, but they're a' like a dream, an' when I get amang them I'm hardly mysel. Dear bairn, ye maunna mind an auld crazy body's reveries."

There was some need for this apology, if Nanny's frame, air, and attitude, are taken into account. She was standing with her back to the light, mixing meal with water, whereof to make bread—her mutch, or *night-bussing*, as she called it, was tied close down over her cheeks and brow as usual; her gray locks hanging dishevelled from under it; and as she uttered the last sentence, immediately before noticing her young mistress, her thin mealy hands were stretched upwards, her head and body bent back, and her voice like one in a paroxysm. Katharine quaked, although well accustomed to scenes of no ordinary nature.

"Nanny," said she, "there is something that preys upon your spirit—some great calamity that recurs to your memory, and goes near to unhinge your tranquillity of mind, if not your reason. Will you inform me of it, good Nanny, that I may talk and sympathize with you over it?"

"Dear bairn, nae loss ava—A' profit! a' profit i' the main! I haena biggit a bield o' the windlestrae, nor lippened my weight to a broken reed! Na, na, dear bairn; nae loss ava."

"But, Nanny, I have overheard you in your most secret hours, in your prayers and self-examinations."

At the mention of this Nanny turned about, and after a wild searching stare in her young mistress's face, while every nerve of her frame seemed to shrink from the recollection of the disclosures she feared

she had made, she answered as follows, in a deep and tremulous tone:—

"That was atween God and me. There was neither language nor sound there for the ear o' flesh! It was unfair! It was unfair! Ye are mistress here, and ye keep the keys o' the aumbry, the kitchen, the ha', an' the hale house; but wi' the secret keys o' the heart and conscience ye hae naething to do!—the keys o' the sma'est portal that leads to heaven or hell are nane o' yours; therefore, what ye hae done was unfair. If I chose, sinful and miserable as I am, to converse with my God about the dead as if they war living, an' of the living as if they war dead, what's that to you? Or if I likit to take counsel of that which exists only in my own mind, is the rackle hand o' steelrife power to make a handle o' that to grind the very hearts of the just and the good, or turn the poor wasted frame o' eild and resignation on the wheel? Lack-a-day, my dear bairn, I'm lost again! Ye canna an' ye maunna forgie me now. Walth's dear, an' life's dearer—but sin' it maun be sae, twal o'clock sanna find me aneath your roof—there shall naebody suffer for harbouring poor auld Nanny—she has seen better days, an' she hopes to see better anes again; but it's lang sin' the warld's weel an' the warld's wae came baith to her alike. I maun e'en bid ye fareweel, my bonny bairn, but I maun tell ye ere I gae that ye're i' the *braid way*. Ye hae some good things about ye, and O, it is a pity that a dear sweet soul should be lost for want o' light to direct! How can a dear bairn find the right way wi' its een tied up? But I maun haud my tongue an' leave ye—I wad fain greet, but I hae lost the gate o't, for the fountain-head has been lang run dry. Weel, weel—it's a' ower!—nae mair about it. How's this the auld sang gaes?

"When the well runs dry then the rain is nigh,
The heavens o' earth maun borrow;
An' the streams that stray thro' the wastes the day,
May sail aboon the morrow.

Then dinna greet, my bonny bird,
I downa bide to hear ye;
The storm may blaw, and the rain may fa',
But nouther sal come near ye.

There's an ear that hears, there's an arm uprears,
There's an eye that sees our mourning,
There's an edict pass'd out frae the sky,
From which there's no returning.

Then dinna greet for the day that's gane,
Nor on the present ponder,
For thou shalt sing on the laverock's wing,
An' far away beyond her."

This Nanny sung to an air so soothing, and at the same time so melancholy, it was impossible to listen to her unaffected, especially as she herself was affected in a very peculiar manner—a beam of wild delight glancing in her eye, but it was like the joy of grief (if one may be allowed the expression), if not actually the joy of madness. Nothing could be more interesting than her character was now to the bewildered Katharine—it arose to her eyes, and grew on her mind like a vision. She had been led previously to regard her as having been crazed from her birth, and her songs and chaunts to be mere ravings of fancy, strung in rhymes to suit favourite airs, or old scraps of ballads void of meaning, that she had learned in her youth. But there was a wild elegance at times in her manner of thinking and expression—a dash of sublimity that was inconsistent with such an idea. "Is it possible" (thus reasoned the maiden with herself), "that this demeanour can be the effect of great worldly trouble and loss? Perhaps she is bereft of all those who were near and dear to her in life—is left alone as it were in this world, and has lost a relish for all its concerns, while her whole hope, heart, and mind, is fixed on a home above, to which all her thoughts, dreams, and even her ravings insensibly turn, and to which the very songs and chaunts of her youthful days are modelled anew. If such is really her case, how I could sympathize with her in all her feelings!"

"Nanny," said she, "how woefully you misapprehend me; I came to exchange burdens of heart and conscience with you—to confide in you, and love you. Why will not you do the same with me, and tell me what loss it is that you seem to bewail night and day, and what affecting theme it is that thus puts you beside yourself? If I judge not far amiss, the knowledge of this is of greater import to my peace than aught in the world beside, and will lead to a secret from me that deeply concerns us both."

Nanny's suspicions were aroused, not laid, by this speech; she eyed her young mistress steadfastly for a while, smiled, and shook her head.

"Sae young, sae bonny, and yet sae cunning!" said she. "Judas coudna hae sic a face, but he had nouther a fairer tongue nor a fauser heart! A secret frae you, dear bairn! what secret can come frae you, but some bit waefu' love story, enough to mak the pinks an' the ewe gowans blush to the very lip? My heart's wae for ye, ae way an' a' ways; but it's a part of your curse—woman sinned an' woman maun suffer—her hale life is but a succession o' shame, degradation, and suffering, frae her cradle till her grave."

Katharine was dumb for a space, for reasoning with Nanny was out of the question.

"You may one day rue this misprision of my motives, Nanny," rejoined she; "in the meantime, I am obliged to leave home, on an express that concerns my father's life and fortune; be careful of my mother until my return, and of everything about the house, for the charge of all must devolve for a space on you."

"That I will, dear bairn—the thing that Nanny has ta'en in hand sanna be neglected, if her twa hands can do it, and her auld crazed head comprehend it."

"But first, tell me, and tell me seriously, Nanny, are you subject to any apprehension or terror on account of spirits?"

"Nae mair feared for them than I am for you, an' no half sae muckle, wi' your leave. Spirits, quoth I!

> "Little misters it to me
> Whar they gang, or whar they ride,
> Round the hillock, on the lea,
> Round the auld borral tree,
> Or bourock by the burn side;
> Deep within the bogle-howe,
> Wi' his haffats in a lowe,
> Wons the waefu' wirricowe.

"Ah! noble Cleland! it is like his wayward freaks an' whimsies! Did ye never hear it, you that speaks about spirits as they war your door neighbours? It's a clever thing; his sister sung it; I think it rins this gate—hum! but then the dialogue comes in, and it is sae kamshackle I canna word it, though I canna say it's misleared either."

"Dear Nanny, that is far from my question. You say you are nothing afraid of spirits?"

"An' why should I? If they be good spirits, they will do me nae ill; and if they be evil spirits, they hae nae power here. Thinkna ye that He that takes care o' me throughout the day, is as able to do it by night? Na, na, dear bairn, I hae contendit wi' the warst o' a' spirits face to face, hand to hand, and breast to breast; ay, an' for a' his power, an' a' his might, I dang him; and packed him off baffled and shamed!—Little reason hae I to be feared for ony o' his black emissaries."

"Should one appear to you bodily, would you be nothing distracted or frightened?"

"In my own strength I could not stand it, but yet I would stand it."

"That gives me joy. Then, Nanny, list to me: You will assuredly see one in my absence; and you must take good heed to my directions, and act precisely as I bid you."

Nanny gave up her work, and listened in suspense. "Then it is a' true that the fock says!" said she, with a long-drawn sigh. "His presence be about us!"

"How sensibly you spoke just now! Where is your faith fled already? I tell you there will one appear to you every night in my absence, precisely on the first crowing of the cock, about an hour after midnight, and you must give him everything that he asks, else it may fare the worse with you, and all about the house."

Nanny's limbs were unable to support her weight—they trembled under her. She sat down on a form, leaned her brow upon both hands, and recited the 63d Psalm from beginning to end in a fervent tone.

"I wasna prepared for this," said she. "I fear, though my faith may stand it, my wits will not. Dear, dear bairn, is there nae way to get aff frae sic a trial?"

"There is only one, which is fraught with danger of another sort; but were I sure that I could trust you with it, all might be well, and you would rest free from any intercourse with that unearthly visitant, of whom it seems you are so much in terror."

"For my own sake ye may trust me there: Onything but a bogle face to face at midnight, an' me a' my lane. It is right wonderfu', though I ken I'll soon be in a warld o' spirits, an' that I maun mingle an' mool wi' them for ages, how the nature within me revolts at a' communion wi' them here. Dear bairn, gie me your other plan, an' trust me for my own sake."

"It is this—but if you adopt it, for your life an' soul let no one in this place know of it but yourself: —It is to admit one or two of the fugitive Whigs—these people that skulk and pray about the mountains, privily into the house every night, until my return. If you will give me any test of your secrecy and truth, I will find ways and means of bringing them to you, which will effectually bar all intrusion of bogle or brownie on your quiet; or should any such dare to appear, they will deal with it themselves."

"An' *can* the presence o' ane o' *them* do this?" said Nanny, starting up and speaking in a loud eldritch voice. "Then heaven and hell acknowledges it, an' the earth maun soon do the same! I knew it!—I knew it!—I knew it!—ha, ha, ha, I knew it! —Ah! John, thou art safe!—Ay! and mae than thee; an' there will be mae yet! It is but a day! an' dark an' dismal though it be, the change will be the sweeter! Blessed, blessed be the day! None can say of thee that thou died like a fool, for thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters." Then turning close round to Katharine, with an expression of countenance quite indescribable, she added in a quick maddened manner—"Eh? Thou seekest a test of me, dost thou? Can blood do it? —Can martyrdom do it?—Can bonds, wounds, tortures, and mockery do it?—Can death itself do it? All these have *I* suffered for that cause *in this same body;* mark that; for there is but one half of my bone and my flesh here. But words are nothing to the misbelieving—mere air mouthed into a sound. Look at this for a test of *my* sincerity and truth." So saying, she gave her hand a wild brandish in the air, darted it at her throat, and snapping the tie of her cap that she had always worn over her face, she snatched it off, and turning her cheek round to her young mistress, added, "Look there for your test, and if that is not enough, I will give you more!"

Katharine was struck dumb with astonishment and horror. She saw that her ears were cut out close to the skull, and a C. R. indented on her check with a hot iron, as deep as the jaw-bone. She burst out a crying—clasped the old enthusiast in her arms—kissed the wound and steeped it with her tears, and without one further remark, led her away to the Old Room, that they might converse without interruption.

The sequel of this disclosure turned not out as desired; but this we must leave by the way, until we overtake it in the regular course of the narrative.

CHAPTER XI.

As soon as her father's letter was put into Nanny's hands, Katharine sent off one of her brothers to Muchrah, to warn old John and his son to come instantly to Chapelhope. They both arrived while she and Nanny were consulting in the Old Room. She told them of her father's letter, of the jeopardy he was in, and of her intended application to Drummelzier without loss of time. "One of you," said she, "must accompany me; and I sent for you both, to learn which could, with least inconvenience, be wanted from your flocks."

"As for me," said John, "it's out o' the question to *think* about me winning away. The ewes wad gang wi' the bit hog-fence o' the Quave Brae, stoup and roup. What wi' ghaists, brownies, dead men, an' ae mischief an' other, it is maistly gane already; an' what's to come o' the poor bits o' plottin baggits a' winter, is mair nor I can tell. They may pike the woo aff ane another for aught that I see."

Katharine was grieved to hear this remonstrance, for she was desirous of having old John as a guide and protector, who well knew the way, and was besides singular for strength and courage, if kept among beings of this world. She represented to him that the hog-fence of the Quave Brae could not possibly be of equal importance with his master's life, nor yet with the loss of his whole stock, both of sheep and cattle, which might be confiscated, if prompt measures were not adopted. Nothing, however, could persuade John, that ought could be of equal importance to him with that which he had the charge of, and on which his heart and attention were so much set both by day and night. He said he had lost his lugs, and been brunt wi' the king's birn, for the hog-fence of the Quave Brae; and when he couldna get away to the prison at Edinburgh for fear o't, but suffered sae muckle in place o' that, how could he win away a' the gate to Dunse Castle?

Jasper liked not the journey more than he; for being convinced of Katharine's power over spirits, he was very jealous of her taking undue advantages of him; but he was obliged to submit. He refused a horse, saying, "it would only taigle him, but if she suffered him to gang on his feet, if he was hindmost at Dunse, he should gie her leave to cut the lugs out o' his head too, and then he wad hae the thief's mark on him like his father."

Away they went; she riding on a stout shaggy pony, and Jasper running before her barefoot, but with his *hose and shoon* bound over his shoulder. He took the straight line for Dunse, over hill and dale, as a shepherd always does, who hates the *wimples*, as he calls them, of a turnpike. He took such a line as an eagle would take, or a flock of wild geese, journeying from the one side of the country to the other, never once reflecting on the inconvenience of riding on such a road. Of course, it was impossible his young mistress could keep up with him—indeed she had often enough to do in keeping sight of him. They met with some curious adventures by the way, particularly one near Thirlestane castle on Leader, with some stragglers of a troop of soldiers. But these things we must hurry over as extraneous matter, having nothing more to do with them than as connected with the thread of our tale. They slept that night at a farm-house in Lammermoor, which belonged to Drummelzier, and next day by noon arrived at Dunse Castle.

Drummelzier, being one of the committee of public safety, was absent from home, to which he did not return for several days, to the great perplexity of Katharine, who was in the utmost distress about her father, as well as her affairs at home. She was obliged, however, to wait with patience, as no one knew in what part of the country he was. The housekeeper, who was an Englishwoman, was kind to her, and bade her not be afraid, for that their master had much more power with the government than Claverhouse, the one being a moving spring, and the other only a tool.

Drummelzier was a bold and determined royalist —was, indeed, in high trust with the privy council, and had it in his power to have harassed the country as much, and more, than the greater part of those who did so; but, fortunately for that south-east division of Scotland, he was a gentleman of high honour, benevolence, and suavity of manners, and detested any act of injustice or oppression. He by these means contributed materially to the keeping of a large division of Scotland (though as whiggishly inclined as any part of it, Ayrshire perhaps excepted) in perfect peace. The very first dash that Clavers made among the Covenanters, while he was as yet only a captain of a company, was into this division of the country over which Drummelzier was appointed to keep an eye, and it was in consequence of his intrepid and decided behaviour there, that the Duke of York interested himself in his behalf, and procured him the command of a troop of horse. At a place called Bewly, on the confines of Roxburghshire, he surprised a large conventicle about eleven o'clock on a Sabbath morning. Having but a small band, as soon as he appeared, a crowd of the hearers gathered round the preacher to defend him, or to further his escape. Clavers burst in upon them like a torrent; killed and wounded upwards of a hundred; took the preacher prisoner, and all such of the hearers as were the most respectable in appearance. He would have detained many more had his force been sufficient for his designs, for that very day, about five o'clock in the afternoon, he surprised

another numerous conventicle, at a place called Helmburn Linn, in Selkirkshire, where he acted over the same scene that he had done in the morning. The people, it is true, did not get time to rally round their pastor as at the former place, for the first intelligence they had of his approach was from a volley of musketry among them from the top of the linn, which took too sure effect.

The congregation scattered in a moment; and as there were strong fastnesses near at hand, none were taken prisoners, save some old men and a number of ladies; unfortunately all these were ladies of distinction: the preacher likewise was taken, who suffered afterwards. The soldiers related of this man, that when they came upon the crowd, and fired among them, he was in the middle of his afternoon prayer, and all the people standing uncovered around him; and that for all the shots, and the people fleeing and falling dead about him, he never so much as paused, nor took down his hands, nor even opened his eyes, but concluded a sentence in the same fervent tone after they had dragged him from the tent.

At one or other of these unfortunate conventicles, a part of all the chief families of the Pringles, such as Torwoodlee, Whitebank, Fairnilie, and others, were taken prisoners; as well as some of the Scotts of Harden, and the Douglases of Cavers and Boonjeddart—rich prizes for Clavers, who bore them all in triumph prisoners to Edinburgh.

Drummelzier put his whole interest to the stretch to get these leading and respectable families freed from such a disagreeable dilemma, and succeeded in getting the greater part of them set at liberty, on giving securities. From that time forth there existed a secret jealousy between him and Clavers; but as their jurisdiction lay on different sides of the country, they had no further interference with one another.

When Katharine informed him that his farmer, whom he so much esteemed, was taken away a prisoner, and by whom, he bit his lip, shook his head, and seemed highly incensed. He then questioned her about all the charges against him, and the evidence, requesting her, at the same time, to tell him the truth, in all its bearings, to the most minute scruple; and when he had heard all, he said that Clavers had other motives for this capture besides these. He lost no time in setting about the most coercive measures he could think of to procure his liberty. He sent an express to the privy council, and wrote to sundry other gentlemen whom Katharine knew nothing of; but the destination of Walter being utterly unknown to either of them, the laird was at a loss how to proceed.

He gave her, moreover, a bond of security, signed with his name, and without a direction, to a great amount, for her father's appearance at any court, to answer such charges as were brought against him; and with this she was to haste to the place where her father was a prisoner, and present it to the sheriff of the county, or chief magistrate of the burgh of such place, unless it was at Edinburgh, and in that case she was to take no farther care or concern about him.

She hasted home with her wild guide, where she arrived the fourth or fifth day after her departure, and found, to her astonishment, the Chapelhope deserted by man, woman, and boy! Not a living creature remained about the steading, but her father's dog and some poultry! The doors were locked, and the key away; and, hungry and fatigued as she was, she could find no means of admittance. At length, on looking about, she perceived that the cows were not about the house, nor anywhere in the corn, and concluding that some one must be herding them, she went up the side of the lake to their wonted walk, and found her two brothers attending the cattle.

They told her that the *town* (so they always denominate a farm-steading in that district) had been so grievously haunted in her absence, both by brownie and a ghost, that they were all obliged to leave it; that their mother was gone all the way to Gilmanscleuch to her brother, to remain there until she saw what became of her husband; Mass John was taken away by the fairies, and old Nanny was at Riskinhope, where they were also residing and sleeping at night; that the keys of the house were to be had there, but nothing would induce Nanny to come back again to Chapelhope, or at least to remain another night under its roof.

One mischief came thus upon poor Katharine after another, and she was utterly unable to account for this piece of intelligence, having been satisfied when she went away that she had put everything in train to secure peace and order about the house until her return. She rode to Riskinhope for the key, but not one would accompany her home, poor Nanny being lying moaning upon a bed. Jasper sat on the side of the hill, at a convenient distance from the house, until her return, but then took her horse from her, and put it away to the rest, refusing to enter the door. Thus was she left in her father's house all alone. Nanny came over, and assisted her in milking the kine evening and morning, but Katharine remained the rest of the day and every night by herself, neither did she press any one much to bear her company. She had no one to send in search of her father and deliver Drummelzier's bond—at least none that any one knew of—yet it was sent, and that speedily, although to little purpose, for though Walter was sent to Dumfries jail, he remained there but two nights; a party of prisoners, of ten men and two women, being ordered for Edinburgh, under a guard of soldiers, he was mixed indiscriminately with the rest, and sent there along with them.

He always said that though he was disposed to think well of Clavers before he saw him, yet he never was so blythe in his life as when he got from under

his jurisdiction; for there was an appearance of ferocity and wantonness of cruelty in all his proceedings during the time that he rode in his train a prisoner, that made the heart of any man, not brutified by inurement to such scenes, revolt at the principles that induced as well as the government that warranted them. He saw him and his troopers gather the whole vale of Annandale as a shepherd gathers his sheep in droves, pricking the inhabitants with their swords to urge their speed. When he got thus all the people of a parish, or division of a parish, driven together, he surrounded them with his soldiers, made them kneel by dozens, and take the oath of abjuration, as well as one acknowledging James Duke of York their rightful lord and sovereign; and lastly, made them renounce their right and part in heaven, if ever they repented them of that oath. The first man of such a group who refused or objected to compliance with this dreadful measure, he took him forthwith behind the ranks and shot him, which summary way of proceeding generally induced all the people to comply. Moreover, the way in which he threatened and maltreated children, and mocked and insulted women, not to mention more brutal usage of them, proved him at once to be destitute of the behaviour and feelings becoming a man, far less those of a gentleman. He seemed to regard all the commonalty in the south and west of Scotland as things to be mocked and insulted at pleasure—as beings created only for the sport of him and his soldiers—while their mental and bodily agonies were his delight. The narrator of this tale confesses that he has taken this account of his raid through the vales of Esk and Annan solely from tradition, as well as the attack made on the two conventicles where the Pringles, &c., were taken prisoners; but these traditions are descended from such a source and by such a line as amounts with him to veracity, while other incidents recorded by Wodrow and Howie fully corroborate them.

Far different were Walter's feelings on parting with the commander of his guard, Sergeant Daniel Roy Macpherson, a noble block from the genuine quarry of nature—rude as it was taken thence, without the mark of hammer or chisel. When he heard that his prisoner was to be taken from under his charge, he made up to him when out of the eye of his commander, and treated him with a parting speech; which, on account of its singularity, is here preserved, though, doubtless, woefully garbled, by being handed from one southland generation to another.

"Now he'll pe tahaking you away from mhe pefore as it were yesterdhay, and he'll pe putting you into some vhile dark hole, with all te low fwigs that come from te hills of Gallochee and Drummochloonrich, which is a shame and a disgrhace to shut up a shentleman who is chief of a clan among such poor crhazy maniachs, who will pe filling your ears full of their rejoicings, just as if they were all going to haiven! Do they suppose that haiven is to pe filled full of such poor insignaificant crheatures as they? But I'll pe giving you advice as a friend and prhother; when you come pefore the couhnsel, or any of their commissioners, do not you pe talking of haiven, and of conscience and covenants. And do not you pe pragging and poasting of one to pe your chief, or to pe of a clan that has not a friend at court; but tell them your own clan, and your claims to be its chief; and if you do not know her true descent, you had better claim Macpherson; she pe as ould and as honourable a clan as any of them all, and more."

Walter said he trusted still to the proofs of his own loyalty, and the want of evidence to the contrary.

"Pooh! pooh!" said Macpherson; "I tell you the evidence you want is this, if any great man say you ought to live, you will live; if not, you will die. Did not I was telling you that the sholdiers that were found dead in the correi, on the lands that belong to yourself, was evidence enough and more? I would not pe giving a plack for your evidence after that, for the one is much petter than te other. And it is very well thought," continued he, smiling grimly; "if you will pe preaking out into a rage, and pe cursing and tamning them all, you will get free in one moment."

Walter said that would be an easy ransom, and though it was an error he was too apt to fall into when angry, he could see no effect it could have in this case but to irritate his prosecutors more and more against him.

"You see no effect! You never can see any effect peyond the top that is on your nose! and you will not pe advised by a man of experience, who would do more for you than he would be commending of; and if you trust to what you can see, you will pe dancing a beautiful Highland shig in the air to a saulm tune, and that will have a very good effect. I tell you, when you come again to be questioned, I know that Clavers is to be there to pe adducing his proof; take you great and proud offence at some of their questions and their proofs; and you may pe making offer to fight them all one by one, or two by two, in the king's name, and send them all to hell in one pody; you cannot pe tamning them too much sore. By the soul of Rory More Macpherson! I would almost give up this claymore to pe py and see that effect. Now you are not to pe minding because I am laughing like a fool, for I'm perfectly serious; if matters should pe standing hard with you, think of the advice of an ould friend, who respects you as the chief of the clan MacLeadle, supposing it to pe as low and as much fallen down as it may. Farewell! she pe giving you her hearty Cot's blessing.

Thus parted he with Daniel Roy Macpherson, and, as he judged, an unfortunate change it was for him. The wretch who now took the command of their guard had all the ignorance and rudeness of the

former, without any counterbalance of high feeling and honour like him. His name was Patie Ingles, a temporary officer, the same who cut off the head of the amiable Mr. White with an axe, at Kilmarnock, carried it to Newmills, and gave it to his party to play a game with at foot-ball, which they did. Ingles was drunk during the greater part of the journey, and his whole delight was in hurting, mortifying, and mimicking his prisoners. They were all bound together in pairs, and driven on in that manner like coupled dogs. This was effected by a very simple process. Their hands were fastened behind, the right and left arm of each pair being linked within one another. Walter was tied to a little spare Galloway weaver, a man wholly prone to controversy: he wanted to argue every point on which account he was committed. Yet, when among the Cameronians, he took their principles as severely to task as he did those of the other party when examined by them. He lived but to contradict. Often did he try Walter with different points of opinion regarding the Christian church. Walter knew so little about them that the weaver was astonished. He tried him with the apologetical declaration. Walter had never heard of it. He could make nothing of his gigantic associate, and at length began a sly inquiry on what account he was committed, but even on that he received no satisfactory information.

Ingles came staggering up with them. "Weel, Master Skinflint, what say you to it the day? This is a pleasant journey, is it not? Eh? I say, Master, what do they call you? Peal-an'-eat, answer me in this—you see—I say, is it not delightful? Eh?

"Certainly, sir," said the weaver, who wished to be quit of him, "very delightful to those who feel it so."

"*Feel* it so! Sirrah! what do you mean by that? Do you know who you are speaking to? Eh? Answer me in this, What do you mean by *feel it so?* Eh?"

"I meant nothing," returned the weaver, somewhat snappishly, "but that kind of respect which I always pay to gentry like you."

"Gentry like me! Ha! if you speak such a—Eh! Gentry like me! I'll spit you like a cock pheasant —Eh! Have you any of them in Galloway? Answer me in this, will you? Eh?"

"I'll answer any reasonable thing, sir," said the poor weaver.

"Hout! never heed the creature, man," said Walter, "it's a poor drunken senseless beast of a thing."

Ingles fixed his reeling unsteady eyes upon him, filled with drunken rage, walked on, spitting and looking across the way for a considerable space, "What the devil of a whig camel is this?" said he, crossing over to Walter's side. "Drunken senseless beast of a thing! Holm, did you hear that? Macwhinny, did you? Eh! I'll scorn to shoot the cusser, though I could do it. Eh! But I'll kick him like a dog. Eh! Take that, and that, will you? Eh?" And so-saying, he kicked our proud-hearted and independent goodman of Chapelhope with his foot, staggering backward each time he struck.

Walter's spirit could not brook this, and, disregardful of all consequences, he wheeled about with his face toward him, dragging the weaver round with a jerk, as a mastiff sometimes does a spaniel that is coupled to him, and, as Ingles threw up his foot to kick him on the belly, he followed up his heel with his foot, giving him such a fling upwards as made him whirl round in the air like a reel. He fell on his back, and lay motionless, on which, several of the party of soldiers levelled their muskets at Walter. "Ay, shoot," said he, setting up his boardly breast to them, "Shoot at me if you dare, the best o' ye."

The soldiers cocked their pieces.

"Your colonel himsel durstna wrang a hair o' my head, though fain he wad hae done sae, without first gieing me ower to his betters. Let me see if a scullion amang ye a' dare do mair than he."

The soldiers turned their eyes, waiting for the word of command, and the weaver kept as far away from Walter as the nature of his bonds would let him. The command of the party now devolved on a Sergeant Douglas, who, perhaps nothing sorry for what had happened, stepped in between the soldiers and prisoner, and swore a great oath, that, "what the prisoner said was the truth, and that all that it was their duty to do was to take the prisoners safe to Edinburgh, as at first ordered, and there give their evidence of this transaction, which would send the Whig to hell at once, provided there was any chance of his otherwise escaping."

They lifted Ingles, and held him up into the air to get breath, loosing meantime his cravat and clothes, on which he fell to vomit severely, owing to the fall he had got, and the great quantity of spirits he had drunk. They waited on him for about two hours, but as he still continued unable either to speak or walk, they took him into a house called Granton, and proceeded on their destination.

This Douglas, though apparently a superior person to the former commander of the party, was still more intolerant and cruel than he. There was no indignity or inconvenience that he could fasten on his prisoners which he did not exercise to the utmost. They lodged that night at a place called Tweedshaws, and Walter used always to relate an occurrence that took place the next morning, that strongly marked the character of this petty officer, as well as the licensed cruelty of the times.

Some time previous to this, there had been a fellowship meeting, at a place called Tallo Linns, of the wanderers that lurked about Chapelhope and the adjacent mountains. About eighty had assembled, merely to spend the night in prayer, reading the Scriptures, &c. The curate of Tweedsmuir, a poor dissolute wretch, sent a flaming account of this in

writing to the privy council, magnifying that simple affair to a great and dangerous meeting of armed men. The council took the alarm, raised the hue and cry, and offered a reward for the apprehending of any one who had been at the meeting of Tallo Linns. The curate, learning that a party of the king's troops was lodged that night in his parish and neighbourhood, came to Tweedshaws at a late hour, and requested to speak with the captain of the party. He then informed Douglas of the meeting, showed him the council's letter and proclamation, and finally told him that there was a man in a cottage hard by whom he strongly suspected to have formed one at the meeting alluded to in the proclamation. There being no conveniency for lodging so many people at Tweedshaws, Douglas and the curate drank together all the night, as did the soldiers in another party. A number of friends to the prisoners had given them money when they left Dumfries for Edinburgh, to supply as well as they might the privations to which they would be subjected, but here the military took the greater part of it from them to supply their intemperance. About the break of day, they went and surrounded a shepherd's cottage belonging to the farm of Corehead, having been led thither by the curate, where they found the shepherd, an old man, his daughter, and one Edward M'Cane, son to a merchant in Lanarkshire, who was courting this shepherdess, a beautiful young maiden. The curate having got intelligence that a stranger was at that house, immediately suspected him to be one of the wanderers, and on this surmise the information was given. The curate acknowledged the shepherd and his daughter as parishioners, but of M'Cane, he said he knew nothing, and had no doubt that he was one of the rebellious Whigs. They fell to examine the youth, but they were all affected with the liquor they had drunk over night, and made a mere farce of it, paying no regard to his answers, or, if they did, it was merely to misconstrue or mock them. He denied having been at the meeting at Tallo Linns, and all acquaintance with the individuals whom they named as having been there present. Finding that they could make nothing of him whereon to ground a charge, Douglas made them search him for arms, for being somewhat drunk, he took it highly amiss that he should have been brought out of his way for nothing. M'Cane judged himself safe on that score, for he knew that he had neither knife, razor, bodkin, nor edged instrument of any kind about him, but as ill luck would have it, he chanced to have an old gun-flint in his waistcoat pocket. Douglas instantly pronounced this to be sufficient, and ordered him to be shot. M'Cane was speechless for some time with astonishment, and at length told his errand, and the footing on which he stood with the young girl before them, offering at the same time to bring proofs from his own parish of his loyalty and conformity. He even condescended to kneel to the ruffian, to clasp his knees, and beg and beseech of him to be allowed time for a regular proof, but nothing would move him. He said the courtship was a very clever excuse, but would not do with him, and forthwith ordered him to be shot. He would not even allow him to sing a psalm with his two friends, but cursed and swore that the devil a psalm he should sing there. He said, "It would not be singing a few verses of a psalm in a wretched and miserable style that would keep him out of hell, and if he went to heaven, he might then lilt as much at psalm singing as he had a mind." When the girl, his betrothed sweetheart, saw the muskets levelled at her lover, she broke through the file, shrieking most piteously, threw herself on him, clasped his neck and kissed him, crying, like one distracted, "O Edward, take me wi' ye, take me wi' ye, a' the world sanna part us."

"Ah! Mary," said he, "last night we looked forward to long and happy years: how joyful were our hopes! but they are all blasted at once. Be comforted, my dearest, dearest heart! God bless you! Farewell for ever."

The soldiers then dragged her backward, mocking her with indelicate remarks, and while she was yet scarcely two paces removed, and still stretching out her hands towards him, six balls were lodged in his heart in a moment, and he fell dead at her feet. Deformed and bloody as he was, she pressed the corpse to her bosom, moaning and sobbing in such a way as if every throb would have been her last, and in that condition the soldiers marched merrily off and left them. For this doughty and noble deed, for which Sergeant Douglas deserved to have been hanged and quartered, he shortly after got a cornetcy in Sir Thomas Livingston's troop of horse.

Two of the prisoners made their escape that morning, owing to the drunkenness of their guards, on which account the remainder being blamed, were more haughtily and cruelly treated than ever. It is necessary to mention all these, as they were afterwards canvassed at Walter's trial, the account of which formed one of his winter evening tales as long as he lived. Indeed, all such diffuse and miscellaneous matter as is contained in this chapter, is a great incumbrance in the right onward progress of a tale; but we have done with it, and shall now haste to the end of our narrative in a direct uninterrupted line.

CHAPTER XII.

The sudden departure of Katharine from home, after the extraordinary adventure of the curate Clerk in the Old Room, at the crowing of the cock, was a great relief to him, as it freed him from the embarrassment of her company, and gave him an opportunity of telling his own story to the gudewife without interruption, of the success he had in freeing her daughter from the power and fellowship of evil

spirits. That story was fitted admirably to suit her weak and superstitious mind; it accorded with anything nearer than the truth, and perhaps this finished hypocrite never appeared so great a character in the eyes of Maron Linton as he did that day. He spoke of going away to Henderland in the evening, but she entreated him so earnestly to stay and protect her from the power of the spirits that haunted the place, that he deemed it proper to acquiesce, for without the countenance of the family of Chapelhope he was nothing—he could not have lived in his puny cure. She depended on him, she said, to rid the town of these audacious (or, as she called them, *misleared*) beings altogether, for without his interference the family would be ruined. Their servants had all left them—the work remained unwrought, and everything was going to confusion—she had given Brownie his accustomed wages again and again, and still he refused to leave the house; and without the holy man's assistance in expelling him and his train, their prospects in life were hopeless.

The curate promised to use his highest interest with Heaven, and assured her that no further evil should come nigh unto her, at least while he remained under her roof: "for were it not," said he, "for the conjunction which they are in with one of the family, they should have been expelled long ere now. That unnatural bond, I hope, by a course of secret conferences, to be able to break asunder, but be not thou afraid, for no evil shall come nigh thy dwelling." He talked with the goodwife in the style that pleased her; flattered her high and pure notions of religion, as well as her piety and benevolence; said evening prayers in the family with zeal and devotion; but how was he startled when informed that he was to sleep again in the Old Room! He indeed knew not that it was haunted more than any other part of the house, or that it was the favourite nightly resort of the Brownie of Bodsbeck; but the apparition that he had seen, and the unaccountable rescue that he had witnessed the night before, preyed on his mind, and he hinted to the goodwife, that he had expected to be preferred to her daughter's room and bed that night, as she was absent. But Maron, too, was selfish; for who is without that great ruling motive? She expected that Brownie would appear; that Mass John would speak to it; and thenceforward to be freed from its unwelcome intrusions. To the Old Room he was shown at a late hour, where the lamp, the Bible, and the *sand-glass* were placed on the little table, at the bed's head, as usual.

It was past eleven when the curate went to sleep. Old Nanny, who was dressed more neatly than usual, sat still at the kitchen fire, expecting every minute the two Covenant men, whom her young mistress had promised to send to her privily, as her companions and protectors through the dark and silent watches of the night until her return. Still nothing of them appeared; but, confident that they would appear, she stirred the embers of the fire, and continued to keep watch with patient anxiety. When it drew towards midnight, as she judged, she heard a noise without, as of some people entering or trying to enter, by the outer door of the Old Room. Concluding that it was her expected companions, and alarmed at the wrong direction they had taken, she ran out, and round the west end of the house, to warn them of their mistake, and bring them in by the kitchen door. As she proceeded, she heard two or three loud and half-stifled howls from the interior of the Old Room. The door was shut, but, perceiving by the seam in the window shutters that the light within was still burning, she ran to the window, which directly faced the curate's bed; and there being a small aperture broken in one of the panes, she edged back the shutter, so as to see and hear the most part of what was going on within. She saw four or five figures standing at the bed, resembling human figures in some small degree—their backs towards her; but she saw a half face of one that held the lamp in its hand, and it was of the hue of a smoked wall. In the midst of them stood the deformed little Brownie, that has often been mentioned and described in the foregoing part of this tale. In his right hand he brandished a weapon, resembling a dirk or carving-knife. The other hand he stretched out, half raised over the curate's face, as if to command attention. "Peace!" said he, "thou child of the bottomless pit, and minister of unrighteousness; another such sound from these polluted lips of thine, and I plunge this weapon into thy heart. We would shed thy blood without any reluctance—nay, know thou that we would rejoice to do it, as thereby we would render our master acceptable service. Not for that intent or purpose are we now come; yet thy abominations shall not altogether pass unpunished. Thou knowest thy own heart—its hypocrisy and licentiousness. Thou knowest, that last night, at this same hour, thou didst attempt, by brutal force, to pollute the purest and most angelic of the human race—we rescued her from thy hellish clutch, for we are her servants, and attend upon her steps. Thou knowest that still thou art cherishing the hope of succeeding in thy cursed scheme. Thou art a stain to thy profession, and a blot upon the cheek of nature, enough to make thy race and thy nation stink in the nose of their Creator. To what thou deservest, thy doom is a lenient one—but it is fixed and irrevocable!"

There was something in that mis-shapen creature's voice that chilled Nanny's very soul while it spoke these words, especially its pronunciation of some of them; it sounded like something she had heard before, perhaps in a dream, but it was horrible and not to be brooked. The rest now laid violent hold of Mass John, and she heard him mumbling in a supplicating voice, but knew not what he said. As they stooped forward, the lamp shone on the floor,

and she saw the appearance of a coffin standing behind them. Nanny was astonished, but not yet overcome; for, cruel were the scenes that she had beheld, and many the trials she had undergone!—but at that instant the deformed and grizzly being turned round, as if looking for something that it wanted—the lamp shone full on its face, the lineaments of which when Nanny beheld, her eyes at once were darkened, and she saw no more that night. How she spent the remainder of it, or by what means she got to her bed in the kitchen, she never knew; but next morning when the goodwife and her sons arose, poor old Nanny was lying in the kitchen bed delirious, and talking of dreadful and incomprehensible things. All that could be gathered from her frenzy was, that some terrible catastrophe had happened in the Old Room, and that Clerk, the curate, was implicated in it. The goodwife, judging that her favourite had been at war with the spirits, and that Heaven had been of course triumphant, hasted to the Old Room to bless and pay the honour due to such a divine character: she called his name as she entered, but no one made answer; she hasted to the bed, but behold there was no one there! The goodwife's sole spiritual guide had vanished away.

The curate Clerk was never more seen nor heard of in these bounds; but it may not be improper here to relate a circumstance that happened some time thereafter, as it comes no more within the range of this story.

In the month of October, and the memorable year 1688, it is well known that Clavers hasted southward, with all the troops under his command, to assist King James against the Prince of Orange and the Protestant party of England, or to sell himself to the latter, any of the ways that he found most convenient. In the course of this march, as he was resting his troops at a place called Ninemile-brae, near the Border, a poor emaciated and forlorn-looking wretch came to him, and desired to speak a word with him. Mr. Adam Copland and he were sitting together when this happened; Clavers asked his name and his business, for none of the two recognized him. It was Clerk, the curate (that had been) of Chapelhope and Kirkhope! Clavers said, as there were none present save a friend, he might say out his business. This he declined, and took Clavers a short way aside. Copland watched their motions, but could not hear what Clerk said. When he began to tell his story Clavers burst into a violent fit of laughter, but soon restrained himself, and Copland beheld him knitting his brows, and biting his lip, as he seldom failed to do when angry. When they parted, he heard him saying distinctly, "It is impossible that I can avenge your wrongs at this time, for I have matters of great import before me; but the day may come ere long when it will be in my power, as well as my will to do it!"

The spirits of the wild having been victorious, and the reverend curate, the goodwife's only stay, overcome and carried off bodily, she was impatient, and on the rack every minute that she stayed longer about the house. She caused one of her sons to take a horse, and conduct her to Gilmanscleuch that night, to her brother Thomas's farm, determined no more to see Chapelhope till her husband's return; and if that should never take place, to bid it adieu for ever.

Nanny went to the led farm of Riskinhope, that being the nearest house to Chapelhope, and just over against it, in order to take what care she was able of the things about the house during the day. There also the two boys remained, and herded throughout the day in a very indifferent manner; and, in short, everything about the farm was going fast to confusion when Katharine returned from her mission to the Laird of Drummelzier. Thus it was that she found her father's house deserted, its doors locked up, and its hearth cold.

Her anxiety to converse privately with Nanny was great; but at her first visit, when she went for the key, this was impossible without being overheard. She soon, however, found an opportunity; for that night she enticed her into the byre at Chapelhope, in the gloaming, after the kine had left the lone, where a conversation took place between them in effect as follows:—

"Alas, Nanny! how has all this happened? Did not the two Covenanters, for whom I sent, come to bear you company?"

"Dear bairn, if they did come I saw nae them. If they came, they were ower late, for the spirits were there afore them; an' I hae seen sic a sight! Dear, dear bairn, dinna gar me gang ower it again—I hae seen a sight that's enough to turn the heart o' flesh to an iceshogle, an' to freeze up the very springs o' life! Dinna gar me gang ower it again, an' rake up the ashes o' the honoured dead. But what need I say sae? The dead are up already! Lord in heaven be my shield and safeguard!"

"Nanny, you affright me; but, be assured, your terrors have originated in some mistake—your sight has deceived you, and all shall yet be explained to your satisfaction."

"Say nae sae, dear bairn; my sight hasna deceived me, yet I have been deceived. The world has deceived me—hell has deceived me—and heaven has winked at the deed. Alack, an' wae's me, that it should sae hae been predestined afore the world began! The day was, an' no sae lang sin' syne, when I could hae prayed wi' confidence, an' sung wi' joy; but now my mind is overturned, and I hae nouther stay on earth, nor hope in heaven! The veil of the temple may be rent below, and the ark of the testimony thrown open above, but *their* forms will not be seen within the one, nor their names found written in the other."

"Peace, peace, for heaven's sake!—You are verging on blasphemy, and know not what you say."

"Do the reprobate know what they say, or can they forbear saying it? How then can I? I, who am in the bond of iniquity, and the jaws of death eternal?—Where can I fly? When the righteous are not saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Ay, dear bairn, weel may ye stare and raise up your hands that gate; but when ye hear my tale, ye winna wonder that my poor wits are uprooted. Suppose sic a case your ain—suppose you had been the bosom companion o' ane for twenty years—had joined wi' him in devotion, e'ening and morning, for a' that time, and had never heard a sigh but for sin, nor a complaint but of the iniquities of the land—If ye had witnessed him follow two comely sons, your own flesh and blood, to the scaffold, and bless his God who put it in their hearts to stand and suffer for his cause, and for the crown of martyrdom he had bestowed on them, and bury the mangled bodies of other two with tears, but not with repining—If, after a' this, he had been hunted as a partridge on the mountains, and for the same dear cause, the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus, had laid down his life—If you knew that his gray head was hung upon the city wall for a spectacle to gaze at, and his trunk buried in the wild by strangers—Say you knew all this, and had all these dear ties in your remembrance, and yet, after long years of hope soon to join their blest society above, to see again that loved and revered form stand before your eyes on earth at midnight, shrivelled, pale, and deformed, and mixed with malevolent spirits on dire and revengeful intent, where wad your hope—where wad your confidence—or where wad your wits hae been flown?" Here she cried bitterly; and seizing the astonished Katharine's hand with both hers, and pressing it to her brow, she continued her impassioned and frantic strain.—"Pity me, O dear bairn, pity me! For man hasna pitied me, an' God hasna pitied me! I'm gaun doun a floody water, down, down; an' I wad fain grip at something, if it were but a swoomin strae, as a last hope, afore I sink a' thegither."

"These are the words of delirium," said Katharine, "and I will not set them down in my memory as spoken by you. Pray the Almighty that they may never be written in his book of remembrance against you; for the veriest downfallen fiend can do no more than distrust the mercy of God in a Redeemer. I tell you, woman, that whatever you may fancy you have seen or heard in the darkness of night, when imagination forms fantasies of its own, of all those who have stood for our civil and religious liberties, who, for the sake of a good conscience, have yielded up all, and sealed their testimony with their blood, not one hair of *their* head shall fall to the ground, for their names are written in the book of life, and they shall shine as stars in the kingdom of their Father. You have yourself suffered much, and have rejoiced in your sufferings. So far you did well. Do not then mar so fair an eternal harvest—so blest a prospect of a happy and everlasting community, by the sin of despair, that can never be forgiven. Can you, for a moment, while in possession of your right senses, doubt of the tender mercies of your Maker and Preserver? Can you for a moment believe that he has hid his face from the tears and the blood that have been shed for his cause in Scotland? As well may you doubt that the earth bears or the sun warms you, or that he never made a revelation of his will to man."

All the while that Katharine spoke thus, Nanny's eyes were fixed on her, as if drinking every word she uttered into a soul that thirsted for it. A wild and unstable light beamed on her countenance, but it was still only like a sunbeam breaking through the storm, which is ready to be swallowed up by the rolling darkness within. Her head shook as with a slight paralytic affection, and she again clasped the hand which she had never quitted.

"Are ye an angel o' light," said she, in a soft tremulous voice, "that ye gar my heart prinkle sae wi' a joy that it never thought again to taste? It isna then a strae nor a stibble that I hae grippit at for my last hope, but the tap of a good tow-widdy saugh; an' a young sapling though it be, it is steevely rootit in a good soil, and sprung frae a seed o' heaven, an' will maybe help the poor drowning wretch to the shore!—An' *hae* I thought sae muckle ill o' you? Could I deem that mild heavenly face, that's but the reflection o' the soul within, the image o' sin and o' Satan, an' a veil o' deceit thrawn ower a mind prone to wickedness? Forgie me, dear, dear saint, forgie me, an' help me better out yet. It surely canna be condemned spirits that ye are connectit wi'? Ah, ye're dumb there!—ye daurna answer me to that! Na, na! the spirits o' the just made perfect wad never leave their abodes o' felicity to gabble amang derksome fiends at the dead hour o' the night, in sic a world o' sin and sorrow as this. But I saw *him*, an' heard him speak, as sure as I see your face an' hear the tones o' my ain voice; an', if I lookit nae wrang, there were mae risen frae the dead than ane. It is an awfu' dispensation to think o'! But there was a spirit o' retaliation in him that often made me quake, though never sae as now. O wad ye but tell me what kind o' spirits ye are in conjunction wi'?"

"None but the blest and the happy—none but they who have come out of great tribulation, and washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb—none that would harbour such a thought, or utter such a doubt, as you have done to-night, for the empire of the universe. More I may not tell you at present; but stay you here with me, and I will cherish you, and introduce you to these spirits, and you shall be happier with them than ever you have been."

"Will I sae? Say nae mair!—I wad pit hand to my ain life the night, an' risk the warst, or I again met wi' them face to face in the same guise as I saw them at midnight last week. Ye're a wonderfu'

creature! But ye're ayont my depth; therefore I'll love ye, an' fear ye, an' keep my distance. Sit down, dear, dear bairn, an' join me in singing a hymn afore we part."

SANG SIXTH.

O Father Almighty, O Father of light,
I kneel and I tremble before thee,
For darkness surrounds the throne of thy might,
And with terror I fear and adore thee.
I have seen, I have heard, what I not comprehend,
Which has caused my poor reason to waver,
The bodies or spirits of martyred men,
Who shrunk from thy standard, O never,
O never!—O never!
But bled for their God and forgiver.

II.

In the darkness of midnight I saw them appear,
With faces unearthly and sallow,
Their forms were all shrivelled, their features severe,
Their voices unearthly and hollow.
And yet, O great God! it was they, it was they,
Put down by a sinful blasphemer,
They laid down their lives in the moor and away,
And bled for their God and Redeemer,
O Saviour!—Dear Saviour,
Preserve from despondence for ever.

III.

But where can I turn my bewildered eye,
Or where can I fly but to Thee,
Since all the long vales of eternity lie
Concealed in deep darkness from me?
Then here at thy footstool of mercy I bow,
Imploring thy grace to deliver;
For shadows of darkness beleaguer me now,
And I fly to my God and forgiver.
For ever!—O ever!
I'll cling to my Saviour for ever.

Thus they parted: Katharine into her long vacant house, and Nanny over to Riskinhope. The farmer of Riskinhope (David Bryden of Eldin-hope) was ruined by the sequestration of his stock by Clavers, but the shepherds and other servants still lingered about the house for better or for worse. There was not a sheep on that large farm, save about five scores of good ewes, that Davie Tait, the herd of Whithope, had turned slyly over into the hags of the Yokeburn-head, that day the drivers took away the stock. When Clavers made his last raid up by Chapelhope, all the family of Riskinhope fled to the hills, and betook them to cover, every one by himself; and there, with beating hearts, peeped through the heath and the rash-bush, to watch the motions of that bloody persecutor. Perilous was their case that day, for had any of them been found in that situation, it would have been enough; but Davie well knew it was good for him to keep out of the way, for Mr. Renwick, and Mr. Shields, as well as other wanderers, had been sheltered in his house many a night, and the latter wrote his *Hind let Loose* in a small house at the side of Winterhopeburn. Yet Davie was not a Cameronian, properly speaking, nor a very religious man neither; but the religious enthusiasm of his guests had broke him a little into their manner and way of thinking. He had learned to make family exercise, not, however, to very great purpose, for the only thing very remarkable in it was the strong nasal Cameronian whine of his prayer, and its pastoral allusions; but he was growing fond of exhibiting in that line, having learned the Martyr's tune, and the second part of the Dundee, which formed the whole range of his psalmody. Yet Davie liked a joke as well as ever he did, and perhaps as well as any part of divine worship. When one remarked to him that his family music was loud enough, but very discordant—"Ay," quoth Davie, "but it's a lang gate atween here an' heaven: a' music's good i' the distance; I hae strong faith in that."

That night after Nanny came over, Davie had prayed as usual, and among other things, had not forgot the Brownie of Bodsbeck, that "he might be skelpit wi' the taws o' divine wrath, an' sent back to hell wi' the sperks on his hips; and that the angel of presence might keep watch over their couches that night, to scare the howlaty face o' him away, an' learn him to keep his ain side o' the water."

After prayers the family were crowded round the fading ingle, and cracking of the Brownie and of Davie's prayer. Davie had opened his waistcoat, and thrown off his hose to warm his feet, and, flattered with their remarks on his abilities, began to be somewhat scurrilous on Brownie. "I think I hae cowed him the night," said he; "he'll fash nane o' us—he may stay wi' his Keatie Laidlaw yonder, an' rin at her bidding. He has a sonsy weel-faur'd lass to bide wi'—he's better aff than some o' his neighbours, Maysey;" and, saying so, he cast a look to his wife that spoke unutterable things; but finding that his joke did not take, after so serious a prayer, he turned again on Brownie, and, as his own wife said, "didna leave him the likeness of a dog." He said he had eaten sax bowes o' good meal to the goodman, an' a' that he had done for't, that ony body kend o', was mending up an auld fail-dike round the corn ae night. In short, he said he was an unprofitable guest—a dirty droich, an' a menseless glutton—an' it was weak and silly in ony true Christian to be eiry for him." He had not said out the last words, when they heard a whispering at the door, and shortly after these words distinctly uttered:

"There's neither blood nor rown-tree pin,
At open doors the dogs go in."

The size of every eye's orbit was doubled in a moment, as it turned towards the door. The light of the fire was shining bright along the short entry between the beds, and they saw the appearance of a man, clothed in black, come slowly and deliberately in, walk across the entry, and go into the apartment in the other end of the house. The family were all above one another in beyond the fire in an instant, and struggling who to be undermost, and next the wall. Nanny, who was sitting on the form beyond the fire, pondering on other matters, leaning her

brow on both hands, and all unconscious of what had entered, was overborne in the crush, and laid flat undermost of all.

"Dear, dear bairns, what's asteer? Hoot fy! Why, troth, ye'll crush the poor auld body as braid as a bloodkercake."

"Ah! the Brownie!—the Brownie!—the Brownie o' Bodsbeck!" was whispered in horror from every tongue.

Davie Tait luckily recollecting that there was a door at hand that led to a little milk-house in the other end of the house, and still another division farther from Brownie, led the way to it on all four, at full gallop, and took shelter in the farthest corner of that. All the rest were soon above him, but Davie bore the oppressive weight with great fortitude for some time, and without a murmur. Nanny was left last; she kept hold of the Bible that she had in her lap when she fell, and had likewise the precaution to light the lamp before she followed her affrighted associates. Nothing could be more appalling than her own entry after them—never was a figure more calculated to inspire terror, than Nanny coming carrying a feeble glimmering lamp, that only served to make darkness visible, while her pale raised-like features were bent over it, eager to discover her rueful compeers. The lamp was half-covered with her hand to keep it from being blown out; and her face, where only a line of light here and there was visible, was altogether horrible. Having discovered the situation, and the plight of the family, she bolted the door behind her, and advanced slowly up to them. "Dear bairns, what did ye see that has putten ye a' this gate?"

"Lord sauf us!" cried Davie, from below, "we hae forespoke the Brownie—tak that elbow out o' my guts a wee bit. They say, if ye speak o' the deil, he'll appear. 'Tis an unsonsy and dangerous thing to—Wha's aught that knee? slack it a little. Guide us, sirs, there's the weight of a millstane on aboon the links o' my neck—Nanny, hae ye boltit the door?"

"Ay hae I, firm an' fast."

"Then muve up a wee, sirs, or faith I'm gane—Hech howe! the weight o' sin an' mortality that's amang ye."

Davie's courage, that had began to mount on hearing that the door was bolted, soon gave way again, when he raised his head, and saw the utter dismay that was painted on each countenance. "Hout, Maysey, woman, dinna just mak sic faces—ye are eneuch to fright fock, forby aught else," said he to his wife.

"O Davie, think what a wheen poor helpless creatures we are! Does Brownie ever kill ony body?"

"I wish it be nae a waur thing than Brownie," said Dan.

"Waur than Brownie? Mercy on us! Waur than Brownie! What was it like?" was whispered round.

"Ye mind poor Kirko, the bit Dinscore laird, that skulkit hereabouts sae lang, an' sleepit several nights ben in that end? Didna ye a' think it was unco like him?"

"The very man! the very man!—his make, his gang, his claes, an' everything," was echoed by all.

"An' ye ken," continued Dan, "that he was shot on Dumfries sands this simmer. It is his ghaist come to haunt the place whar he baid an' prayed sae aften."

"Ower true! ower true! it's awsome to think o'," was the general remark.

"Let us go to prayers," said Nanny; "it isna a time to creep into nooks on aboon other, an' gie way to despair. There is but ane that *can* guard or protect us; let us apply there."

"Something has been done that way already," said Davie Tait; "we canna come to handygrips wi' him, an' force him to stand senter at our door a' night."

Davie's matter was exhausted on the subject, and he did not much relish going over the same words again, which, he acknowledged, were *rather kenspeckle;* nor yet to venture on composing new ones out of his own head: this made him disposed to waive Nanny's proposal.

"Ay," answered she, "but we maunna haud just wi' saying, gie us this, an' gie us that; and then, because we dinna just get it aff loof, drap the plea an' despair. Na, na, dear bairns, that's nae part o' the Christian warfare! We maun plead wi' humility, and plead again; an' never was there mair cause for rousing to exertion than now. The times are momentous, and some great change is drawing near, for the dead are astir—I have seen them mysel. Yes, the several members that were scattered, and buried apart, are come thegither again—joined, an' gaun aboon the grund, mouthing the air o' heaven. I saw it mysel. Can it be that the resurrection is begun? It is a far away thought for the thing itsel to be as near, but it's a glorious ane, an' there's proof o't. But then the place an' the time are doubtfu'; had it been sun proof I wad hae likit it better. We little wot what to say or think under sic visitations. Let us apply to the only source of light and direction. David, be you a mouth to us."

"A mouth!" said Davie; but recollecting himself, added, "hum, I understand you; but I hae mouthed mair already than has come to ony good. I like fock to pray that hae some chance to be heard; some fock may scraugh themsels herse, and be nae the better."

"O fie, David! speak wi' some reverence," said his wife Maysey.

"I mintit at naething else," said he, "but I hae an unreverent kind o' tongue, that nought ever serous-like fa's frae, let my frame o' mind be as it will; an' troth I haena command o' language for a job like this. I trow the prelates hae the best way

after a', for they get prayers ready made to their hands."

"How can ye speak sae the night, David? or how can sic a thought hover round your heart as to flee out at random that gate? If ye will *read* prayers, there's a book, read them out o' that; if the words o' God winna suit the cases o' his ain creatures, how can ye trow the words o' another man can do it? But pray wi' the heart, an' pray in humility, and fearna being accepted."

"That's true; but yet ane maks but a poor figure wi' the heart by itsel."

"Wow, Davie, man," quoth Maysey, his wife, "an' ye mak but a poor figure indeed; when we're a' in sic a plight! Ye hear the woman speaks gude truth; an' ye ken yoursel ye fenced us against the Brownie afore, but no against Kirky's ghaist; tak the beuk like a man, an' pit the fence o' scripture faith round us for that too."

Stupid as Maysey was, she knew the way to her husband's heart. Davie could not resist such an appeal; he took the Bible, sung the 143d Psalm from beginning to end, at Nanny's request, and likewise, by her direction, read the 20th of Revelation; then kneeling down on his bare knees, legs, and feet, as he fled from the kitchen, on the damp miry floor of the milk-house, he essayed a strong energetic prayer, as a fence against the invading ghost. But, as Davie acknowledged, he had an irreverent expression naturally, that no effort could overcome (and by the bye, there is more in this than mankind are in general aware of), and the more he aimed at sublimity the more ludicrous he grew, even to common ears. There is scarcely a boy in the country who cannot recite scraps of Davie Tait's prayer; but were I to set all that is preserved of it down here, it might be construed as a mockery of that holy ordinance, than which nothing is so far from my heart or intention.

The act of rude devotion being ended, all the family arose from their knees with altered looks. Thus fenced, a new energy glowed in every breast. Poor Maysey, proud of her husband's bold and sublime intercession, and trusting in the divine fence now raised around them, rose with the tear in her eye, seized the lamp, and led the way, followed by all the rest, to retake the apartment of Kirky's ghost by open assault. Nanny, whose faith was wont to be superior to all these things, lagged behind, dreading to see the sight that she had seen on the Saturday night before, and the bold intercessor himself kept her company, on pretence of a sleeping leg; but, in truth, his faith in his own intercession and fence did not mount very high. All the apartment was searched—every chest, corner, and hole that could be thought of—everything was quiet, and not so much as a mouse stirring!—not a bed-cover folded down, nor the smallest remembered article missing! All the family saw Kirky's ghost enter in his own likeness, and heard him speak in his wonted tongue, except old Nanny. It was a great and wonderful victory gained. They were again in full possession of their own house, a right which they never seemed before to have duly appreciated. They felt grateful and happy; and it was hinted by Maysey, Dan, and uncle Nicholas, that Davie Tait would turn out a burning and a shining light in these dark and dismal times, and would supersede Messrs. Renwick, Shields, and all the curates in the country. He had laid a visible ghost, that might be the devil for aught they knew to the contrary; and it was argued on all hands that "Davie was nae ama' drink."

The whole of the simple group felt happy and grateful; and they agreed to sit another hour or two before they went to sleep, and each one read a chapter from the Bible, and recite a psalm or hymn. They did so, until it came to Nanny's turn. She laid her hands across each other on her breast, turned in the balls of her half-closed eyes, so that nothing was seen but the white, and with her face raised upwards, and a slow rocking motion, she sung the following hymn, to a strain the most solemn that ever was heard:—

"O thou, who dwell'st in the heavens high,
Above yon stars, and within yon sky,
Where the dazzling fields never needed light
Of the sun by day, nor the moon by night!

Though shining millions around thee stand,
For the sake of one that's at thy right hand,
O think of them that have cost him dear,
Still chained in doubt and in darkness here!

Our night is dreary, and dim our day;
And if thou turnest thy face away,
We are sinful, feeble, and helpless dust,
And have none to look to, and none to trust.

The powers of darkness are all abroad,
They own no Saviour, and fear no God;
And we are trembling in dumb dismay,
O turn not thus thy face away!

Our morning dawn is with clouds o'erspread,
And our evening fall is a bloody red;
And the groans are heard on the mountain swarth;
There is blood in heaven, and blood on earth.

A life of scorn for us thou did'st lead,
And in the grave laid thy blessed head;
Then think of those who undauntedly
Have laid down life and all for thee.

Thou wilt not turn them forth in wrath,
To walk this world of sin and death,
In shadowy dim deformity?
O God, it may not—cannot be!

Thy aid, O mighty One, we crave!
Not shortened is thy arm to save.
Afar from thee we now sojourn;
Return to us, O God, return!"

This hymn affected the family group in no ordinary degree; it made the hairs of their head creep, and thrilled their simple hearts, easily impressed by divine things, while their looks strongly expressed their feelings. None of them would read or recite anything farther, but entreated Nanny to say it

over again, affirming, with one voice, that "it was an *extrodnar* thing."

"Ah! dear, dear bairns! I dinna ken about it," said she; "he was a good cannie lad that made it, but he mixed wi' the scoffers, and turned to hae his doubts and his failings like mony ane (Lord forgie us a' for our share in them); he seems even to have doubted o' the Omnipresence when he penned that, which was far far wrang."

And thus I must close this long and eccentric chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

Next morning Davie Tait was early astir, and not having anything better to do, he took his plaid and staff, and set out towards Whithope-head, to see what was become of his five scores of ewes, the poor remains of a good stock. Davie went slowly up the brae towards Riskinhope-swire, for the events of last night were fresh in his mind, and he was conning a new prayer to suit some other great emergency; for Davie began to think that by fervent prayer very great things might be accomplished—that perhaps the floods of the earth and the winds of heaven might be restrained in their course, and that even the Hermon Law might be removed out of its place. He had, therefore, his eye fixed on a little green gair before him, where he was determined to try his influence with heaven once more; for his heart was lifted up, as he afterwards confessed, and he was hasting to that little gair to kneel down and ask a miracle, nothing doubting.

Let any one guess, if he can, what Davie Tait was going to ask. It was not that the rains and storms of heaven might be restrained, nor that the mountains might be removed out of their places; but Davie was going to pray that "when he went over at the Hewn-gate-end, as soon as he came in sight of Whithope, he might see all his master's ewes again; all his old friends, every one of which he knew by head-mark, going spread and bleating on their old walk from the Earl Hill all the way to the Braid-heads." So intent was Davie on this grand project, that he walked himself out of breath against the hill, in order to get quickly at the little gair to put his scheme in execution; but, as he sagely observed, it had been graciously foreordained that he should not commit this great folly and iniquity. He paused to take his breath; and in pausing he turned about, as every man does who stops short in climbing a hill. The scene that met Davie's eye cut his breath shorter than the steep—his looks were rivetted on the haugh at Chapelhope—he could scarcely believe his own eyes, though he rubbed them again and again, and tried their effects on all things around. "Weel," cried Davie, "what a world do we live in! Gin a hale synod had sworn, I coudna hae believed this! My sooth, but the Brownie o' Bodsbeck has had a busy night!"

Walter of Chapelhope had ten acres of as good corn as ever grew in a moorland district. Davie knew that when he went to his bed the evening before that corn was all growing in the field, dead ripe and ready for the sickle, and he had been lamenting that very night that such a crop should be lost for want of reapers, in a season when there was so much need for it. But now Davie saw that one half of that crop at least was shorn during the night, all standing in tight shocks, rowed and hooded, with their ends turned to the south-west. Well might Davie exclaim, "My sooth, but the Brownie of Bodsbeck has had a busy night!"

Davie thought no more of his five scores of ewes, nor of his prayer, nor the miracle that was to take place in consequence of that, but turned and ran back to Riskinhope as fast as his feet would carry him, to arouse the rest of the people, and apprise them of this wonderful event that had occurred beneath their noses, as he called it. He did so, and all of them rose with wonder and astonishment, and agreed to go across the lake and look at the Brownie's workmanship. Away they went in a body to the edge of the stubble, but durst not set foot thereon for fear of being affected by enchantment in some way or another, but they saw that the corn had been shorn exactly like other corn, except that it was rather more neat and clean than ordinary. The sheaves were bound in the same way as other bandsters bind them, and in the shocking, the corn-knots were all set outermost. "Weel, is not he a most unaccountable fellow that Brownie of Bodsbeck?" said Davie Tait.

While they were thus standing in a row at the side of the shorn field, wondering at the prowess and agility of Brownie, and trying to make some random calculations of the thousands of cuts that he had made with his hook that night, Katharine went by at a little distance, driving her father's cows afield, and at the same time directing her father's dog far up the hill to turn the ewes from the Quave Brae. She was dressed in her usual neat morning habit, with a white short-gown, green petticoat, and her dark locks bound up with a scarlet snood; she was scolding and cajoling the dog in a blithsome and good-humoured way, and scarcely bestowing a look on the workmanship of her redoubted Brownie, or seeming to regard it.

"Ay, ye may speel the brae, Keatie Laidlaw," said Davie Tait, apostrophizing her, but shaking his head all the while, and speaking in a low voice, that his fellow-servants only might hear; "Ay, ye may speel the brae, Keatie Laidlaw, an' drive your ewes an' your kye where ye like, but wae's me for ye! Ye hae a weel-faurd face o' your ain, an' a mak that's liker to an angel than a thing o' flesh and blude; but och! what a foul heart ye boud to hae

within! and how are ye to stand the aftercome? There will be a black reckoning with you some day. I wadna that my fit war i' your shoe the night for a' the ewes on the Lang Bank."

Old Nanny went over as usual, and assisted her to milk the cows, and make the butter and cheese, but spoke no word that day to her young mistress, good or bad. She regarded her with a kind of awe, and often took a long stolen look of her as one does of a dog that he is afraid may be going mad.

As the people of Riskinhope went home, Dan chanced to say jocularly, "He's a clever fellow the Brownie; I wish he would come and shear our croft too."

"Foul fa' the tongue that said it," quoth Davie, "an the heart that thought the ill! Ye think na how easily he's forespoken. It was but last night I said he hadna wrought to the gudeman for half his meat, an' ye see what he has done already. I spake o' him again, and he came in bodily. Ye should take care what ye say here, for ye little ken wha's hearing. Ye're i' the very same predicament, billy Dan, as the tod was in the orchard. 'Afore I war at this speed,' quo' he, 'I wad rather hae my tail cuttit off:' he hadna the word weel said before he stepped into a trap, which struck, and snapt off his tail. 'It's a queer place this,' quo' he, 'ane canna speak a word but it is taen in nettle-earnest.' I' the same way is Brownie likely to guide you, an' therefore, to prevent him taking you at your word, we'll e'en gang an' begin the shearing oursels."

Davie went in to seek out the hooks; he knew there were half-a-dozen lying above the bed in the room where the spirit had been the night before. They were gone! not a sickle was there! Davie returned, scratching his head, biting his lip, and looking steadily down to the ground. "It hasna been Kirky's ghost after a," said he, "it has been Brownie, or some o' his gang, borrowing our hooks."

Davie lost all hope of working any great change in the country by dint of prayer. His faith, which never was great, gave way. About eight days after that, when the moon was in the wane, the rest of Walter's corn was all cut down in one night, and a part of the first safely stowed in the barn-yard. About the same time, too, the shepherds began to smear their flocks at a small sheep-house and fold, built for the purpose near to the forkings of the Chapelhope burn. It is a custom with them to mix as much tar with grease before they begin as they deem sufficient to smear all the sheep on the farm, or at least one hirsell of them. This the herds of Chapelhope did, but, on the very second morning after they began, they perceived that a good deal of their tar was wanting, and judging that it had been stolen, they raised a terrible affray about it with their neighbours of Riskinhope and Corse-cleuch. Finding no marks of it, old John Hoy said, "We must give it up, callants, for lost; there is nae doubt but some o' the fishers about Dryhope has stown it for fish-lights. There are a set of the terriblest poachers live there that's in all the Forest."

In the afternoon John went out to the Ox-cleugh head to bring in a houseful of white sheep, and to his utter astonishment saw that upwards of an hundred ewes had been smeared during the night, by the officious and unwearied Brownie of Bodsbeck. "The plague be in his fingers," quoth old John to himself, "gin he haena smeared crocks an' fat sheep, an' a' that has come in his way. This will never do."

Though the very hairs of John's head stood, on coming near to the sheep that had been smeared by Brownie, yet seeing that his sensible dog Keilder was nothing afraid of them, but managed them in the same way as he did other sheep, John grew by degrees less suspicious of them. He confessed, however, as he was shedding them from the white ones, that there was a ewe of Brownie's smearing came running by very near him, and he could not help giving a great jump out of her way.

All shepherds are accused of indolence, and not, perhaps, without some reason. Though John dreaded as death all connection with Brownie, yet he rejoiced at the progress they were likely to make in the smearing, for it is a dirty and laborious business, and he was glad by any means to get a share of it off his hands, especially as the season was so far advanced. So John took into the fold twice as many sheep as they needed for their own smearing, put the crocks and the fat sheep out from among them, and left them in the house to their fate, taking good care to be out of sight of the place before dark. Next morning a certain quantity of tar was again gone, and the sheep were all neatly smeared and keeled, and set to the hill. This practice the shepherds continued throughout smearing time, and whether they housed many or few at night, they were still all smeared and set to the hill again next morning. The smearing of Chapelhope was finished in less than one-third of its wonted time. Never was the labour of a farm accomplished with such expedition and exactness, although there were none to work, to superintend, or direct it, but one simple maiden. It became the wonder and theme of the whole country, and has continued to be a standing winter evening tale to this day. Where is the cottager, dwelling between the Lowthers and Cheviot, who has not heard tell of the feats of the Brownie of Bodsbeck?

CHAPTER XIV.

Walter was hardly used in prison for some time, but at last Drummelzier found means of rendering his situation more tolerable. Several of his associates that were conducted with him from Dumfries died in jail; he said they seemed to have been

forgotten both by the council and their friends, but they kept up so good a heart, and died with such apparent satisfaction, that he could scarcely be sorry for their release by death, though he acknowledged, that a happiness beyond the grave was always the last kind of happiness that he wished to his friends. His own trial was a fireside theme for him as long as he lived; but he confounded names, and law terms, and all so much through other, that, were it given wholly in his own words, it would be unintelligible. It took place on the 12th of November, and Sir George Lockhart and Mr. Alexander Hay were his counsel. His indictment bore, that he had sheltered on his farm a set of the most notorious and irreclaimable rebels in the whole realm; that sundry of his majesty's right honest liege subjects had been cruelly murdered there, very near to the prisoner's house, and a worthy curate in the immediate vicinity. It stated the immense quantity of victuals found in his house, and the numbers of fugitive Whigs that were seen skulking in the boundaries of his farm; and also how some false delinquents were taken and executed there.

Clavers was present, as he had a right to be when he desired it, and gave strong and decided evidence against him. The time had been, and not long agone, when, if the latter had manifested such sentiments against any one, it had been sufficient for his death-warrant; but the killing time was now nearly over, and those in power were only instituting trials in order to impose heavy fines and penalties, that they might glean as much of the latter vintage of that rich harvest as possible, before the sickle was finally reft from their grasp. Several witnesses were examined to prove the above accusations, and among the rest, Daniel Roy Macpherson, whose deposition was fair, manly, and candid. As soon as his examination was over, he came and placed himself near to Walter, who rejoiced to see him, and deemed that he saw in him the face of a friend.

Witnesses were next called to prove his striking Captain Bruce with his fist, and also tripping the heels from Ingles, and tossing him over a steep, while in the discharge of his duty, whereby he was rendered unable to proceed in the king's business. Walter being himself examined on these points, confessed both, but tried to exculpate himself as well as he could.

"As to Bruce, my masters," said he, "I didna ken that he was a captain, or what he was; he pu'd up his bit shabble of a sword an' dang aff my bonnet, when I was a free man i' my ain ben-end. I likit nae sic freedoms, as I had never been used wi' them, sae I took up my neive an' gie him a yank on the haffet till I gart his bit brass cap rattle against the wa'. I wonder ye dinna ceete me too for nippin' Jock Graham's neck there, as he ca'd himsel that day, an' his friend Tam Liviston. There's nae word o' that the day! Nah! but I could tell an I likit what I hae been put to a' this plague for."

Here the advocate stopped him, by observing that he was wandering from the point in question, and his own counsel were always trembling for him when he began to speak for himself. Being asked what defence he had to offer for kicking and maltreating a king's officer in the discharge of his duty?

"If it was that drunken dirt Ingles that ye mean," said Walter, "I dinna ken what ye ca' a man's duty here, but it surely coudna be a duty, when my hands were tied ahint my back, to kick me i' the wame, an' that's what he was doing wi' a' his pith, whan I gart him flee heels-ower-head like a batch o' skins."

Sir George Mackenzie and Dalrymple of Stair both laughed outright at this answer, and it was some time before the business could proceed. Sir George Lockhart, however, compelled them to relinquish these parts of the indictment, on account of the treatment offered to the prisoner, and the trial proceeded on the charges previously mentioned, which were found relevant. Walter was utterly confounded at the defence made for him by Sir George Lockhart. He was wont to say, "Aih, but he's a terrible clever body yon Geordie Lockie; od, he kend mair about me, and mair that was in my favour, than I did mysel."

The conclusion of this trial must be given in Walter's own phrase. "I pretendit to be very crouse, an' no ae bit fear'd—aha! I was unco fear'd for a' that—I coudna swally my spittle for the hale day, an' I fand a kind o' foost, foost, foostin about my briskit that I coudna win aneath ava. But when the chield Mackenzie began to clink thegither the evidence against me, gude faith I thought it was a' ower wi' me then; I saw nae outgate, an' lost a' hope; mair than aince I tried to think o' auld Maron Linton an' the bairns, but I could think about nae-thing, for I thought the house was heaving up i' the tae side, and gaun to whommel a' the judges an' jurymen on the tap o' me. He revertit aye to the evidence of Clerk the curate, wha had said that I had a private correspondence wi' the Whigs, an' then he brought a' the ither proof to bear upon that, till he made my guilt perfectly plain; an' faith I coudna say that the chiel guessed far wrang. Then my Lord Moray, wha was head judge that day, was just gaun to address the jurymen, an direct them to hang me, when up gat Geordie Lockie again for the hindmost time; (he had as mony links an' wimples in his tail as an eel, that body), an' he argyed some point o' law that gart them a' glowr; at last he said, that it was hard, on a point of life an' death, to take the report of a man that wasna present to make oath to the information he had gi'en, which might be a slander to gain some selfish end; and he prayed, for the satisfaction of the jury, that his client might be examined on that point (he ca'd me aye *a client*, a name that I abhorred, for I didna ken the meaning o't, but I trowed it meant nae good), for, says he, he has answered very freely, and much to the point, a' that ye hae speered at him. I was just considering what I should say, but I could get

nought to say ava, when I was startit wi' a loud Hem! just amaist at my elbow. I naturally liftit up my een, very stupit like, I dare say, to see what it was; and wha was it but the queer Highland chap, Roy Macpherson, makin' sic faces to me as ye never saw. I thought he was wanting to mak me recollect something, but what it was I coudna tell. I was dumfoundered sae, that when the judge put the question to me about Clerk I never answered a word, for I was forefoughten wi' another thought. At length I mindit the daft advice that honest Macpherson gae me at parting with me in Dumfries, which was sic a ridiculous advice I had never thought o't mair. But now, thinks I to mysel, things canna be muckle waur wi' me; the scrow's come fairly to the neb o' the miresnipe now; an' never had I better reason to be angry than at the base curate whom I had fed an' clad sae aften. Sae I musters a' my wrath up into my face, and when the judge, or the advocate, put the question again, I never heedit what it was, but set up my birses an spak to them as they had been my herd callants. What the deil are ye a' after? quoth I. Curse the hale pack o' ye, do you think that auld Wat Laidlaw's a Whig, or wad do aught against his king, or the laws o' his country? They ken little about him that say sae! I ainee fought twa o' the best o' them armed wi' swords, an' wi' nought but my staff I laid them baith flat at my feet; an' had I ony twa o' ye on Chapelhope-flow thegither, if ye dared to say that I was a Whig, or a traitor to my king, I wad let ye find strength o' arm for ainee. Here the wily chap Geordie Lockie stappit me in great agitation, and beggit me to keep my temper, and answer his lordship to the point, what defence I had to make against the information given by Clerk the curate? He, the wretch! said I: he kens the contrair o' that ower weel; but he kend he wad be master an' mair when he gat me away frae about the town. He wantit to wheedle my wife out o' ilk thing she had, an' to kiss my daughter too, if he could. Vile brock! gin I war hame at him I'll dad his head to the wa'; ay, an' ony twa o' ye forby, quo' I, raising my voice, an' shaking that neive at them—ony twa o' ye that dare set up your faces an' say that I'm a Whig or a rebel!

"The hale court was thunnerstruck, an' glowred at ane anither like wullcats. I gae a sklent wi' my ee to Daniel Roy Macpherson, an' he was leaned ower the back o' the seat, an' fa'n into a kink o' laughing. The hale crowd ahint us got up wi' a great hurrah! an' clappit their hands, an' I thought the fock war a' gaen mad thegither. As soon as there was a wee quiet, my lord the Earl o' Moray, he speaks across to Clavers, an' he says: 'This winna do, my lord; that carl's nae Whig, nor naething akin to them. Gin that be nae a sound worthy man, I never saw ane, nor heard ane speak.' An' wi' that the croud shoutit an' clappit their hands again. I sat hinging my head then, an' looking very blate, but I was unco massy for a' that. They then spak amang themsels for five or sax minents, and they cried on my master Drummelzier, an' he gaed up an' crackit wi' them too; an' at last the judge tauld me, that the prosecution against me was drappit for the present, an' that gin I could raise security for twa thousand merks, to appear again if cited before the first of June, 1686, I was at liberty to go about my business. I thankit his lordship; but thinks I to mysel, ye're a wheen queer chaps! Ye shoot fock for praying an' reading the Bible, an whan ane curses an' damns ye, ye ca' him a true honest man! I wish ye be nae the deil's bairns, the halewort o' ye! Drummelzier an' Lockie cam' security for me at ainee, an' away I sets for hame, as weel satisfied as ever I was a' my life, that I mind o'.

"Weel, when I came out to the close at the back o' the prison, a' the fock croudit about me; an' *he* shook hands wi' me; an' the young chaps they hurra'd an' waved their caps, an' cried out, Ettrick Forest for ever! Auld Braid-Bonnet for ever—hurra! An' I cam up the Lawn-Market, an' down the Bow, wi' sic an army at my tail, as I had been gaun away to fight Boddel-Brigg ower again.

"I now begoud to think it wad be as weel to gie the lads the slip, for my army was gathering like a snaw-ba', an' I little wist how sic a hobbleshue might end; sae I jinkit into Geordie Allan's at the West-Port, where I had often been afore, when selling my eild ewes and chasers; an' I whispered to them to keep out my sodgers, for there were too many of them for the house to haud; but they not perfectly understanding my jest, I was not well entered ere I heard a loud altercation at the head o' the stair, an' the very first aith that I heard I knew it to be Macpherson."

"Hoo-hooh! put she shall pe coing in: were not she her friend and counshel?"

"You his counsel? A sergeant of dragoons his counsel? That winna do. He charged that nae sodgers should get in. Get aff wi' your Hieland impudence—brazen-faced thief!"

"Fat? Tief? M'Leadle!—Trocho!—Hollo! Cresorst!"

"I ran to the door to take the enraged veteran in my arms, and welcome him as my best friend and adviser, but they had bolted the inner door in his face, through which he had run his sword amaist to the hilt, an' he was tugging an' pu'ing at it to get it out again, swearing a' the time like a true dragoon. I led him into my room, an' steekit the door o't, but there he stood wi' his feet asperr, and his drawn sword at arm's length ahint his back, in act to make a lounge at the door, till he had exhausted a' his aiths, baith in Gaelic an' English, at the fock o' the house, and then he sheathed his sword, and there was nae mair about it.

"I speered what I could do to oblige him?"

"Hu, not creat moach at hall, man; only pe

kiffing me your hand. Py McTavish More, put if you tit not stonish tem! Vas not I peen telling you tat him's hearty curse pe te cood?"

"My certy," quo' I, "but ye did do that, or I wad never hae thought o't; ye're an auld-farrant honest chiel! I am sorry that I canna just now make ye sic a present as ye deserve; but ye maun come out an' see me."

"Present! Poo, poo, poo! Teol more take te present tat pe coing petween friends, and she may have sharper works tan pe coing visits; put not te more, she pe haifing small favour to seek."

"Od, man," says I, "ye hae been the mean o' preserving my life, an' ye sanna ax a thing that I'll refuse, e'en to my ain doughter. An' by the by, sergeant, gin ye want a good wife, an' a bonny ane, I'll gie ye sic a tocher wi' my Keatie, as never was gi'en wi' a farmer's lassie i' the Forest."

"Hu! Cot pe plessing you! She haif cot wife, and fery hexcellent boddach, with two childs after him."

"What is it then, sergeant? Gin the thing be in my power, ye hae naething ado but to say the word."

"Do you know tat her nainsell pe coosin to yourself?"

"Od, man," quo' I, "that's hardly possible, or else the taen o' us has come o' the wrang side o' the blanket."

"Now do you just pe holding your paice for a fery less time, for you must halways pe spaik spaiking, without knowing fat to say, unless I were putting it into your haid. I haif tould ould Simon Glas Macrhimmon, who knows all the pedigrees from the creation of the world, and he says that te Lheadles are Macphersons; for, in the days of Rory More of Ballindalloch and Invereshie, tere was te Gordons, who would pe making grheat prhogress on te Sassenach, and tere went down wit Strabogie of te clan Ahnderson, and te clan Grhaham, and one Letulloch Macpherson of Strathneshalloch, vit as bould a clan after her as any and mhore; and they would pe toing creat might upon the Sassenach, and they would pe killing her in tousands, and ten she cot crheat lhands out of King Robert on te Bhorder, and Letulloch he had a whoule country to himself. But te people could not be putting her nhame into worts, and instead of Letulloch tey called her *Leadlea*, and te Sassenach she called her *Little*, so that all tese are of Macpherson, and you may pe te chief, and te forward son of te crheat Strathneshalloch himself. Now tat I would pe te tog, and te shame, and te tisgrhace, not to help my owhn poor clansman and prhother out of te evil, tat would pe worse eneuch; and te ting tat I would pe asking of you is tis, tat you will always look upon a Macpherson as a prhother until te end of te world, and pe standing py her as long as tere is peing one trop of plood in your whole poty."

"Gude faith, sergeant," says I, "I never was sae happy as to find, that the man to whom I hae been sae muckle obliged is sic a noble disinterested chiel; an' there's my hand, I'll never gie up the cause of a Macpherson, if he's in the right."

"Hu! Never mind your *right!* a clansman speak of the right! Any man will stand py me when I am in te right, put wit a prhother I must always pe in te right. No right or wrong tere! Poo, poo!"

"Od, man," quo' I, "that's a stretch o' billyhood that I was never up to afore, but sin' ye say't, may I never see the Hermon Law again gif I winna stand by it. Come, then, we'll hae a stoup o' brandy, or a bottle o' wine thegither, for a parting cup."

"Hu!—no, no! None of your prandies or your wines for me! I must pe on duty in less than an hour, and I would not pe tasting any of your prandies or wines. No, no! Cot pless you! And should she never pe seeing your face again, you will pe———"

"He could say nae mair, for the muckle round tears were coming hopping down ower his weather-beaten cheek, but he gae my hand a hard squeeze an' a shake, an' brak out at the door; an' that was my last sight of honest Daniel Roy Macpherson, a man that I hae met few like! I was tanld lang after, that he fell fighting like a lion against the Campbells, at the battle o' Killiecranky, and that, to the last day o' his life, he spake o' his kinsman, ould MacLeadle."

CHAPTER XV.

It was on the inauspicious night of All-Hallow-eve that Walter arrived again at his own house, after so long an absence; but some of the farmers of Manor Water, his acquaintances, were so overjoyed at seeing him again, that they persuaded him to go in, taste of their cheer, and relate his adventures and his trial to them, and so long was he detained in this way, that it was dark before he left Dollar Burn; yet so anxious was he to get home to his family, and all unconscious that it was Hallow-e'en, the great jubilee of the fairies and all the spirits of these mountain regions, he set out on his journey homeward, across the dreary moors of Meggat Dale. Walter found his way full well, for he knew every brae, height, and declivity by the way; and many delightful little dreams was he cherishing in his heart, how he would surprise Maron and the bairns by his arrival, and how extravagantly delighted his excellent and generous dog Reaver would be, for he often said, "he had mair sense about him than what was a beast's good right;" but, above all, his mind dwelt most on his dear lassie Kate, as he called her. He had been informed by Drummelzier of all that she had done for him, who gave her a character so high before some friends of his who were present, that Walter never was so proud

in his life, and he longed, with all a father's fondness, to clasp "his bit dear kind-heartit lassie" again in his arms.

With all these delightful and exhilarating thoughts glowing in his breast, how could that wild and darksome road, or indeed any road, be tedious to our honest goodman? For, as to the evil spirits with whom his beloved Keatie was in conjunction, the idea had died away like a thing of the imagination, and he barely spent a thought upon it. He crossed the Meggat about eleven o'clock in the night, just as the waning moon began to peep over the hills to the south-east of the lake, but such scenes and such adventures are not worth a farthing, unless described and related in the language of the country to which they are peculiar.

"I fand I was come again into the country o' the fairies an' the spirits," said Walter, "an' there was nae denying o't, for when I saw the bit crookit moon come stealing o'er the kipps o' Bowerhope Law, an' thraw her dead yellow light on the hills o' Meggat, I fand the very nature an' the heart within me changed. A' the hills on the tae side o' the loch war as dark as pitch, an' the tither side had that ill-hued colour on't, as if they had been a' rowed in their winding sheets; an' then the shadow o' the moon it gaed bobbing an' quivering up the loch fornent me, like a streek o' cauld fire. In spite o' my teeth I turned eiry, an' the mair I feucht against it, I grew the eiryer, for whenever the spirits come near ane, that kind o' feeling comes on.

"Weel, just as I was gaun round the end o' the Wedder Law, a wee bit aboon the head o' the Braken Wood, I sees a white thing on the road afore me. At the first it appeared to be gaun away, but at length I saw it coming nearer an' nearer me, keeping aye a little aboon the road till I came amaist close to it, an' then it stood stane-still an' glowred at me. What in the wide world can it be that is here at sic an untimely time o' night as this? thinks I to mysel. However, I steps aye on, an' wasna gaun to mak nor meddle wi't ava, till at last, just as I was gaun by, it says in a soft low voice, "Wow, friend, but ye gang late the night!"

"'Faith, no muckle later than yoursel,' quo' I, 'gin it be your will.'

"'O'er late on sic a night!' quoth the creature again, 'o'er late on Hallow-e'en, an' that ye will find.'

"It elyed away o'er the brow, an' I saw nae mair o't. 'Lord sauf us!' quo' I to mysel, 'is this Hallow-e'en? I wish I war safe at hame, or in amang Christian creatures o' ony kind! Or had I but my fine dog Reaver wi' me, to let me ken when the fairies are coming near me. Goodness to the day! I may be amang the mids o' them ere ever I ken what I'm doing.' A' the stories that ever I heard about fairies in my life came linkin into my mind ane after anither, and I almaist thought I was already on my road to the Fairy Land, an' to be paid away to hell, like a kane-cock, at the end o' seven years. I likit the boding o' the apparition I had met wi' unco ill, but yet I had some hopes that I was o'er muckle, an' o'er heavy metal for the fairies. Hout, thinks I, what need I be sae feared? They'll never take away ane o' my size to be a fairy—od, I wad be the daftest like fairy ever was seen.

"I had naething for't but to stride on as fast as I could, an' on I comes till I comes to the bit brae at the side o' the Ox-cleuch Lea, an' there I heard something fistlin among the brakens, an' making a kind o' wheenge, wheenge, wheenging, that gart a' my heart loup to my mouth, an' what was this but my poor dog Reaver, coming creeping on his wame, an' sae fain to meet me again that he hardly kent what he was doing. I took him up in my arms, an' clappit him, an' said a' the kind things to him that I could, an' oh sic a wark an' fidgetting as he made! But yet I couldna help thinking there was a kind o' doufness and melancholy in his looks. What ails ye, Reaver man? quo' I. I wish a' may be weel about Chapelhope the night, but ye canna tell me that, poor fallow, or else ye wad. He sometimes lickit my stocking wi' his tongue, an' sometimes my hand, but he wadna gang away afore me as he used to do, cocking his tail sae massy like, an' I feared sair that a' wasna right about hame, an' can hardly tell onybody how I felt—fock's ain are aye their ain!

"At length I cam' amaist close to the bit brow o' the Lang Bank that brought me in sight o' my ain house, but when I lookit ower my shoulder Reaver was fled. I grew fearder than ever, an' wistna what to think, an' wi' that I sees a queer like shapen thing standing straight on the road afore me. Now, thinks I, this is the Brownie o' Bodsbeck; I wadna face him for a' the warld—I maun try to gie him the slip. Sae I slides aff the road, an' down a bit howe into the side o' the loch, thinking I wad get up within the brae out o' sight o' him. But, aha! there was he standing straight afore me on the shore. I clamb the brae again, an sae did he. Now, thinks I, his plan is first to pit me out o' my reason, an' then wear me into the loch and drown me—I'll keep an open side wi' him. Sae up the hill I scrambles wi' a' my speed, an' doun again, and up again, five or six times, but still he keepit straight afore me. By this time I was come by degrees very near him, an' waxed quite desperate, an' desperation made me crouse. 'In the name o' God,' cries I, 'what are ye that winna let me by to my ain house?'

"'Did you see a woman on your way?' said the creature in a deep solemn voice.

"'Yes, I did,' answered I.

"'Did she tell you anything?' said the apparition again.

"'No,' said I.

"'Then I must,' said the creature. 'You go no nearer to your own house to night.'

"'Say you sae!' said I, 'but I'll gang to my ain

house the night, though nae like you stood atween me an' it.'

"'I charge you,' said the thing again, 'that you go not nearer to it. For your own sake, and the sakes of those that are dearest to you, go back the gate you came, and *go not* to that house.'

"'An' pray, wha may you be that's sae peremptory?' said I.

"'A stranger here, but a friend to you, Laidlaw. Here you do not pass to-night.'

"I never could bide to be braved a' my life. 'Say you sae, friend?' quo' I, 'then let me tell ye, stand out o' my way, or, be ye brownie or fairy—be ye ghaist, or be ye deil, in the might o' Heaven, I sall gie ye strength o' arm for aince; an' here's a cudgel that never fell in vain.'

"So saying, I took my stick by the sma' end wi' baith my hands, an' heaving it ower my shoulder I cam' straight on to the apparition, for I hardly kend what I was doing, an' my faith it had gotten a paik! but it had mair sense than to risk it, for when it saw that I was dementit, it e'en steppit quietly aff the road, and said, wi' a deep grane, 'Ye're a wilfu' man, Laidlaw, an' your wilfu'ness may be your undoing. Pass on your ways, and Heaven protect your senses.'

"I dredd sair I was doing wrang, but there was something in my nature that wadna be contrair'd; sae by I went, an' lookit full at the thing as I past. It had nouther face nor hands, nor head nor feet, but there was it standing like a lang corn sack. Weel! if I kend whether I was gaun on my feet or the crown o' my head!

"The first window that I came to was my ain, the ane o' that room where Maron and I slept. I rappit at it wi' a rap that wont to be weel kend, but it was barred, an' a' was darkness and vacancy within. I tried every door and window alang the foreside o' the house, but a' wi' the same effect. I rappit an' ca'd at them a', an' named every name that was in the house when I left it, but there was nouther voice, nor light, nor sound. 'Lord, have a care o' me!' said I to mysel, 'what's come o' a' my fock? Can Clavers hae been here in my absence an' taen them a' away? or has the Brownie o' Bodsbeck eaten them up, stoop an' roop? For a' that I hae wearied to see them, here I find my house left unto me desolate. This is a waesome welcome hame to a father, an' a husband, an' a master! O what will come o' puir auld Wat now?'

"The Auld Room was a place I never thought o' ganging to; but no kenning what to mak o' mysel, round the west end o' the house I gaes towards the door o' the Auld Room. I soon saw through the seam atween the shutters that there was a light in it, an' kenning weel that there was a broken lozen, I edged back the shutter naturally to see what was gaun on within. May never a father's e'e again see sic a sight as mine saw! There was my dear, my only daughter Katharine, sitting on the bed wi' a dead corpse on her knee, and her hands round its throat; and there was the Brownie o' Bodsbeck, the ill-faured, runkled, withered thing, wi' its eildron form and gray beard, standin at the bed side hauding the pale corpse by the hand. It had its tither hand liftit up, and was mutter, muttering some horrid spell, while a crew o' the same kind o' grizzly bearded phantoms were standing round them. I had nae doubt but there had been a murder committit, and that a dissection was neist to take place, and I was sae shockit that I was just gaun to roar out. I tried it twice, but I had tint my voice, and could do naething but gape.

"I now fand there was a kind o' swarf coming o'er me, for it came up, up, about my heart, an' up, up, o'er my temples, till it darkened my een, an' I fand that if it met on the crown o' my head I was gane. Sae I thought it good, as lang as that wee master bit was sound, to make my escape, an' aff I ran, an' fell, an' fell, an' rase an' ran again. As Riskinhope was the nearest house, I fled for that, where I wakened Davie Tait out o' his bed in an unco plight. When he saw that I was a' bedaubit wi' mire o'er head an' ears (for I had faun a hunder times), it was impossible to tell wha o' us was maist frightit.

"'Lord sauf us, goodman,' quo' he, 'are ye hangit?'

"'Am I hangit, ye blockhead!' says I, 'what do ye mean?'

"'I m-m-mean,' says Davie, 'w-w-war ye ek-ek-execute?'

"'Dinna be feard for an auld acquaintance, Davie,' quo' I, 'though he comes to you in this guise.'

"'Guise!' said Davie, staring, and gasping for breath, 'Gui-gui-guise! Then it se-e-e-eems ye *are* dead?'

"'Gin I were dead, ye fool,' quo' I, 'how could I be here? Give me your hand.'

"'Uh-uh-uh-uuuh!' cried Davie, as I wore him up to the nook, and took haud o' his hand by force. 'Uh, goodman, ye are flesh and blude yet! But O ye're cauld an' ugsome!'

"'Davie,' quo' I, 'bring me a drink, for I hae seen something o'er-bye, an' I'm hardly just mysel.'

"Davie ran and brought me a hale bowie-fu' o'milk. 'Tak a gude waught, goodman,' quo' he, 'an' dinna be discouraged. Ye maun lay your account to see and hear baith, sic things as ye never saw or heard afore, gin ye be gaun to bide here. Ye needna wonder that I thought ye war dead—the dead are as rife here now as the living; they gang amang us, work amang us, an' speak to us; an' them that we ken to be half-rotten i' their graves, come an' visit our firesides at the howe o' the night. There hae been sad doings here sin ye gaed away, goodman!'

"'Sad doings, I fear, indeed, Davie!' says I. 'Can ye tell me what's become o' a' my family?'

"'Troth, can I, goodman. Your family are a' weel, Keatie's at hame her lievahlane, an' carrying

on a' the wark o' the farm as weel as there war a hunder wi' her. Your twa sons an' auld Nanny bide here, an' the honest gudewife hersel, she's away to Gilmanscleuch. But oh, gudeman, there are sad things gaun on o'er-by yonder, an' mony a ane thinks it will hae a black an' a dreadfu' end. Sit down an' thraw aff your dirty claes, an' tell us what ye hae seen the night?'

"'Na, na, Davie! unless I get some explanation, the thing that I hae seen the night maun be lockit up in this breast, an' be carried to the grave wi' it. But, Davie, I'm unco ill, the cauld sweat is brekking on me frae head to foot. I'm feared I gang away athegither.'

"'Wow, gudeman, what can be done?' quo' Davie. 'Think ye we sudna tak the beuk?'

"I was sae faintish I couldna arguy wi' the fool, an' ere ever I wist he has my bonnet whuppit aff, and is booling at a sawm, and when that was done, to the prayin' he fa's, an' sic nonsense I never heard prayed a' my life. I'll be a rogue gin he wasna speakin' to his Maker as he had been his neighbour herd; an' then he was baith fleetching an' fighting wi' him. However, I came something to mysel again, an' Davie he thought proper to ascribe it a' to his bit ragabash prayer."

Walter spent a restless and a troubled morning till daylight, and Davie said, that wearied as he was, he believed he never closed his een, for he heard him frequently turning in the bed, and moaning to himself, and he heard him once saying, with deep sighs as if weeping, "O my poor Keatie Laidlaw! what is to become o' her! My poor lost, misled lassie! Wae's my heart for her! I fear she is ruined for this world, an' for the aftercome; I dare hardly venture to think about it! O wae's me for my poor luckless bairn!"

CHAPTER XVI.

Next morning Walter and his two sons, and old Nanny, went all over to Chapelhope together, just as the cows came to the lone; and the farmer was sundry times remarking by the way that "daylight had mony een!" The truth was, that the phantoms of superstition had in a measure fled with the shadows of the night, which they seldom fail to do. They, indeed, remain in the bosom, hid, as it were, in embryo, ready to be embodied again at the fall of the long shadow in the moonlight, or the evening tale round the fading embers; but Walter at this time, perhaps, regarded the visions of last night as dreams scarcely remembered, and less believed, and things which in the open day he would have been ashamed to have acknowledged.

Katharine had begun a milking, but when she beheld her father coming across the meadow, she left her leglen and ran home. Perhaps it was to put his little parlour in order, for no one of the family had set foot within that house but herself for three weeks, or perhaps she did not choose that their meeting should be witnessed by other eyes. In short, she had something of importance to put to rights: for home she ran with great haste; and Walter, putting his sons to some work to detain them, followed her all alone. He stepped into the parlour, but no one being there, he sat down on his elbow chair, and began to look about him. In a few seconds his daughter entered, flung herself on her father's knee and bosom, clasped her arms about his neck, kissed him, and shed a flood of tears on his breast. At first he felt somewhat startled at her embrace, and his arms made a feeble and involuntary effort to press her away from him; but she grew to him the closer, and welcomed him home with such a burst of filial affection and tenderness, that nature in a short time regained her empire over the father's heart; and there was to be seen old Walter with his large hands pressing her slender waist, keeping her at a little distance from him on his knee, and looking steadfastly in her face, with the large tear rolling in his eye. It was such a look as one sometimes takes of the corpse of one that was dearly beloved in life. Well did she read this look, for she had the eye of the eagle for discernment; but she hid her face again on his shoulder, and endeavoured, by familiar inquiries, to wean him insensibly from his reserve, and draw him into his wonted freedom of conversation with her.

"Ye ken o'er weel," said he at length, "how deep a haud ye hae o' this heart, Keatie. Ye're my ain bairn still, and ye hae done muckle for my life—but"—

"Muckle for your life!" said she, interrupting him, "I have been but too remiss. I have regretted every hour that I was not with you attending you in prison, administering to all my father's wants, and helping to make the time of bondage and suspense pass over more lightsomely, but grievous circumstances have prevented me. I have had sad doings here since you went away, my dear father; there is not a feeling that can rack the human heart has not been my share. But I will confess all my errors to my father, fall at his knees, and beg his forgiveness; ay, and I hope to receive it too."

"The sooner ye do sae the better then, Keatie," said he, "I was here last night, an' saw a sight that was enough to turn a father's heart to stane."

"*You were here last night!*" said she emphatically, while her eyes were fixed on the ground—"You were here last night! Oh! what shall become of me!"

"Ay, weel may ye say sae, poor lost and undone creature! I was here last night, though warned back by some o' your infernals, an' saw ye in the mids o' your dreadfu' game, wi' a' your bike o' hell round about ye. I watna what your confession and

explanation may do; but without these I hae sworn to myself, and I'll keep my aith, that you and I shall never night thegither again in the same house, nor the same part o' the country—ay, though it should bring down my gray hairs wi' sorrow to the grave, I'll keep that aith."

"I fear it will turn out a rash vow," said she, "and one that we may all repent to the last day that we have to live. There is danger and jeopardy in the business, and it is connected with the lives and souls of men; therefore, before we proceed farther in it, relate to me all the circumstances of your trial, and by what means you are liberated."

"I'll do that cheerfully," said Walter, "gin it war but to teach you compliance."

He then went over all the circumstances of his extraordinary trial, and the conditions on which he was discharged; and ended by requiring her positively to give him the promised explanation.

"So you are only then out on bail," said she, "and liable to be cited again on the same charges?"

"No more," was the reply.

"It is not then time yet for my disclosure," said she, "and no power on earth shall wring it from me; therefore, my dear father, let me beg of you to urge your request no farther, that I may not be under the painful necessity of refusing you again."

"I hae tauld ye my determination, Keatie," returned he; "an' ye ken I'm no very apt to alter. If I should bind ye in a cart wi' my ain hands, ye shall leave Chapelhope the night, unless ye can avert that by explaining your connections to me. An' why should ye no? Things can never appear waur to my mind than they are just now. If hell itself had been opened to my e'e, an I had seen you ane o' the inmates, I coudna hae been mair astoundit than I was yestreen. I'll send ye to Edinburgh, an' get ye safely put up there, for I canna brook things ony langer in this state. I winna hae my family scattered, an' made a byeword and an astonishment to the hale country this gate. Outher tell me the meaning o't, or lay your account to leave your father's house this day for ever."

"You do not know what you ask, father—the thing is impossible. Was ever a poor creature so hard bestead! Will not you allow me a few days to prepare for such a departure?"

"No ae day, nor ae hour either, Kate. Ye see this is a situation o' things that canna be tholed ony langer."

She sat down as if in deep meditation, but she neither sobbed nor wept. "You are only out on bail," said she, "and liable to be tried again on the same grounds of charge?"

"Ay, nae mair," said Walter; "but what need ye harp on that? I'm safe enough. I forgot to tell you that the judges were sae thoroughly convinced of my loyalty and *soundness* (as they ca'd it), that they wadna risk me to the vote of a jury; an' that the bit security they sought was naething but a mere sham to get honourably quit of me. I was likewise tauld by ane that kens unco weel, that the king has gotten ither tow to tease than persecuting Whigs ony langer, an' that there will soon be an order put out of a very different nature. There is never to be mair blood shed on account of the covenanted reformation in Scotland."

When Walter began his speech, his daughter lifted up her downcast eyes, and fixed them on his face with a look that manifested a kind of hopeless apathy; but as he advanced, their orbs enlarged, and beamed with a radiance as if she had been some superior intelligence. She did not breathe—or, if she did, it stole imperceptibly from between her parted ruby lips. "What did you say, my dear father?" said she.

"What did I say!" repeated Walter, astonished and nettled at the question. "What the deil was i' your lugs, that ye didna hear what I said? I'm sure I spake out. Ye are thinking o' something else, Kate."

"Be so good as repeat every word that you said over again," said she, "and tell me whence you drew your intelligence."

Walter did so; repeated it in still stronger and more energetic language than he had done before, mentioning at the same time how he had his information, which could not be doubted.

"It is enough, my dear father," said she. "Say not another word about it. I will lay open all my errors to my father this instant—come with me, and I will show you a sight!"

As she said this, she put her arm in her father's to lead him away; but Walter looked about him with a suspicious and startled eye, and drew somewhat back.

"You must go instantly," continued she, "there is no time so fit; and whatever you may see or hear, be not alarmed, but follow me, and do as I bid you."

"Nane o' your cantrips wi' me, Kate," said Walter. "I see your drift weel eneugh, but ye'll find yoursel disappointit. I hae lang expectit it wad come to this; but I'm determined against it."

"Determined against what, my dear father?"

"Ye want to mak a warlock o' me, ye imp o' mischief," said Walter; "but I hae taen up my resolution there, an' a' the temptations o' Satan sanna shake it. Nah! Gudefaith, auld Wat o' the Chapelhope's no gaun to be led away by the lug an' the horn to the deil that gate."

Katharine's mien had a tint of majesty in it, but it was naturally serious. She scarcely ever laughed, and but seldom smiled; but when she did so, the whole soul of delight beamed in it. Her face was like a dark summer day, when the clouds are high and majestic, and the lights on the valley mellowed into beauty. Her smile was like a fairy blink of the sun shed through these clouds, than which there is nothing in nature that I know of so enlivening and beautiful. It was irresistible; and such a

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smile beamed on her benign countenance, when she heard her father's wild suspicions expressed in such a blunt and ardent way; but it conquered them all —he went away with her rather abashed, and without uttering another word.

They walked arm in arm up by the side of the burn, and were soon out of sight of Nanny and the boys. Walter was busy all the way trying to form some conjecture what the girl meant, and what was to be the issue of this adventure, and began to suspect that his old friends, the Covenant men, were some way or other connected with it; that it was they, perhaps, who had the power of raising those spirits by which his dwelling had been so grievously haunted, for he had heard wonderful things of them. Still there was no co-indication of circumstances in any of the calculations that he was able to make, for his house had been haunted by Brownie and his tribe, long ere he fell in with the fugitive Covenanters. None of them had ever given him the least hint about the matter, or the smallest key to it, which he believed they would have done; nor had he ever mentioned a word of his connection with them to one of his family, or indeed to any one living. Few were the words that passed between the father and daughter in the course of that walk, but it was not of long duration.

They soon came to the precipitate linn on the South Grain, where the soldiers had been slain. Katharine being a little way before, began to scramble across the face of the rock by a path that was hardly perceptible. Walter called after her, "Where are ye gaun, Keatie? It's impossible to win yont there—there's no outgate for a mouse."

"We will try," answered she; "it is perhaps not so bad as it looks. Follow me—you have nothing to fear."

Walter followed; for however much he was affrighted for brownies, and fairies, and dead corpses, and all these awful kind of things, he was no coward among rocks and precipices. They soon reached a little dass in the middle of the linn, or what an Englishman would call a small landing-place. Here she paused till her father reached her, and pointed out to him the singularity of their situation, with the burn roaring far below their feet, and the rock fairly overhanging them above.

"Is it not a romantic and tremendous spot?" said she.

"It is that!" said Walter, "an' I believe you and I are the first that ever stood on it."

"Well, this is the end of our journey," said she; and, turning about, she began to pull at a bush of heath that grew between two rocks.

"What can she be gaun to do wi' the heather?" thought Walter to himself, when instantly a door opened, and showed a cavern that led into the hill. It was a door wattled with green heath, with the tops turned outward so exactly, that it was impossible for any one to know but that it was a bush of natural heath growing in the interstice. "Follow me, my dear father," said she, "you have still nothing to fear;" and so saying she entered swiftly in a stooping posture. Walter followed, but his huge size precluded the possibility of his walking otherwise than on all fours, and in that mode he fairly essayed to follow his mysterious child; but the path winded—his daughter was quite gone—and the door closed behind him, for it was so constructed as to close of itself, and as Walter expressed it—"There was he left, gaun boring into the hill like a moudiwort, in utter darkness." The consequence of all this was, that Walter's courage fairly gave way, and by an awkward retrograde motion, he made all the haste he was able back to the light. He stood on the shelve of the rock at the door for several minutes in confused consternation, saying to himself, "What in the wide world is com'd o' the wench? I believe she is gane away down into the pit bodily, an' thought to wile me after her; or into the heart of the hill, to some enchantit cave, amang her brownies, an' fairies, an' hobgoblins. Gudeness have a care o' me, gin ever I saw the like o' this!" Then losing all patience, he opened the door, set in his head, and bellowed out,—"Hollo, lassie! What's com'd o' ye? Keatie Laidlaw—Holle!" He soon heard footsteps approaching, and took shelter behind the door, with his back leaning to the rock, in case of any sudden surprise; but it was only his daughter, who chided him gently for his timidity and want of confidence in her, and asked how he could be frightened to go where a silly girl, his own child, led the way? adding, that if he desired the mystery that had so long involved her fate and behaviour to be cleared up, he behoved to enter and follow her, or to remain in the dark for ever. Thus admonished, Walter again screwed his courage to the sticking place, and entered in order to explore this mysterious cave, following close to his daughter, who led him all the way by the collar of the coat as he crept. The entrance was long and irregular, and in one place very narrow, the roof being supported here and there by logs of birch and alder. They came at length into the body of the cave, but it was so dimly lighted from above, the vent being purposely made among rough heath, which in part overhung and hid it from view without, that Walter was almost in the middle of it ere ever he was aware, and still creeping on his hands and knees. His daughter at last stopped short, on which he lifted his eyes, and saw indistinctly the boundaries of the cave, and a number of figures standing all around ready to receive him. The light, as I said, entered straight from above, and striking on the caps and bonnets which they wore on their heads, these shaded their faces, and they appeared to our amazed goodman so many blackamoors, with long shaggy beards and locks, and their garments as it were falling from their bodies piece-meal. On the one side, right over against him, stood a coffin, raised a

little on two stones; and on the other side, on a couch of rushes, lay two bodies that seemed already dead, or just in the last stage of existence; and, at the upper end, on a kind of wicker chair, sat another pale emaciated figure, with his feet and legs muffled up in flannel, a napkin about his head, and his body wrapped in an old duffel cloak that had once belonged to Walter himself. Walter's vitals were almost frozen up by the sight—he uttered a hollow exclamation, something like the beginning of a prayer, and attempted again to make his escape, but he mistook the entrance, and groped against the dark corner of the cavern. His daughter pulled him by the arm, entreating him to stay, and addressing the inmates of that horrid den, she desired them to speak to her father, and explain the circumstances of their case, for he was still bewildered, and the scene was too much for him to bear.

"That we will do joyfully," said one, in a strong intelligent voice.

Walter turned his eyes on the speaker, and who was it but the redoubted Brownie of Bodsbeck, so often mentioned before, in all his native deformity; while the thing in the form of a broad bonnet that he wore on his head, kept his features, gray locks and beard, wholly in the shade; and, as he approached Walter, he appeared a being without any definitive form or feature. The latter was now standing on his feet, with his back leaning against the rock that formed the one side of the cave, and breathing so loud, that every whiff sounded in the caverned arches like the rush of the winter wind whistling through the crevices of the casement.

Brownie approached him, followed by others.

"Be not alarmed, goodman," said the creature, in the same solemn and powerful voice; "you see none here but fellow-creatures and Christians—none who will not be happy to bestow on you their blessing, and welcome you as a father."

He stretched forth his hand to take hold of our goodman's. It was bent to his side as by a spasm, and at the same time a volley of breath came forth from his capacious chest with such a rush, that it was actually like the snort of a horse that is frightened in the dark. The Brownie, however, laid hold of it, stiff as it was, and gave it a squeeze and a hearty shake. "You are welcome, sir!" continued the shapeless mass, "to our dismal habitation. May the God of heaven particularly bless you in your *family*, and in all your other concerns!"

The naming of this name dispelled Walter's wild apprehensions like a charm, for though he was no devotee, yet his mind had a strong bias to the superstitions of the country in which he was bred; therefore this benediction, pronounced in such a tone of ardour and sublimity of feeling, had a powerful effect on his mind. But the circumstance that proved the most effective of all, was perhaps the sensible assurance gained by the shaking of hands, that Brownie was really and truly a corporeal being. Walter now held out his hand to all the rest as they came forward one by one, and shook hands heartily with them all, while every one of them blessed him in the name of their Maker or Redeemer. Walter was still involved in mystery, and all this while he had never uttered a word that any man could make meaning of; and after they had all shook hands with him, he looked at the coffin; then at the figures on the couch; then at the pale wretch on the wicker-seat, and then at the coffin again.

"Let us fully understand one another," said, Katharine. "Pray, Brown, be so good as detail the circumstances of this party as shortly as you can to my father, for, as is natural, he is still perplexed and bewildered."

"You see here, before you, sir," said the little hunchbacked figure, "a wretched remnant of that long persecuted, and now nearly annihilated sect, the covenanted reformers of the west of Scotland. We were expelled from our homes, and at last hunted from our native mountains like wolves, for none of our friends durst shelter any of us on their grounds, on pain of death. Even the rest of the persecuted disowned us, and became our adversaries, because our tenets were more stern and severe than theirs; for we acted on the principle of retaliation as far as it lay in our power, holding that to be in consistency with the laws of God and man; therefore were we expelled from their society, which indeed we disdained.

"We first came to Bodsbeck, where we got shelter for a few weeks. It was there that I was first supposed by the menials, who chanced to see me, to be a brownie, and that superstitious idea the tenant thought meet to improve for our safety, but on the approach of Lag's people he dismissed us. We then fled to Leithenhall, from whence in a few days we were again compelled to flee; and at last came to this wild, the only place in the south that soldiers had never searched, or could search with any degree of success. After much labour we completed this cave, throwing the stuff into the torrent below, so that the most minute investigator could not distinguish the smallest difference in the linn, or face of the precipice; and here we deemed we might live for years without being discovered; and here we determined to live, till God should see fit, in his own good time, to send some relief to his persecuted church in these lands.

"But alas, the worst evil of all awaited us! We subsisted for a considerable time by bringing victuals over night from a great distance, but even the means of obtaining these failed us; so that famine, and the dampness of the air here, we being compelled to lie inactive in the bowels of the earth for days and nights together, brought on us a malignant and pestilential fever. In three days from its first appearing, one half of our number were lying unable to move, or lift an eye. What could we do? The remnant could not flee, and leave their sick and

wounded brethren to perish here unseen. We were unable to carry them away with us, and if we had, we had no place to which we could have conveyed them. We durst not apply to you, for if you had taken pity on us, we knew it would cost you your life, and be the means of bereaving your family of all your well-earned wealth. In this great extremity, as a last resource, I watched an opportunity, and laid our deplorable case before that dear maid, your daughter. Forgive these tears, sir; you see every eye around fills at mention of her name. She has been our guardian angel. She has, under Almighty Providence, saved the lives of the whole party before you—has supplied us with food, cordials, and medicines: with beds, and with clothing, all from her own circumscribed resources. For us, she has braved every danger, and suffered every privation; the dereliction of her parents, and the obloquy of the whole country. That young man, whom you see sitting on the wicker chair there, is my only surviving son of five—he was past hope when she found him—fast posting to the last goal—her unwearied care and attentions have restored him; he is again in a state of convalescence. O may the eternal God reward her for what she has done to him and us!

"Only one out of all the distressed and hopeless party has perished, he whose body lies in that coffin. He was a brave, noble, and pious youth, and the son of a worthy gentleman. When our dear nurse and physician found your house deserted by all but herself, she took him home to a bed in that house, where she attended him for the last seven days of his life with more than filial care. He expired last night at midnight, amid our prayers and supplications to heaven in his behalf, while that dear saint supported his head in his dying moments, and shed the tear of affliction over his lifeless form. She made the grave-clothes from her own scanty stock of linen—tied her best lawn napkin round the head; and"—

Here Walter could contain himself no longer; he burst out a crying, and sobbed like a child.

"An' has my Keatie done a' this?" he said, in a loud broken voice—"Has my woman done a' this, an' yet me to suspect her, an' be harsh till her? I might hae kend her better!" continued he, taking her in his arms, and kissing her cheek again and again. "But she shall hae ten silk gowns, an' ten satin anes, for the bit linen she has bestowed on sic an occasion, an' a' that she has wared on ye I'll make up to her a hunder an' fifty fauld."

"O my dear father," said she, "you know not what I have suffered for fear of having offended you; for I could not forget that their principles, both civil and religious, were the opposite of yours—that they were on the adverse side to you and my mother, as well as the government of the country."

"Deil care what side they war on, Kate!" cried Walter, in the same vehement voice; "ye hae taen the side o' human nature; the suffering and the humble side, an' the side o' feeling, my woman, that bodes best in a young unexperienced thing to tak. It is better than to do like yon bits o' gillflirts about Edinburgh; poor shilly-shally milk-an'-water things! Gin ye but saw how they cock up their noses at a Whig, an' thraw their bits o' gabs; an' downa bide to look at aught, or hear tell o' aught, that isna i' the tap fashion. Ye hae done very right, my good lassie—od, I wadna gie ye for the hale o' them, an they war a' hung in a strap like ingans."

"Then, father, since you approve, I am happy. I have no care now save for these two poor men on that couch, who are yet far from being out of danger."

"Gudeness guide us!" said Walter, turning about, "I thought they had been twa dead corpses. But now, when my een are used to the light o' the place, I see the chaps *are* living, an' no that unlife-like, as a body may say."

He went up to them, spoke to them kindly, took their wan bleached sinewy hands in his, and said, he feared they were still very ill.

"Better than we have been," was the reply—"Better than we have been, goodman. Thanks to you and yours."

"Dear father," said Katharine, "I think if they were removed down to Chapelhope, to dry comfortable lodgings, and had more regular diet, and better attendance, their health might soon be re-established. Now that you deem the danger over, will you suffer me to have them carried down there?"

"Will I no, Kate? My faith, they shall hae the twa best beds i' the house, if Maron an' me should sleep in the barn! An ye sal hae naething ado but to attend them, an nurse them late an' aire; an' I'll gar Maron Linton attend them too, an' she'll rhame o'er bladds o' Scripture to them, an' they'll soon get aboon this bit dwaum. Od, if outher gude fare or drogs will do it, I'll hae them playin' at the penny-stane wi' Davie Tait, an' prayin' wi' him at night, in less than twa weeks."

"Goodman," said old Brown (for this celebrated brownie was no other than the noted Mr. John Brown, the goodman of Caldwell)—"Goodman, well may you be proud this day, and well may you be uplifted in heart on account of your daughter. The more I see and hear of her, the more am I struck with admiration; and I am persuaded of this, that, let your past life have been as it may, the Almighty will bless and prosper you on account of that maid. The sedateness of her counsels, and the qualities of her heart, have utterly astonished me. She has all the strength of mind, and energy of the bravest of men, blent with all the softness, delicacy, and tenderness of feminity. Neither danger nor distress can overpower her mind for a moment—tenderness does it at once. If ever an angel appeared on earth in the form of woman, it is in that of your daughter."

"I wish ye wad haud your tongue," said Walter, who stood hanging his head, and sobbing aloud.

The large tears were not now dropping from his eyes —they were trickling in torrents. "I wish ye wad haud your tongue, an' no mak me ower proud o' her. She's weel eneugh, puir woman. It's a—it's a shame for a great muckle auld fool like me to be booin an' greetin like a bairn this gate, but deil tak the doer gin I can help it! I watna what's ta'en me the day! She's weel eneugh, puir lassie. I daresay I never learned her ony ill, but I little wat where she has gotten a' the gude qualities ye brag sae muckle o', unless it hae been frae heaven in gude earnest; for I wat weel, she has been brought up but in a ramstamphish, hamely kind o' way wi' Maron an' me. But come, come! let us be done wi' this fuffing an' blawing o' noses, an' making o' wry faces. Row the twa puir sick lads weel up, an' bring them down in the bed-claes to my house. An' d'ye hear, callants—gudesake, get your beards clippit or shaven a wee, an' be something warld-like, an' come a' down to Chapelhope; I'll kill the best wedder on the Hermon Law, an' we shall a' dine heartily thegither for aince; I'll get ower Davie Tait to say the grace, an' we'll be as merry as the times will allow."

They accepted the invitation, with many expressions of gratitude and thankfulness, and the rays of hope once more enlightened the dejected countenances that had so long been overshadowed with the gloom of despair.

"But there's ae thing, callants," said Walter, "that has astonished me, an' I canna help speering. Where got ye the coffin sae readily for the man that died last night?"

"That coffin," said Brown, "was brought here one night by the friends of one of the men whom Clavers caused to be shot on the other side of the ridge there, which you saw. The bodies were buried ere they came; it grew day on them, and they left it; so, for the sake of concealment, we brought it into our cave. It has been useful to us; for when the wretched tinker fell down among us from that gap, while we were at evening worship, we pinioned him in the dark, and carried him in that chest to your door, thinking he had belonged to your family. That led to a bloody business, of which you shall hear anon. And in that coffin, too, we carried off your ungrateful curate so far on his journey, disgraced for ever, to come no more within twenty miles of Chapelhope, on pain of a dreadful death in twenty-four hours thereafter; and I stand warrandice that he shall keep his distance. In it we have now deposited the body of a beloved and virtuous friend, who always foretold this, from its first arrival in our cell. But he rejoiced in the prospect of his dissolution, and died as he had lived, a faithful and true witness; and his memory shall long be revered by all the just and the good."

CHAPTER XVII.

I hate long explanations, therefore this chapter shall be very short; there are, however, some parts of the foregoing tale which require that a few words should be subjoined in elucidation of them.

This John Brown was a strenuous and desperate reformer. He was the son of a gentleman by a second marriage, and half-brother to the Laird of Caldwell. He was at the battle of Pentland, with five brave sons at his back, two of whom were slain in the action, and he himself wounded. He was again at Bothwell Bridge with the remaining three, where he was a principal mover of the unhappy commotions in the army that day, owing to his violent, irreclaimable principles of retaliation. A little before the rout became general, he was wounded by a musket bullet, which grazed across his back, and deprived him of all power. A dragoon coming up, and seeing him alive, struck him again across the back with his sword, which severed the tendons, and cut him to the bone. His sons had seen him fall, and knowing the spot precisely, they returned overnight, and finding him still alive, they conveyed him to a place of safety, and afterwards to Glasgow, where he remained concealed in a garret in a friend's house for some months, and, after great sufferings in body and mind, recovered of his wounds; but, for want of surgical assistance, he was so crooked and bowed down, that his nearest friends could not know him; for in his youth, though short in stature, he was strong and athletic. At length he reached his own home, but found it ransacked and desolate, and learned that his wife was carried to prison, he knew not whither. His powerful eloquence and wild Cameronian principles made him much dreaded by the other party; a high reward was offered for apprehending him, so that he was driven to great straits, yet never failed to wreak his vengeance on all of the persecuting party that fell within his power, and he had still a number of adherents.

At length there was one shot in the fields near Kirkconnel that was taken for him, and the promised reward actually paid, on which the particular search after him subsided. His two youngest sons both died for the same cause with the former, but James, his third son, always kept by his father, until taken prisoner by Clavers as he was fishing one day in Coulter Water. Clavers ordered him to be instantly shot, but the Laird of Coulteralloes being present, interceded for him, and he was detained a prisoner, carried about from place to place, and at length confined in the jail at Selkirk. By the assistance of his father and friends he effected his escape, but not before being grievously wounded; and by reason of the hurts he received, and the fever that attacked them in the cave, when Katharine was first introduced there

he was lying past hope, but by her unwearied care and attention, he, with others, was so far recovered as to be able to sit up, and walk about a little. He was poor Nanny's own son, and this John Brown was her husband, whom she had long deemed in another and a happier state. No wonder that she was shocked and affrighted when she saw him again in such a form at midnight, and heard him speak in his own natural and peculiar voice. Their meeting that day at Chapelhope must be left to the imagination; it is impossible for any pen to do it justice.

It is only necessary to add, that Walter seems to have been as much respected and beloved, by his acquaintances and domestics, at least, as any neighbour or master of the present day, as will appear from the few following remarks. The old session-clerk and precentor at Ettrick said "it was the luckiest thing that could have happened that he had come home again, for the poor's ladle had been found to be a pund Scots short every Sunday since he and his family had left the church;" and Sandy Cunningham, the conforming clergyman there, a very honest, inoffensive man, remarked "that he was very glad to hear the news, for the goodman always gave the best dinners at the visitations and examinations of any farmer in his parish; and one always felt so comfortable in his house." Davie Tait said that "divine Providence had just been like a stell dike to the goodman. It had bieldit him frae the bitter storm o' the adversary's wrath, and keepit a' the thunderbolts o' the wicked frae brekking on his head; that, for his part, he wad sit down on his knees an' thank heaven, Sunday and Saturday, for his return, for he could easily lend his master as muckle siller as wad stock a' Riskinhope ower again, an' there was little doubt but he wad do it." Even old John of the Muchrah remarked, "that it was just as weel that his master was come back, for he had an unco gude e'e amang the sheep when ought was gaun wrang on the hill, and the ewes wadna win nae mair into the hogg fence o' the Quave Brae, i' the day time at ony rate."

If there are any incidents in this tale that may still appear a little mysterious, they will all be rendered obvious by turning to a pamphlet entitled, "*A Cameronian's Tale*, or the Life of John Brown, written by himself." But any reader of common ingenuity may very easily solve them all.

THE WOOL-GATHERER.

Love is a passion so capricious, so violent, and so productive of whimsical expedients, that there is no end of its varieties. Dramas may be founded, plots arranged, and novels written on the subject, yet the simple truth itself generally outlasts them all. The following story, which relates to an amiable family still existing, is so like a romance, that perhaps the word of a narrator is insufficient to stamp it with that veracity to which it is entitled. The principal incidents, however, are set down precisely as they were related to me, only I have deemed it meet to change the designations of the individuals so far, that they cannot be recognized by any one not previously acquainted with the circumstances.

The late Laird of Earlhall dying in the fiftieth year of his age, as his grave-stone intimates, left behind him a widow, and two sons, both in their minority. The eldest was of a dashing impatient character; he had a kind and affectionate heart, but his actions were not always tempered with prudence. He entered at an early age into the army, and fell in the Peninsular war when scarcely twenty-two years of age. The estate thus devolved wholly on the youngest, whose name for the present shall be Lindsey, that being his second Christian name, and the one by which his mother generally called him. He had been intended for the law, but on his brother's death gave up the study, as too laborious for his easy and careless disposition. He was attached to literature, and after his return home, his principal employment consisted in poring over his books, and managing a little flower garden in which he took great delight. He was studious, absent, and sensible, but paid little attention to his estate, or the extensive farm which he himself occupied.

The old lady, who was a stirring, talkative, industrious dame, entertained him constantly with long lectures on the ill effects of idleness. She called it the *blight* of youth, the *grub* of virtue, and the *mildew* of happiness, and sometimes, when roused into energy, she said it was *the devil's lang-settle* on which he plotted all his devices against human weal. Lindsey bore all with great patience, but still continued his easy and indolent way.

The summer advanced, the weather became peculiarly fine, labourers were busy in every field, and the shepherd's voice, and the bleating of his flocks, sounded from the adjacent mountains by break of day. This lively and rousing scene gave a new edge to the old lady's remonstrances; they came upon poor Lindsey thicker and faster, like the continued dropping of a rainy day, until he was obliged in some degree to yield. He tried to reason the matter with her, in somewhat near to the following words, but there, lawyer as he was, he had no chance. He was fairly overcome.

"My dear mother," said he, "what does all this signify? or what is it that I can effect by my superintendence? Our farmers are all doing well, and pay their rents regularly; and as for our farm-servants, they have each of them filled the same situation so long and so creditably, that I feel quite awkward when standing looking over them—it looks as if I suspected their integrity, which has been so often proved. Besides, it is a leading maxim with me, that if a man, and more particularly a woman, know or believe that trust is reposed in them, they will, in ten out of eleven instances, deserve it; but if once they see that they are suspected, the feeling towards you is changed, and they will in a little time as likely deserve the one as the other. Our wealth is annually increasing, at least as fast as necessary, and it is my principal wish, that every one under us may be as easy and comfortable as possible."

This was true, for the old lady being parsimonious in the extreme, their riches had increased rapidly since the death of the late laird. As for Lindsey, he never spent anything, save some trifle that he laid out yearly in payment of reviews and new books, and in relieving some poor families in the neighbourhood. The article of dress he left entirely to his mother: whatever she bought or made for him he approved of, and whatever clothes or linen she laid down in his chamber, he put on without any observations. He acted upon the same principle with regard to his meals; but he sometimes was obliged to insist on a little addition being made to the comforts of the family servants, all of whom loved him as a friend and benefactor. He could at any time have swayed his mother so far as to make her a little more liberal towards the men servants, but with regard to the maids he had no such power. She and they lived at constant variance; an irreconcileable jealousy seemed always to subsist between them, and woe to them if the young laird interested himself in their favour! Matters being in such a state, he was obliged to witness this mutual animosity—this tyranny on the one hand, and discontent on the other, without having the power to amend it.

"But then, my dear Lindsey," returned she to his former remonstrance, "making allowance for a'

that you say, allowing that your weel-spoken arguments are a' foundit in truth—for laith wad ye be to say an untruth, an' I never heard an argument that wasna sound come out o' your mouth; but then I say, what's to hinder you to gang a fishing like other gentlemen, or shooting moor-cocks, an' paetricks, an' black-cocks, as a' ither countrymen o' your age an' station do? Some manly exercise in the field is absolutely necessary to keep your form robust, your colour fresh, and your mind active; an', indeed, you mauna be discontentit nor displeased, if I insist on it, while the weather is so fine."

"With regard to fowling, my dear mother, I am perfectly ignorant; I know nothing about the sport, and I never can delight in it, for often has it given me pain to see others pursuing it. I think the pleasure arising from it can scarcely originate in any thing else than a principle of cruelty. Fishing is little better. I never regret the killing of an ox, or sheep, by which we have so much necessary food for one life, but I think it hard to take a precious life for a single mouthful."

"His presence be about us, Lindsey! what's that ye say? Wha heard ever tell of a trout's precious life? or a salmon's precious life? or a ged's precious life? Wow, man, but sma' things are precious in your een! Or wha can feel for a trout? A cauld-rife creature that has nae feeling itsel—a greedy grampus of a thing, that worries its ain kind, an' eats them whenever it can get a chance. Na, na, Lindsey, let me hear nae mair o' siccan langnebbit fine-spun arguments; but do take your father's rod, like a man, and a gentleman, and gang a fishing, if it were but an hour in the day; there are as many hooks and lines in the house as will serve you for seven years to come; an' it is weel kend how plenty the trouts are in your ain water. I hae seen the day when we never wanted plenty o' them at this time o' the year."

"Well, well," said Lindsey, taking up a book, "I shall go to please you, but I would rather be at home."

She rung the bell, and ordered in old John the barnman, one well skilled in the art of angling. "John," said she, "put your master's fishing-rod and tackle in order, he is going a-fishing at noon."

John shrugged up his shoulders when he heard of his master's intent, as much as to say, "Sic a fisher as he'll mak!" however, he went away in silence, and the order was quickly obeyed.

Thus equipped, away trudged Lindsey to the fishing for the first time in his life; slowly and indifferently he went, and began at the first pool he came to. John offered to accompany him, to which he assented, but this the old lady resisted, and bid him go to his work; he, however, watched his master's motions slyly for some time, and on joining his fellow-labourers remarked, that "his master was a real saft hand at the fishing."

An experienced angler certainly would have been highly amused at his procedure. He pulled out the line, and threw it in again so fast, that he appeared more like one thrashing corn than angling; he, moreover, fixed always upon the smoothest parts of the stream, where no trout in his right senses could possibly be inveigled. But the far greater part of his employment consisted in loosening the hook from different objects with which it chanced to come in contact. At one time he was to be seen stooping to the arm-pits in the middle of the water, disengaging it from some officious twig that had intercepted its progress; at another time on the top of a tree tearing off a branch on which it had laid hold. A countryman happening to pass by just as he stood stript to the shirt cutting it out of his clothes, in which it had fastened behind, observed by way of friendly remark, that "they were fashous things them hooks." Lindsey answered, that "they certainly had a singular knack of catching hold of things."

He went through all this without being in the least disconcerted, or showing any impatience, and towards dinner time, the trouts being abundant, and John having put on a fly that answered the weather, he caught some excellent fish, and might have caught many more had he been diligent, but every trout that he brought ashore took him a long time to contemplate. He surveyed his eye, his mouth, and the structure of his gills with tedious curiosity, then again laid him down, and fixed his eyes on him in deep and serious meditation.

The next day he needed somewhat less persuasion from his mother to try the same amusement; still it was solely to please her that he went, for about the sport itself he was quite careless. Away he set the second day, and prudently determined to go farther up the water, as he supposed that part to be completely emptied of fish where he had been the day before. He sauntered on in his usual thoughtful and indifferent mood, sometimes throwing in his line without any manner of success. At length, on going over an abrupt ridge, he came to a clear pool where the farmers had lately been washing their flocks, and by the side of it was a most interesting female, apparently not exceeding seventeen years of age, gathering the small flakes of wool in her apron that had fallen from the sheep in washing, while, at the same time, a beautiful well-dressed child, about two years old, was playing on the grass. Lindsey was close beside her before any of them were aware, and it is hard to say which of the two was most surprised. She blushed like scarlet, but pretended to gather on, as if wishing he would pass without taking any notice of them, but Lindsey was rivetted to the spot: he had never in his life seen any woman half so beautiful, and at the same time her array accorded with the business in which she was engaged. Her form was the finest symmetry; her dark hair was tucked up behind with a comb, and hung waving in ringlets over her cheeks and brow, "like

shadows on the mountain snow;" and there was an elegance in the model of her features, arms, and hands, that the youth believed he had never before seen equalled in any lady, far less a country girl.

"What are you going to do with that wretched stuff, lassie," said Lindsey, "it has been trampled among the clay and sand, and is unfit for any human use?"

"It will easily clean again, sir," said she, in a frank and cheerful voice, "and then it will be as good as ever."

"It looks very ill; I am positive it is for no manner of use."

"It is certainly, as you say, not of great value, sir, but if it is of any, I may as well lift it as let it lie and rot here."

"Certainly, there can be no harm in it; only I am sorry to see such a girl at such an employment."

"It is better doing this than nothing," was the reply.

The child now rolled himself over to get his face turned towards them, and, fixing his large blue eyes on Lindsey, looked at him with the utmost seriousness. The latter observing a striking likeness between the girl and the child, had no doubt that she was his sister, and, unwilling to drop the conversation, he added, abruptly enough, "Has your mother sent you to gather that stuff?"

"I have neither father nor mother, sir."

"But one who supplies both their places, I hope. You have a husband, have you not?"

"Not as yet, sir, but there is no time lost."

She blushed; but Lindsey coloured ten times deeper when he cast his eyes on the child. His heart died within him at the thoughts that now obtruded themselves; it was likewise wrung for his imprudence and indelicacy. What was his business whether she was married or not, or how she was connected with the child? She seemed likewise to be put into some confusion at the turn the conversation was taking, and, anxious to bring it to a conclusion as soon as possible, she tucked up the wool in her apron below one arm, and was lifting up the child with the other to go away, when Lindsey stepped forward, saying, "Will not you shake hands with me, my good little fellow, before you go?"

"Ay," said the child, stretching out his little chubby hand; "how d'ye doo, sil?"

Lindsey smiled, shook his hand heartily, and put a crown piece into it.

"Ah, sir, don't give him that," said she, blushing deeply.

"It is only a plaything that he must keep for my sake."

"Thank you, sil," said the child. "Great muckle shilling, mamma."

This last appellation, *mamma*, struck Lindsey motionless; he had not another word to say, while the two went away prattling to one another.

"Very lalge fine-looking shilling, mamma."

"Ay, it is a very bonny shilling, dear, said she, kissing him, and casting a parting look at the petrified fisher.

"Mamma, mamma!" repeated Lindsey to himself an hundred times, trying it with every modulation of his voice. "This is the most extraordinary circumstance I ever witnessed. Now, who in the world can comprehend that thing called woman! Who would not have sworn that that rural beauty there was the most pure, innocent, and untainted of her sex? And yet, behold! she has a fine boy running at her side and calling her *mamma!* Poor girl, is she not to be pitied? when one thinks how some tender parent might rejoice over her, anticipating so much better things of her! It is plain she has been very indifferently used by the world—most cruelly used—and is she the less interesting on that account? I wish I knew how to make her some amends."

Thus reasoned our moral fisher with himself, keeping all the while a sidelong glance towards her, till he saw her enter a little neat white-washed cottage not far from the side of the stream; there were sundry other houses inhabited by cottagers in the hamlet, and the farm-house stood at the head of the cluster. The ground belonged to Lindsey, and the farmer was a quiet, sober man, a widower, with a large family. Lindsey now went up the water a-fishing every day; and though he often hovered a considerable while at the washing-pool, and about the crook opposite to the cot, pretending all the while to be extremely busy fishing, he could never get another sight of the lovely Wool-gatherer, though he desired it above all present earthly things: for, some way or other, he felt that he *pitied* her exceedingly, and though he was not greatly *interested* in her, yet he was very much so in the *child*—he was *certain it was the child* that interested him so much—nevertheless, he was sorry too on account of the mother, for she seemed *very gentle*, and *very amiable*, and must have been abominably used; and therefore he could not help feeling *very sorry for her indeed*, as well as deeply *interested in the child*. On the second and third day that he went up, little George came out paddling to meet him at the water side, on which he always sent him in again with a fish in one hand, and some little present in the other; but after that he appeared no more, which Lindsey easily perceived to originate in the Wool-gatherer's diffidence and modesty, who could not bear the idea of her little man receiving such gifts.

The same course was continued for many days, and always with the same success, as far as regarded the principal motive, for the trouts were only a secondary one—the beauteous Wool-gatherer was thenceforward invisible. After three weeks' perseverance, there chanced to come on a heavy rain one day when he was but a little way above the farm-house. Robin the farmer, expecting that he would flee into his house until the shower abated, was

standing outside his own door to receive him; but he kept aloof, passed by, and took shelter in the Wool-gatherer's cottage, though not without some scruples of conscience as to the prudence of the step he was taking. When he went in she was singing a melodious Scottish air, and plying at her wheel. "What a thoughtless creature she must be," said he to himself; "and how little conscious of the state to which she has fallen." He desired her to go on with her song, but she quitted both that and her wheel instantly, set a chair for him, and sitting down on a low form herself, lighted sticks on the fire to warm and dry him, at the same time speaking and looking with the utmost cheerfulness, and behaving with all that ease and respect as if she had been his equal, and an old intimate acquaintance. He had a heart of the greatest integrity, and this was the very manner that delighted him; and indeed he felt that he was delighted in the highest degree by this fair mystery. He would gladly have learned her story, but durst not hint at such a thing, for fear of giving her pain, and he had too much delicacy to inquire about her of any other person, or even to mention her name. He observed that though there was but little furniture in the house, yet it was not in the least degree like any other he had ever seen in such a cottage, and seemed very lately to have occupied a more respectable situation. Little George was munching at a lump of dry bread, making very slow progress. He kept his eyes fixed on his benefactor, but said nothing for a considerable time, till at length he observed him sitting silent, as in pleasing contemplation; he then came forward with a bounce upon his knee, and smiled up in his face, as much as to say, "You are not minding little George."

"Ah my dear little fellow, are you there? Will you have a muckle shilling of me to-day?"

"Na, na; be vely solly. Mamma quite angly. She scold me."

"Well, but since you have never come to help me to catch the fish for so long a time, I will only give you a very little one to-day."

"Dear sir, if you would not distress me, don't mind him; he is a little impudent fellow. Go off from the gentleman, George."

George clapped both his hands upon his head, and went back without hesitation, gloomed at his mamma, and took again up his luncheon of dry bread.

"Nay, pardon me," continued Lindsey; "but you must always suffer me to give my little new acquaintance something." So saying, he put a guinea into the child's hand.

"Hank you, sil," said George. "O, no be angy, mamma—only little wee halfpenny—ook ye, mamma."

"Oh sir," said she, "you distress me by these presents. I have no need of money, and what can he do with it but throw it away?"

"Nay, nay; pray don't notice it; that is nothing between two friends like George and me."

Lindsey dried himself, talked of indifferent matters, and then took the child on his knee and talked to him. The conversation had as yet been as free and unrestrained as possible, but Lindsey, by a blunder quite natural to a studious and absent man, cut it short at once. "Tell me your name, good lad?" said he to the child. "Let me hear you say your name?"

"George," was the reply.

"But what more than George? Tell me what they call you more than George?"

"Just Geoge, sil. Mamma's Geoge."

"Pray, what is my young friend's surname?" said Lindsey, with the greatest simplicity.

The Wool-gatherer stooped to the floor, as if lifting something, in order that she might keep her face out of the light; two or three times an answer seemed trembling on her tongue, but none came. There was a dead silence in the cot, which none had the courage to break. How our unfortunate fisher's heart smote him! He meant only to confer happiness, in place of which he had given unnecessary pain and confusion. The shower was past; he arose abruptly, said "Good b'ye, I will call and see my little George to-morrow," and home he went, more perplexed than ever, and not overmuch pleased with himself. But the thing that astonished him most of all was the cheerful serenity of her countenance and manners under such grievous misfortunes. He did not know whether to blame or approve of her for this; however, he continued to go up the water for the most part every day, and seldom failed to call at the cot. He meant no ill—he was certain he meant no harm to any one—it was only to *see the child* that he went, and why should any man be ashamed to go and see a child? Very well reasoned, gentle fisher! but beware that this is not the reverse of what you feel within. At all events, it is the world that must judge of your actions and mine, not we ourselves. Scandal is a busy vixen, and none can make fame fly so fast on an errand as she.

Robin the farmer was hurt in the tenderest part that day when his laird went by his door, and took shelter in the Wool-gatherer's cot; and on going in, he mentioned it in such a way that his old-maiden sister, Meg, took note of it, and circulated it among the men-servants, with strong injunctions of secrecy. The continuation of his visits confirmed their worst suspicions; it was now no longer a matter of doubt with them what was going on, but an obvious certainty. The shameful and sudden attachment was blabbed from tongue to tongue, until every ear in the parish had drunk the delicious draught, save those of the parties implicated, and the old lady, the original cause of all. When he was seen going into the cot, an event that was strictly watched, the lasses would smile to each other—the ploughmen broke jests upon it—and Meg would hold up both her hands and say, "Hech wow, sirs! I wonder what our young gentles will turn to by an' by. It

winna be lang till marriage be out o' the fashion a' thegither, and the fock that pretend to be Christians a' living through other like the wild Tartarers."

Little wist the old lady of what was going on! She dreamed not once of a beautiful stranger among the cottagers at Todburn (the name of Robin's farm) that was working such deray, else woe would have been to her and all concerned; for there was no sin that she dreaded so much as her son forming any attachment or connection with the country maidens. She had been congratulating herself mightily on the success of her expedient, in making him take such delight in a manly and healthful exercise, and one which led him insensibly to be acquainted with his people and every part of his estate. She had even been boasting aloud of it to every one with whom she conversed; indeed her conversation with others was mostly about her son, for he being her only surviving child, she loved him with her whole heart, and her cares were all for him.

It happened one day that a little pert girl had come down from one of the cottages at Todburn to buy some milk, which the lady supplied to them from her dairy, and while skimming and measuring it, she fell into conversation with this little sly provoking imp.

"Did you see my son fishing in the water as you came down?"

"Na, na, mim; he was safe landit or I came away. He was fishing wi' Hoy's net."

"Safe landit? Fishing wi' Hoy's net? How do you mean?"

"He was gane in to take a rest, mim, that's a'."

"Oh, that was a'—was it? I'm glad to hear o' that. I never knew he had called upon his tenants or looked after them at all!"

"I trow he disna look muckle after them, mim. He's keener o' lookin' after something else."

"Oh ay, the trouts! To be sure they hae almaist gane between him an' his wits for some time; but he'll aye be seeing something o' his land, an' something o' his fock. It was I that persuaded him to it. There are some lucky hits in life."

"Ay, an' some lucky misses too, mim, that some think he likes as weel."

"He's sae tender-hearted, I believe he may be as happy oft to miss the fish as to hit them; but that will soon wear away, as I tell him. He's tender-hearted to a fault."

"An' there's mae tender-heartit nor him. There's some other kind o' misses forbye trouts up the water."

"What is it you say?"

"I'll say nae mair about it—ane may very easily speak muckle nonsense."

"Didna ye say that my son was gane into Robin's house afore ye came away?"

"I never said sic a word, begging your pardon, mim. He wadna gang into Robin's, though it war raining auld wives and Jeddart staves."

"What house was he gone into then?"

"Into Jeany's, mim."

"Jeany's! What Jeany?"

"I dinna ken what they ca' her mair than Jeany. Little George's mother, ye ken, that lives at the head o' the Washing-green."

"Jeany! Little George's mother! That lives at the head o' the Washing-green! Wha is she! Where comes she frae? Has she a husband?"

"Na, na, mim—nae husband."

The lady breathed as short as if in the heat of a fever—hasted out to the air, and then returned with equal haste into the house, without being able to accomplish anything, for her hands trembled like the aspen leaf; and, finally, after ordering the girl to send Robin down to her immediately, she took to her bed, and lay brooding over the great calamity of her son's shameful attachment. These low-bred women were her bane, especially if they were beautiful; she loathed, she hated, and if she could, would have cleared the country of them. This, therefore, was a great trial; and before Robin arrived, she had made out to herself a picture of as many disagreeable objects as ever a distempered imagination conceived. Instead of a genteel respected wife, the head of a lovely family, a disgraceful connection, and an illegitimate offspring! Ills followed on ills, a dreadful train! She could think of nothing else, and the more she thought of it the worse did the consequences appear. Before her messenger *reached* Robin, she had regularly determined on the young woman's dismissal from the estate, and, if possible, from the district.

We shall pass over a long conversation that took place between the old dame and Robin. It was maintained with great bitterness on the one hand, and servility on the other; but the final resolution was, that Jane should be ordered to depart from Todburn that night, or early the next morning; and if she refused, Robin was to bribe her to compliance with any moderate sum of money, rather than that she should be suffered to remain longer; for the lady sagely observed, she might corrupt and lead astray all the young men in the country side, and would likely, at the long run, cost the parish more than if it were to maintain a company of soldiers. Last of all, it was decreed that their proceedings should be kept a profound secret from Lindsey.

Robin went home; and waiting upon Jane, told her abruptly to prepare for her immediate departure from the house that she occupied, for that she could not be longer there; and that he would be answerable for her furniture until she sent for it, or otherwise disposed of it; that she needed not to ask any questions as to his motives, for that he was obliged to do as he did, and the thing was decided that she was not to remain longer there.

She answered not a word; but, with the tears in her eyes, and many a half-smothered sob, she packed up a small bundle of clothes, and, taking that below

her arm, and little George on her back, she went away, having first locked the door and given the key to the farmer. "Farewell, Robin," said she; "you are turning two very helpless and friendless creatures out to the open fields; but think you, you may not rue this on a day when you cannot help it?"

Robin was affected, but he was obliged to do as he was desired, and therefore made no defence, but said simply, "Farewell! Farewell!—God help thee, poor thing!" He then kept an eye on her, that she might not communicate with any until she was fairly across the end of the Todburn-Law, and he was agreeably surprised at seeing her take that direction.

As soon as she got out of sight of her late dwelling, she sought a retired spot by the side of a clear mountain rivulet, where she sat down and gave free vent to her tears. "My poor child," said she, clasping little George to her breast, "what is now to become of us, and where will our sorrows terminate? Here we are turned out on the wide world, and have neither house nor home to cover our heads; we have no bed now, George, but the cold earth, and no covering but that sky that you see over us."

"O no geet, mamma—no geet; Geoge vely wae," said the child, clasping her neck in return, and sobbing aloud; "no geet, else Geoge tuln bad child, and geet too."

"No, for your sake, my dear, I will not greet; therefore cheer up thy little kind heart, for there is One who will provide for us still, and will not suffer two helpless inexperienced beings like you and me to perish."

"Geoge like 'at man."

"It is no man that we must now depend on, my dear; we must depend on God, who will never forsake us."

"Geoge like God."

Here she kissed him and wept anew, yet was all the while trying to console him. "Let us be of good cheer, George; while I have health I will work for you, for you have no one else on earth that cares for you."

"But no geet, mamma, I tell you; Geoge wulk too. When Geoge tuln geat big man, Geoge wulk mo than two mans."

Here their tender prattle was interrupted by a youth named Barnaby, who was close at their side before they observed him. He was one of Robin's servants, who herded a few young sheep at the back of the hill where Jane was sitting. He was fifteen years of age, tall and thin, but had fine features, somewhat pitted with the small-pox. He had an inexhaustible fund of good humour and drollery, and playing the fool among the rest of the servants to keep them laughing was his chief delight; but his folly was all affected, and the better part of his character lay concealed behind the screen of a fantastic exterior. He never mended his clothes like the rest of the servant lads, but suffered them to fall into as many holes as they pleased; when any expostulated with him on the subject, he said, "he likit them nae the waur o' twa or three holes to let in the air;" and, in truth, he was as ragged a stripling as one would see in a summer day. His hat was remarkably broad-brimmed and supple, and hung so far over his eyes, that, when he looked any person in the face, he had to take the same position as if looking at a vertical star. This induced him often, when he wanted to see fairly about him, to fold in the fore part of the brim within the crown, which gave it the appearance of half a hat, and in this way was he equipped when he joined Jane and little George. They had been intimately acquainted from the first; he had done many little kind offices for her, and had the sagacity to discover that there was something about her greatly superior to the other girls about the hamlet; and he had never used the same freedom with her in his frolics that he was wont to do with them.

"What ails you, Jeany?" said he; "I thought I heard you greeting."

"No, no, Barnaby; I do not ail anything; I was not crying."

"Why, woman, you're *crying* yet, as you call it; tell me what ails you, and whar ye're gaun this wild gate?"

"I'm going to leave you, Barnaby. I am going far from this."

"I fear ye're gaun awa frae us a' thegither. Hae ye been obliged to leave your ain wee house for want o' meat?"

"I had plenty of meat; but your master has turned me out of my cot at an hour's warning; he would not even suffer me to remain overnight, and I know of no place to which I can go."

"O, deil be i' the auld hard-heartit loon! Heard ever ony body the like o' that? What ailed him at ye? Hae ye done ony thing, Jeany, or said ony thing wrang?"

"It is that which distresses me. I have not been given to know my offence, and I can form no conjecture of it."

"If I had a hame, Jeany, ye should hae a share o't. I dinna ken o' ane I wad make mair welcome, even though I should seek a bed for mysel. War ye at my father's cottage, I could insure you a month's good hamely lodging, but it is far away, an' a wild road till't. I hae indeed an auld aunt about twa miles frae this, but she's no muckle to lippen to, unless it come frae her ain side o' the house; an' then she's a' hinny and joe. If ye like I'll gang that length wi' ye, an' try if she'll put ye up a while till we see how matters turn."

Jane was now so much confused in her mind, that, not being able to form any better measure for the present, she arose and followed her ragged conductor, and they arrived at his aunt's house before sunset.

"My dear aunt," said Barnaby, "here is a very good an' a very helpless lassie turned away frae her

hame this same day, and has nae place to gang to; if ye'll be sae good, an' sae kind, as to let her stay a while wi' you, I will do ten times as muckle for you again some ither day."

"My faith, stirra!" said she, setting up a face like a firebrand, and putting her arms a-kimbo; "My faith, man, but ye're soon begun to a braw trade! How can ye hae the assurance, ye brazen-faced rascal, to come running to me wi' a hizzy an' bairn at your tail, an' desire me to keep them for ye? I'll sooner see you an' her, an' that little limb, a' hung up by the links o' the neck, than ony o' ye sal crook a hough or break bread wi' me."

"There's for't now! There's for't! When the deil gets in, the fire maun flee out!—But, aunt, I ken the first word's aye the warst wi' ye; ye're never sae ill as ye say. Think like a Christian. How wad ye hae likit, when ye war as young, to hae been turned out to the open hills wi' a bairn in your arms?"

"Hear to the tatterdemallion!—Christian? Bairn i' *my* arms?—ye impudent, hempy-looking tike that ye are! Pack out o' my house, I say, or I'll gar the bluid blind your een—ay, an' your bit toastit pie too! Gang after your braw gallaunt, wi' your ox-terfu' ket!—A bonny pair, troth!—A light head makes a heavy fit!"

Barnaby retired with his back foremost, facing up to his aunt all the way till fairly in the open fields, for fear of actual violence; but the epithets he bestowed on her there in the bitterness of his heart cannot here be set down. Jane trembled, yet was obliged to smile at his extravagance, for it had no bounds; while his aunt stood in her door, exulting and calling after him everything that she could construe to mortify and provoke him. Tears for a space choked his utterance; at length he forced out the following sentences in volleys:—

"Wae—wae be to the—the auld randy—witch!—Had I but the—owrance o' the land for ae day—I—I should gar some look about them. My master an' she hae this wark to answer for yet; they'll get their dichens for't some day—that's ae comfort! Come away, Jeany—they'll squeal for this—let them tak it!—Come away, Jeany."

"Where would you have me to go now, Barnaby?"

"Out-by aff that auld witch at ony rate! I'll hae ye put up though I should travel a hunder mile."

"Let me beseech you to return to your flock, and trouble yourself no farther about my infant and me. Heaven will take care of us."

"It disna look very like it just now. I dinna arguy that it is wrang to trust in heaven—only, gin we dinna use the means, heaven's no obliged to work miracles for us. It is hard upon the gloamin', an' there is not another house near us; if we sit down and trust, ye'll hae to sleep in the fields, an' then baith you and that dear bairn may get what ye will never cast. Let us make a wee exertion the night, and I hae resolved what ye shall do to-morrow."

"And what shall I do to-morrow, Barnaby?"

"Go with me to my parents; they hae nae doughter o' their ain, an' my mither will be muckle the better o' your help, an' they will baith be very glad to see you, Jeany. Gudeness be thankit! the warld's no just a' alike. I' the meantime my pickle gimmers dinna need muckle at my hand just now, sae I'll gae an' ax my master for a day to see my fock, and gang fit for fit wi' ye the morn."

She fixed her humid eyes on him in pleasing astonishment; she had never before witnessed such earnest and disinterested benevolence; the proposal was made in such a way that she could not refuse it, else she saw that she would give a kind and feeling heart pain. "I have a great mind to make trial of your expedient, good Barnaby," said she; "all parts of the country are now alike to me; I must go somewhere; and as it is but a hard day's journey, I will go and see the parents of so good a lad."

"Now that's spoken like yoursel, an' I'm glad to hear ye say't—But what's to come o' ye the night?"

"I have some victuals with me, and I can lie in the fields this pleasant night: it is a good one to begin with, for who knows what's before one?"

"I canna think o' that ava. If ye war to lay that bonny red cheek on the cauld dew, an' the wind blawin' i' little George's face, there wad some sleep nane the night; but there is a little snug sheep-house in our hope, a wee bit frae this; let us gang there, an' I will take little George in my bosom, an' hap *you* wi' my plaid.—O, but I forgot—that will never do," continued he, in a melancholy tone, and looking at his ragged doublet and riven clothes. Away, however to the sheep-cot they went, where they found plenty of old hay, and Jane instantly proposed that he should go home and leave them alone, get a holiday from his master, and join them next morning.

"But I dinna ken about it," said Barnaby, hanging his head and looking serious; "that linn's an unco uncanny place for bogles; an' by this time o' night they'll be keeking ower the black haggs o' the Cairny Moss to see what's gaun on. If ony o' them war to come on ye here, they might terrify you out o' your wits, or carry ye baith aff, lith and limb—Is the callant baptized?"

Jane answered in the affirmative, smiling; and farther assured him, that he needed to be under no apprehensions on account of spirits, for she was perfectly at ease on that score, having a good assurance that no spirit had power over her.

"Ay, ye are maybe a gospel minister's bairn, or an auld Cameronian; that is, I mean come o' the saints and martyrs—they had unco power. I hae heard o' some o' them that fought the deil, hand to fist, for an hour and forty minutes, and dang him at the last—yethered him and yerked him till he couldna mou' another curse. But these times are gane! yet it's no sae lang sin auld Macmillan (ye hae heard o' auld Macmillan?) was coming through

that linn i' the derk wi' twa o' his elders, an' they spak o' the bogle, but Macmillan jeered at it; an' when they came to the tap o' yon steep brae they stoppit to take their breath, and there they heard a loud nichering voice come out o' the how o' the linn, an' it cried,

"'Ha, ha, Macky! had ye been your lane,
Ye should never hae crackit through either wood or water again.'

"'Say ye sae, fause loon?' quo' the auld hardy veteran; 'then be at your speed, for I'll gang through that wood my lane in spite o' your teeth, an' a' hell at your back.'

"An' what does the carl do, but leaves his twa elders yonder, standing glowrin i' the howe night, an' trodges his way back through the linn to the very farrest side o't—said the hunder-an'-ninth psalm against him, an' came back wi' never a turned hair on his head. But yet for a' that, Jeany, dinna lippin ower muckle to bygane things; there have been fairy raids i' the Hope, an' mony ane ill fleyed. I could tell ye sic a story of a wicked laird here!"

Jane entreated him not to tell it that night, but amuse them with it to-morrow as they journeyed. He was passive—left them his plaid—went home and got leave of absence from his master for two days, but hinted nothing of what had passed in the Hope. He was again back at the sheep-house by the time the sun rose; and, early as it was, he found Jane walking without, while little George was sleeping soundly on the hay, wrapped in the plaid. She said she had got a sound and short sleep, but awakening at dawn she had stepped out to taste the fresh mountain air, and see the sun rise. When they lifted the child he was somewhat fretful—a thing not customary with him; but he was soon pacified, and they proceeded without delay on their journey.

Until once they had cleared the boundaries of the farm of Todburn, Barnaby was silent, and looked always around with a jealous eye, as if dreading a surprise. When his fellow-traveller asked the reasons of his anxiety, he remained silent; but as soon as they got fairly into the next glen he became gay and talkative as ever. She deemed it to be some superstitious dread that discomposed him, but was left to guess the cause.

"Jeany," said he, "you said you had a short and sound sleep last night—so had I. Pray, did you dream ony?"

"Not that I remember of; but I put no faith in dreams."

"Weel, how different fock's bodies, or their souls, or something about them maun be frae ane anither! For I'm come this length in the warld, an' I never yet dreamed a regular dream, in a sound sleep, that I didna get as plainly read to me as the A, B, C. I had a strange dream last night, Jeany, an' it was about you. I am sure I'll live to see it fulfilled; but what it means even now, I canna in the least comprehend."

"Well, Barnaby, suppose you give it. I have read the Book of Knowledge, and may lend you a hand at the interpretation."

"I thought I saw ye lying in a lonesome place, an' no ane in the wide world to help or heed ye, till there was a poor bit black mootit-like corby came down frae the hills an' fed ye. I saw it feeding ye, an' I thought ye war as contentit, an' as bonny, an' as happy as ever. But ere ever I wist, down comes there a great majestic eagle some gate frae about the e'e-bree o' the heavens, an' cleeks ye away up to the lowne bieldy side o' a sunny hill, where ye had a' braw things. An' I dinna ken how it was, I thought ye war a she eagle sitting amang your young, an' I thought aye ye war a woman too, an' I coudna separate the tane frae the tither, but the poor bit plottit forefoughen corby gaed alang w'ye, an' ye war kind to him, an' fed him in your turn, an' I saw him hoppin, an' pickin, an' dabbin round about ye, as happy as ever I saw a beast, an' the eagle didna chase him away, but was kind to him; but somehow, or I wakened, I thought it was the confusedest thing I ever saw. Na, ye needna laugh nor smile, for we'll baith live to see it read."

"Believe me, Barnaby, it will never be apparent; you may force circumstances to agree with it, but these will not be obvious ones."

"It's needless for me to arguy wi' you unless I can bring things hame to your ain conscience, but can ye say that ye never got a dream read?"

"Never that I noted, for I never thought of them."

"Or, for instance, have ye never, when you saw a thing for the first time, had a distinct recollection of having seen it sometime afore?"

"Never."

"How wonderfu'! I have done so a thousand an' a thousand times. I have remembered of having seen exactly the same scene, the same faces, the same looks, and heard the same words, though I knew all the while that I never had seen them in reality; and that I could only have seen them in some former vision, forgotten, or perhaps never remembered."

She now saw clearly that dreams, visions, and apparitions, were Barnaby's region of existence. His very thoughts and language seemed elevated whenever he entered on the subject; and it being a trait in the shepherd's character that she had never thought of before, she resolved to encourage it, and asked for a single instance of that strange foresight alluded to.

"You'll surely acknowledge," said Barnaby, "that it is impossible I could ever have come up that strait swire before with a bairn on my back, an' a young woman gaun beside me exactly like you, an' that while in that condition, I should have met wi' a bull an' a cow coming out o' the path by themsels, an' thought o' yon craig for a shelter to the bairn that I was carrying; yet when that happened

about an hour ago, I remembered so distinctly of having gone through it some time long before, that I knew every step that would next be taken, and every word that would next be said. It made me very thoughtful, but I can remember nothing of where or when I dreamed it, or what was the issue.

"There was another instance that I'll never forget. The winter afore last, I gaed out wi' my father in the morning to help him to gather the sheep, for the rime had sitten down, an' the clouds war creepin, and we kend the drift wad be on. Weel, away we sets, but a' the hills were wrappit i' the clouds o' rime as they had been rowed in a fleece o' frosty woo, an' we couldna see a stime; we were little better than fock gaun *graiping* for sheep: an' about twal o'clock (I mind it weel), just when I was in the very straitest and steepest part o' the Shielbrae Hope, the wind gae a swirl, an' I lookit up an' saw the cloud screwing up to heaven; the brow o' the hill cleared, an' I saw like a man cringing and hanging ower the point o' the rock, an' there was seven white ewes an' a black ane gaun bleetin in a raw yont aneath him. That was a'; but the sight strak me motionless. I mindit that I had seen the very thing afore; the very clouds, the very rocks, an' the man standing courin' and keekin' ower, wi' the white rime hingin' about his lugs like feathers; an' I mindit that it ended ill—it ended awsomely! for I thought it ended in death. I could speak nae mair a' that day, for I expectit that either my father or I wad never gang hame living. He aften said to me, 'What ails ye, callant? Are ye weel eneugh? Od, ye're gane stupid.' We saved some sheep, an' lost some, like mony ane, for it was a dreadfu' afternoon; however, we wan baith safe hame. But that night, afore we gaed to bed, our neighbour, auld Robin Armstrong, was brought into our house a corp. Our fock had amaist gane out o' their judgment, but the very features, the white rime frozen about the cauld stiff een, an' the ice-shogles hangin' at the grey hair, war nae new sight to me; I had seen them a' before, I kendna when. Ah, Jeany! never tell me that we haena some communication wi' intelligences far ayont our capacity to comprehend."

The seriousness of Barnaby's manner made it evident to his fellow-traveller that he believed in the reality of every word he had said. There was an inconceivable sublimity in the whole idea, and she fancied herself going to reside, perhaps for a season, in the regions of imagination and romance. She asked him if his father and mother had faith in dreams and apparitions?

"Aye, that they hae," answered he; "ye had need to tak care how ye dispute the existence of fairies, brownies, and apparitions there; ye may as weel dispute the gospel o' Saint Matthew. We dinna believe in a' the gomral fantastic bogles an' spirits that fley light-headed fock up an' down the country, but we believe in a' the apparitions that warn o' death, that save life, an' that discover guilt. I'll tell you what we believe, ye see.

"The deil an' his agents, they fash nane but the gude fock, the Cameroniana, an' the prayin ministers, an' sic like. Then the bogles, they are a better kind o' spirits; they meddle wi' nane but the guilty, the murderer, an' the mansworn, an' the cheater o' the widow an' fatherless; they do for *them*. Then the fairies, they're very harmless, they're keener o' fun an' frolic than aught else; but if fock neglect kirk ordinances, they see after *them*. Then the brownie, he's a kind o' half-spirit half-man; he'll drudge an' do a' the wark about the town for his meat, but then he'll no work but when he likes for a' the king's dominions. That's precisely what we a' believe here awa', auld an' young; an' I'll tell you twa or three stories that we a' ken to be true, an' which I wadna misbelieve for a' that I'm worth.

"Sandy Shiel, the herd o' the Birky-cleuch, was standing afore his sheep ae fine day in winter. The snaw had been drifted ower the brae-head to the size of another hill, but it was blawn bare aneath, an' there was Sandy standin' i' the sun afore his sheep whistling an' singing, an' knitting a stocking. Ere ever he wist there comes a broken leggit hare by his very foot. Every Scotsman's keen of a hunt. Sandy flings the plaid frae him, an' after the hare what he can streik, hallooing, and crying on his dog to kep. As he gaed ower the brow he was close upon her, an' had up his stick just to knock her dead. Tut! the hare vanished in a moment! Sandy jumpit round about an' round about. 'What's come o' my hare now? Is she santit? or yirdit? or flown awa'!' Sandy lookit up into the air, but she wasna to be seen there neither. She was gane, an' for ever! Sandy was amaist swarf'd; the cauld sweat brak on him, an' he clew his head. 'Now, gude faith, I hae seen muckle,' quo' Sandy, 'but the like o' that I saw never.' Sandy trodged back, wantin' his hare, to lift his plaid. But what think ye? The hale volume o' snaw on the hill aboon had shot away and buried the plaid fifty feet deep; it was nae mair seen till the month o' May. Sandy kneeled down amang the snaw and thankit his Maker; he saw brawly what the hare had been.

"I'll tell you another that I like still better. The shepherd's house at Glen Tress, in Tweeddale, had ance been a farm-steading, but it was at the time this happened inhabited by an honest respectable shepherd, his wife, and six children. One evening after the sun had set, the eldest girl came running in, crying, 'Bless me, sirs, come here. Here is the grandest lady coming to the house that ever was seen in the world.' They all ran to the door, young and old, and they every one saw her coming at the distance of only about twenty paces. She was never more seen! But that very moment the house fell in, gable and all, with a dreadful crash; and thus a worthy family was saved from momentary destruction. Ah! I wadna hae given that man's feelings of

gratitude that night toward his Maker and Preserver, for a' the dogmas of a thousand cauld-heartit philosophers!"

"Nor would I," said Jane; and they walked on in deep silence.

Barnaby always carried the child one half of the way as nearly as they could agree, but after carrying him often two miles, he would contend that it was but one; they got plenty of bread and milk at the farm-houses and cottages as they passed, for there was no house of accommodation near the whole of their track. One time, after they had refreshed and rested themselves, Jane reminded her conductor that he had promised the evening before to entertain her on their journey with the story of the profligate laird.

"That's an awfu' story," said Barnaby, "but it is soon tauld. It was the Laird o' Ettrickhaw; he that biggit his house amang the widow's corn, and never had a day to do weel in it. It isna yet a full age sin' the foundation-stane was laid, an' for a' the grandeur that was about it, there's nae man at this day can tell where the foundation has been, if he didna ken afore. He was married to a very proud precise lady, come o' high kin, but they greed aye weel eneugh till bonny Molly Grieve came to the house to serve. Molly was as light heartit as a kid, an' as blythe as a laverock, but she soon altered. She first grew serious, then sad, and unco pale at times; an' they whiles came on her greeting by hersel. It was ower weel seen how matters stood, an' there was nae mair peace about the house. At length it was spread ower a' the parish that the lady had gotten Molly a fine genteel service in Edinburgh, an' up comes hurkle-backit Charley Johnston, the laird's auld companion in wickedness, wi' a saddle an' a pad to take her away. When they set her on ahint him, Molly shook hands wi' a' the servants, but coudna speak, for she little kend when she would see them again. But, instead o' taking her away i' the fair daylight, i' the e'e o' God an' man, he took her away just when the lave war gaun to their beds: an' instead o' gaeing the road to Edinburgh, they war seen riding ower the Cacra-cross at twal o'clock at night. Bonny Molly Grieve was never seen again, nor heard of mair in this world. But there war some banes found about the Alemoor Loch, that the doctors said had belanged to a woman. There was some yellow hair, too, on the skull, that was unco like Molly's, but nae body could say.

"Then there was a fine strapping lass came in her place, a farmer's daughter, that had mony a lad running after her, but it wasna a year and a half till a service was to provide in Edinburgh for her too. Up came hurkle-backit Charley to take her away, but no gin they should a' hae sutten down on their knees wad she gae wi' him; she grat an' pray'd, an' they fleeched an' flait: but she stayed in the pariah in spite o' their teeth, an' shamed them a'. She had a son, but Charley got him to take to the nursing, far away some gate, an' there was nae body ony mair fashed wi' him.

"It wad be endless to tell ye ower a' their wickedness, for it can hardly be believed. Charley had mony sic job to do, baith at hame and at a distance. They grew baith odious in the country, for they turned aye the langer the waur, and took less pains to hide it; till ae night that the laird was walking at the back o' his garden, in the moonlight. It was thought he was waiting for a woman he had some tryste with, but that was conjecture, for he never said sae. At length he saw ane coming towards him, and hasted to meet her, but just as he approached, she held up her hand at him, as it war to check him, or make him note who she was; and when he lookit in her face, and saw what it was like, he uttered a loud cry, and fell senseless on the ground. Some fock heard the noise, and ran to the place, and fand him lying streekit in a deep dry seuch at the back of the garden. They carried him in, and he soon came to himself; but after that he was never like the same man, but rather like ane dementit. He durst never mair sleep by himsel while he lived: but that wasna lang, for he took to drinking, and drank, and swore, and blasphemed, and said dreadfu' things that folk didna understand. At length, he drank sae muckle ae night out o' desperation, that the blue lowe came burning out at his mouth, and he died on his ain hearth-stane, at a time o' life when he should scarcely have been at his prime.

"But it wasna sae wi' Charley! He wore out a lang and hardened life; and, at the last, when death came, he coudna die. For a day and two nights they watched him, thinking every moment would be the last, but always a few minutes after the breath had left his lips, the feeble cries of infants arose from behind the bed, and wakened him up again. The family were horrified; but his sons and daughters were men and women, and for their ain sakes they durstna let ane come to hear his confessions. At last, on the third day at two in the morning, he died clean away. They watched an hour in great dread, and then streekit him, and put the dead-claes on him, but they hadna weel done before there were cries, as if a woman had been drowning, came from behind the bed, and the voice cried, 'O, Charley, spare my life! Spare my life! For your own soul's sake and mine, spare my life!' On which the corpse again sat up in the bed, pawled wi' its hands, and stared round wi' its dead face. The family could stand it nae langer, but fled the house, and rade and ran for ministers, but before any of them got there, Charley was gane. They sought a' the house and in behind the bed, and could find naething; but that same day he was found about a mile frae his ain house, up in the howe o' the Baileylee-linn, a' torn limb frae limb, an' the dead-claes beside him. There war twa corbies seen flying o'er the muir that day, carrying

something atween them, an' fock suspectit it was Charley's soul, for it was heard makin' a loud maen as they flew o'er Alemoor. At the same time it was reportit, that there was to be seen every morning at two o'clock, a naked woman torfelling on the Alemoor loch, wi' her hands tied behind her back, and a heavy stane at her neck. It's an awsome story. I never dare tell it but in the middle o' the day, and even then it gars a' my flesh creep; but the hale country has heard it, and God only kens whether it be true or no. It has been a warning to mony ane."

Our fair wanderer asked for no more ghost stories. The last had sufficed her—it having been even more shocking than the former ones were delightful; so they travelled on, conversing about common or casual events, save that she gave him a short sketch of her history, whereof to inform his parents, with strong injunctions of secrecy. They came in view of his father's cottage before sunset. It was situated in the very wildest and most romantic glen in the shire of Peebles, at the confluence of two rough but clear mountain streams, that ran one on each side of the house and *kailyard*, and mingled their waters immediately below these. The valley was level, green, and beautiful, but the hills on each side high, steep, and romantic; and while they cast their long black shadows aslant the glen, the beams of the sun were shed over these like streamers in the middle air. It was a scene of tranquillity and repose, if not indeed the abode of the genii and fairies. Jane's heart danced within her when her eye turned to the varied scenery of the mountains, but again sunk when it fell on the cottage at which she was going to seek a retreat. She dreaded her reception, knowing how equivocal her appearance there must be; but she longed and thirsted for such a retreat, and as she was not destitute of money, she determined to proffer more for her board than she could well afford to pay, rather than be refused. Barnaby also spoke less as they advanced up the glen, and seemed struggling with a kind of dryness about his tongue, which would not suffer him to pronounce the words aright. Two fine shaggy healthy-looking collies came barking down the glen to meet them, and at a timid distance behind them, a half-grown puppy, making more noise than both. He was at one time coming brattling forward, and barking fiercely, as if going to attack them, and at another running yelping away from them with his tail between his legs. Little George laughed as he had been tickled at him. When the dogs came near, and saw that it was their old fire-side acquaintance and friend, they coured at his feet, and whimpered for joy; they even licked his fair companion's hand, and capered around her, as if glad to see any friend of Barnaby's. The whelp, perceiving that matters were amicably made up, likewise ventured near; and though he had never seen any of them before, claimed acquaintance with all, and was so kind and officious that he wist not what to do; but at last he fell on the expedient of bearing up the corner of Jane's mantle in his mouth, which he did all the way to the house. George was perfectly delighted.

"I think," said Jane, "the kindness of these creatures betokens a hearty welcome within."

"Ay, that it does," answered Barnaby; "a dog that is brought up with a man in a wild place, is always of the very same disposition with himself."

Strangers seldom approached that sequestered spot—passengers never. They observed, while yet at a good distance, Barnaby's mother standing amid her burly boys at the end of the cottage, watching their approach, and they heard her calling distinctly to her husband, "Aigh! Geordie, yon's our ain Barny, I ken by auld Help's motions; but wha she is that he's bringing wi' him is ayont my comprehension."

She hurried away in to put her fireside in some order, and nought was then to be seen but two or three bareheaded boys, with their hair the colour of peat-ashes, setting their heads always now and then by the corner of the house, and vanishing again in a twinkling. The old shepherd was sitting on his divot-seat, without the door, mending a shoe. Barnaby strode up to him. "How are ye the night, father?"

"No that ill, Barny lad; is that you? How are ye yoursel?" said a decent-looking, middle-aged man, scratching his head at the same time with the awl, and fixing his eyes, not on his son, but the companion that he had brought with him. When he saw her so young, so beautiful, and the child in her arms, the inquiring look that he cast on his son was unutterable. Silence reigned for the space of a minute. Barnaby made holes in the ground with his staff—the old shepherd began again to sew his shoe, and little George prattled to his mamma, "It's a vely good bonny halp, mamma; Geoge nevel saw sic a good halp."

"An' how hae ye been sin' we saw ye, Barny!"

"Gaylies!"

"I think ye hae brought twa young strangers wi' ye?"

"I wat have I."

"Whar fell ye in wi' them?"

"I want to speak a word to you, father."

The old shepherd flung down his work, and followed his son round the corner of the house. It was not two minutes till he came back. Jane had sat down on the sod-seat.

"This is a pleasant evening," said he, addressing her.

"It is a very sweet evening," was the reply.

"Ye'll be weary; ye had better *gang in* and rest ye."

She thanked him, and was preparing to go.

"It's a muckle matter," continued he, "whan fock can depend on their ain. My Barny never deceived me a' his life, an' you are as welcome here

as heart can mak ye. The flower in May is nae welcomer than ye are to this bit shieling, and your share of a' that's in it. Come your ways in, my bonny woman, an' think nae shame. Ye shall never be lookit on as either a beggar or borrower here, but just ane o' oursels." So saying he took her hand in both his, and led her into the house.

"Wife, here's a young stranger our son has brought to bide a while wi' ye; mak her welcome i' the meantime, an' ye'll be better acquaintit by and by."

"In troth I sal e'en do sae. Come awa in by to the muckle chair. Whar is he himsel, the muckle, duddy, feltered gouk?"

"Ah, he's coming, poor fellow; he's takin a tune to himsel at the house-end—there's a shower i' the heads wi' Barny; his heart can stand naething—it is as saft as a snaw-ba', an' far mair easily thawed, but it is aye in the right place for a' that."

It was a happy evening; the conversation was interesting, and kept up till a late hour; and when the old couple learned from Jane of the benevolent disinterested part that their son had acted, their eyes glowed with delight, and their hearts waxed kinder and kinder. Before they retired to rest, the old shepherd performed family worship, with a glow of devotional warmth which Jane had never before witnessed in man. The psalm that he sang, the portion of Scripture that he read, and the prayer that he addressed to the throne of grace, savoured all of charity and benevolence to our fellow-creatures. The whole economy of the family was of that simple and primitive cast, that the dwellers in a large city never dream of as existing. There was to be seen contentment without affluence or ambition, benevolence without ostentation, and piety without hypocrisy; but, at the same time, such a mixture of gaiety, good sense, and superstitious ideas blent together in the same minds, as was altogether inscrutable. It was a new state of existence to our fair stranger, and she resolved with avidity to improve it to the best advantage.

But we must now leave her in her new habitation, and return with Barnaby to the families of Earlhall and Todburn. Lindsey went up the water every day fishing as he had done formerly, but was astonished at observing from day to day, that his fair Wool-gatherer's cottage was locked, and no smoke issuing from it. At first he imagined that she might have gone on a visit, but at length began to suspect that some alteration had taken place in her circumstances; and the anxiety that he felt to have some intelligence, whether that change was favourable or the reverse, was such that he himself wondered at it. He could not account for it even to his own mind. It was certainly *the child* that so much interested him, else he *could not* account for it. Lindsey might easily have solved the difficulty had he acquiesced freely in the sentiments of his own heart, and acknowledged to himself that he was in love. But no!—all his reasoning, as he threw the line across the stream and brought it back again, went to disprove that. "That I can be in love with the girl is out of the question; there is no danger of such an event; for, in the first place, I would not wrong her or abuse her affections for the whole world; and in the next, I have a certain rank and estimation to uphold in society. I am a proprietor to a large extent—a freeholder of the county—come of a good family, at least by the father's side—and that I should fall in love with and marry a poor wool-gatherer with a"———! He was going to pronounce a word, but it stuck, not in his throat, but in the very utmost perceptible avenues that lead to the heart. "It is a very fine child, however; I wish I had him under my protection, then his mother might come and see him; but I care not for that, provided I had the child. I'll have that child, and for that purpose I will inquire after the mother directly."

He went boldly up to the cot, and peeped in at the little window. The hearth was cold, and the furniture neatly arranged. He examined the door, but the step and threshold had not been swept as they were wont for many days, and the green grass was beginning to peep up around them. "There is something extremely melancholy in this!" said he to himself. "I could not endure the veriest wretch on my estate to be thus lost, without at least inquiring after him."

He turned his eyes to the other cottages, and to the farm-house, but lacked the courage to go boldly up to any of them, and ask after the object of his thoughts. He returned to the fishing, but caught no fish, or if he did it was against his will.

On Barnaby's return he made some sly inquiries about the causes that induced to Jane's removal without effect, the farmer had kept all so snug. But haverel Meg (as they called her for a nick-name), his sister knew, and though she was an excellent keeper of secrets among her own sex, yet she could not help blabbing them sometimes to the young fellows, which her brother always accounted a very ridiculous propensity. Whether or not it is a natural one among old maids, the relater of this tale does not pretend to decide; he is induced to think it is, but is not dogmatic on that side, not having bestowed due consideration on the subject.

One day when Barnaby came home to his breakfast rather later than usual, and while he was sitting hewing away at a good stiff bicker of parritch, mixed with butter-milk, his excellent dog Nimrod all the time sitting with his head leaned on his master's knee, watching the progress of every spoonful, thinking the latter was rather going near him that day in their wonted proportions—while Barnaby, I say, was thus delightfully and busily employed, in comes Meg bare-footed, with a clean white wrapper and round-eared cap on. "Barny, will ye hae time to help me to the water wi' a boucking o' claes? Ye'll just

only hae to carry the tae end o' the hand-barrow to the water, wait till I sinde up the sarks, an' help me hame wi' them again."

"That I will, Miss Peggy, wi' heart an' hand."

"Miss Peggy! Snuffs o' tobacco! Meg's good enough! Troth, I'm nane o' your molloping, precise flegaries, that want to be *miss'd*, an' *beckit*, an' *bowed* to. Na, sooth! Meg's good enough; plain downright *Meg o' the Todburn.*"

"Weel, weel; haud your tongue, I'll do a' that ye bid me, an' mair, Meg, my bonny woman."

"How war a' your focks, Barny, when ye war ower seeing them?"

"Unco weel, an' they're muckle behadden to you for your kind speering."

"I kend your father weel; he's a good cannie man."

"I wish he had beltit your shoulders as aft as he has done mine, ye maybe wadna hae said sae muckle for him."

"Ay, it's weel o' you to say sae; but he's a douse, respectable man, and he's no disgraced in his son."

Barnaby rose with his bicker in his hand; gave it a graceful swing, as a gentleman does his hat when he meets a lady, made a low bow, and set down Nimrod his share of the parritch.

When they went to the river, Barnaby sat him down on the bank, and Meg went into the running stream, and began with great agility, and much splashing, to wash up her clothes. Barnaby perceived her smiling to herself, and was sure that a volley of some stuff or other was forthcoming. She cast her eyes towards the laird's house, then looked up the water, then down, in case any one might be angling on it; and after perceiving that there was nobody within a mile of them, she spoke as follows to Barnaby, in a half whisper, lest any one should overhear her.

"Gude sauf us to the day, Barny man! What think ye o' our laird?"

"Very muckle. I think him a decent worthy lad."

"Decent! Shame fa' *his* decency!—I watna what will be countit *un*decent soon! Sae ye haena heard o' his shamefu' connection wi' the bit prodigal, dinna-good lassie, that was here?"

"Never."

"It's a' ower true though; but sae nae a word about it. My billy Rob was obliged to chase her out o' the country for it; an' a burning shame an' a disgrace it was to the laird to take up wi' the likes o' her.—Deil a bit o' her has the pith o' a pipe stapple! —Fich, Fy! Away wi' your spindle-shankit baby-clouts—they're no the gear."

"As ye say, Meg. I like nane o' the women that *stand'pon trifles.*"

"Stand on trifles!—Ha! ha! that's real good! that's clever for a—young man! ha! ha!—Tut! that water's weetin' a' my claes.—Wad ye hae made sic a choice, Barny?"

"D'ye think that I'm blind? or that I dinna ken what's what?—Na, na, Meg! let me alane; I'm no sae young a cat but I ken a mouse by a feather."

"If a' our young men had the sense o' you, Barny, some o' them might get a pock an' a wheen rustit nails to jingle in't; they might get something better than a bit painted doll, wi' a waist like a thread-paper, an' hae nought ado foreby but to draw in the chair an' sit down. But *they'll* rin after a wheen clay-cakes bakin i' the sun, an' leave the good substantial ait-meal bannocks to stand till they moul, or be pouched by them that draff an' bran wad better hae mensed!—Tut! I'm ower deep into the stream again, without ever thinkin' o't."

"That's a' ower true that ye hae been sayin', Meg —ower true, indeed! But as to your news about the laird and Jane, I dinna believe a word o't."

"Oh! it's maybe no true, ye ken! It's very likely a lee! There's naething mair likely than that a' their correspondence was as pure as the morning snaw. For a laird, ye ken, worth three thousand pund o' yearly rental, to frequent the house o' a bit lassie for an hour ilka day—an' maybe ilka night too, wha kens—ye ken it's a' fair! there's nought mair likely than that they're *very* innocent! An' *sic* a ane too as she is! little better, I trow, than she should be, gin a' war kend. To be sure she has a son, *that* may arguy *something* for her decency. But after a', I dinna blame *her*, for I ken by mysel————"

"Haud your tongue now, Meg, my bonny quean; for I ken you are gaun to lee on yoursel, an' speak nonsense into the bargain."

"Ah! Barny! but ye are a queer ane!" (then in a whisper). "I say—Barny—What do ye think o' the bit farm o' Hesperslack? How wad ye like to be tenant there yoursel, an' hae servants o' your ain?"

"I hae nae thought about that yet; but yonder's my master keeking ower the knowe; he'll be thinking I'm stayin' unco lang frae my sheep."

"Ah! is my billy Rob yonder?—No a *word*, ye ken now, Barny. No a cheip aboon your breath about yon."

Sad and heavy were Barnaby's reflections that day as he herded his sheep all alone. "And *this* is the girl that I have taken and recommended so warmly to my parents! I do not believe the hateful slander; but I will go and inform them of all. It is proper they should know all that I know, and then let them judge for themselves. Poor luckless Jeany! I fear she is a ruined creature, be she as innocent and harmless as she will!"

Barnaby was resolved to go, but day passed on after day, and still he had not the heart to go and tell his parents, although every whisper that he heard tended rather to strengthen suspicion than dispel it.

On the very day that we left Lindsey in such distress for the loss of his amiable Wool-gatherer, Barnaby and he met by the side of the stream, at the

foot of the Todburn-Hope. They were both alike anxious to speak to one another, but neither of them had the courage to begin, although both were burning to talk on the same theme. Lindsey fished away, swimming the fly across the ripple as dexterously and provokingly as he was able. Barnaby stood and looked on in silence; at length a yellow fin rose. "Aigh, that was a great chap! I wish your honour had hookit that ane."

"It was better for him that I did not. Do you ever fish any?"

"O yes. I gump them whiles."

"*Gump* them? pray what mode of fishing is that?"

"I guddle them in aneath the stanes an' the braes like."

"I do not exactly understand the terms nor the process. Pray will you be so good," continued he, holding out the fishing-rod to Barnaby, "as give me a specimen how you *gump* the fish?"

"Od bless you, sir, I can do naething wi' that goad; but if ye'll gang wi' me a wee piece up the Todburn-Hope, or up to the Rowntree-Linn, I'll let ye see gumping to perfection."

On being assured that it was not above half a mile to either of the places, the laird accompanied Barnaby without hesitation, to witness this pastoral way of fishing. By the way their converse became very interesting to both parties, but we cannot interrupt the description of such a favourite rural sport just now. Let it suffice that their discourse was all concerning a fair unfortunate, of whom the reader has heard a good deal already, and of whom he shall hear more in due time.

They crossed over a sloping ground, at the bottom of a green steep hill, and soon came into the Todburn-Hope. It was a narrow level valley between two high hills, and terminated in the haunted linn, above the sheep-house formerly mentioned. Down this narrow vale the Tod burn ran with a thousand beautiful serpentine windings, and at every one of these turns there were one or two clear deep pools, overhung by little green banks. Into the first of these pools Barnaby got with his staff, plunging and poaching to make all the fish take into close cover; then he threw off his ragged coat, tucked up the sleeves of his shirt to the shoulders, tying them together behind, and into the pool he got again, knees and elbows, putting his arms in below the green banks, into the closest and most secret recesses of the trouts. There was no eluding him; he threw them out one after another, sometimes hitting the astonished laird on the face, or any other part of the body without ceremony, for his head being down sometimes close with the water, and sometimes below it, he did not see where he flung them. The trouts being a little startled at this momentary change from one element to another, jumped about on the grass, and cast so many acute somersets, that the laird had greater difficulty in getting hold of them the second time to put them into his basket, than Barnaby had at first; and when the latter had changed the scene of plunder to a new pool, Lindsey was commonly to be seen beside the old one, moving slowly about on his hands and knees. "I think ye're pinched to catch them on the dry grund, sir," said Barnaby to him.

"No, no," returned he, with the utmost simplicity; "but I was looking lest some of them had made their way among the long grass and eluded me; and besides they are so very active and slippery that I seldom can keep the hold of them that I get."

As they were going from one of these little pools to another, he said to our shepherd, "So this is what you call *gumping?*"

"Yes sir, this is gumping, or *guddling*, ony o' them ye like to ca't."

"I do not think this is altogether a fair way of fishing."

"Now, I think it is muckle fairer than the tither way, sir. Your way is founded on the lowest artifice and deceit, but I come as an avowed enemy, and let them escape me if they can. I come into a family as a brave mountain robber, or freebooter; but you come as a deceitful friend, promising to treat the family with all good things, that you may poison them every one unawares. A mountaineer's sports are never founded on cunning; it's a' sheer and main force wi' us."

Lindsey confessed that the shepherd's arguments had some foundation in nature and truth, but that they savoured of a period exempt from civilization and the fine arts. "At all events," said he, "it is certainly the most downright way of fishing that I ever beheld." In short, it was not long till the laird was to be seen wading in the pools, and *gumping* as busily as the other; and, finally, he was sometimes so intent on his prey, that the water was running over his back, so that when he raised himself up it poured out torrents from his fine Holland shirt and stained cambric ruffles. "Ye hae settled the pletts o' your sark," said Barnaby. Never did the family of Earlhall behold such a basket of trouts; and never had its proprietor such a day's sport at the fishing, as he had at the *gumping* or *guddling* the trouts among the links of the Todburn-Hope.

Though the sport occupied their minds completely during the time they were engaged in it, yet it was only a relaxation from concerns of a more serious nature. From Barnaby's information the laird now saw exactly how the land lay; and though he got no hint of the part that his mother had acted in it, yet he rather suspected, for he well knew her sentiments regarding all the young and beautiful of her own sex. Barnaby gave him no notice that he had ever seen the girl after her dismissal, or that he knew to what part of the world she had retired; and before they parted he desired him to tell his master to come down and speak with him that night.

Robin came as appointed; Lindsey and his mother were sitting by themselves in the parlour when the

servant announced him; he was ordered to join them, and as soon as he came in, Lindsey said, "Come away, Robin, I had a piece of information within these few days of you, that has somewhat distressed me, and I sent for you to make inquiry concerning it. What reasons had you for turning away the poor stranger girl and child from her cot before the term of your agreement expired?"

Robin looked to the window, then to the lady, and then to the window again, and finally looked down to the carpet, twirled his bonnet with both hands, and remained silent.

Though a strong and speaking look of appeal was turned on the old lady by Robin from time to time, yet she, hearing her son speak in that determined manner, likewise sat still without opening her lips.

"Why don't you answer me?" continued Lindsey. "I ask you simply what were your reasons for turning her away; you certainly must be able to state them."

"Hem! We war feared, sir—we war feared that she was a bad ane."

"You were *afraid* she was bad? Had you no other proofs of her badness farther than your own fears?"

"Indeed, sir, I never saw ony ill behaviour about the lassie. But ye ken weel enough that ane wha had forsaken the paths o' virtue and honesty sae early as it appears she had done, wi' sic an enchanting manner, an' weel-faured face into the boot, was rather a dangerous neighbour for sae mony young chiels."

"I think what Robin says is very true, and good sense," said the old lady.

"You certainly ought to have taken all these things into consideration before you bargained with her at first, Robin," said Lindsey. "I suppose you cannot argue that she is either grown younger or more beautiful since that period? I rather suspect, Robin, that you have used this young woman extremely ill; and if you cannot give any better reasons for your severity towards her, I can find out a method of forcing you to make an ample retribution."

"Indeed then, sir, sin' I maun tell the truth, I will tell the truth; it was my lady, your worthy mother there, that persuaded and *ordered* me to turn her away; for we had observed how great a favourite she was with you, and dreaded the consequences."

"It is then exactly as I suspected. You two have done me a great injury, and one that will not be easily wiped away. I hope neither of you intended it; but I would gladly know what trait in my character justified the conclusion you made. I think you might both have known my dispositions better than to have so readily believed that I would injure youth and beauty, that had already been unfortunate in the world—that I would add to her state of wretchedness, by annihilating for ever that innate principle of virtue and modesty, inherent in every young female's breast, which never man loved more, or delighted more to view, exerting all its primitive and untainted sway. If you had reflected at all, you could not have believed me capable of it. You have taken the readiest means in your power of injuring my character in the eyes of the world. It must naturally be concluded that there was a profligate and criminal intercourse subsisting between us, which rendered such an act of cruelty and injustice necessary. You have hurt my honour and my feelings, and wronged a defenceless and amiable young woman. It is on my account that she is thus innocently suffering, and I am determined, for my own satisfaction, to see her righted, as far as redress is in my power. though equivalent for an injured reputation there is none; but every vile insinuation on my account shall be fairly dispelled. To make therefore an end of all reflections at once, I warn you, Robin, that if she is not found, and restored to her rights in less than a fortnight at farthest, you need not be surprised if *you* are some day removed on as short notice as you gave to her."

The old lady and farmer had an inward view of matters in a different light: they perceived that the world would say he had brought her back to keep her there as his mistress, but this elegant and inflated harangue they were unable to answer. The young man's conscience was hurt, and they were no casuists. The lady, it is true, uttered some involuntary sounds as he was speaking, but it was not easy to determine whether they were groans, or hems of approbation. If one might have judged from her countenance, they were like the former, but the sounds themselves were certainly modulations of the latter. She was dependent on her son! Robin was studying a friendly reply, by way of remonstrance, all the time of the speech; but Robin was a widower, had a good farm, a large family, and was a tenant at will, and the conclusion of the said speech was a stumbling-block to Robin.

Pray, gentle reader, did you ever see a country maiden baking pease-meal bannocks? If you ever did, you must have noted that before she committed them one by one to the gridiron, she always stood straight up, with her head gracefully turned to one side, and moulded them with her two hands to an orb, as nearly resembling the full moon as she could. You must likewise have remarked, that while engaged in this becoming part of her avocation, she was never once looking at her work, but that while her head had that sly cast to the one side, her eyes were ever and anon fixed on the window, noting what was going on without, looking perhaps for her lad coming from the hill, or whistling at the plough. If you have ever seen this, you can easily comprehend the attitude I mean—if you have never, it is a great pity!

Exactly in such a situation stood our honest farmer, Robin Muckerland, plying his bonnet round with both hands in the same way—his head was like-

wise turned to one side, and his eyes immoveably fixed on the window—it was the girl's position to a hair. Let any man take his pen and describe the two attitudes, there is not the slightest shade of difference to be discerned—the one knee of both is even slackened and bent gently forward, the other upright and firm, by its own weight made steadfast and immoveable. Yet how it comes I do not comprehend, and should like much to consult my friend, David Wilkie, about it—it is plain that the attitudes are precisely the same, yet the girl's is quite delightful—Robin's was perfectly pitiable. He had not one word to say, but baked his bonnet and stood thus.

"This is my determination," continued Lindsey, "and you may pay what attention to it you please."

"Od, sir, I'm excessively vexed at what has happened, now when ye hae letten me see it in its true light, an' I sal do what I can to find her again, an' mak her what amends I am able. But, od ye see, nacbody kens where she's, ye see. She may be gane into the wild Highlands, or away to that outlandish country ayont the sea that they ca' Fife, an' how am I to get her? therefore, if I canna an' dinna get her, I hope you will excuse me, especially as neither the contrivance nor the act was mine."

"You and my honoured mother settle that betwixt you. I will not abate a tittle of that I have said; but to encourage your people in the search, or whomsoever you are pleased to employ, I shall give ten guineas to the person who finds her and restores her to her home."

"Aweel, son Lindsey," said the lady, moving her head like the pendulum of a clock, "your mother meant ye good, an' nae ill, in what she has done; but them that will to Cupar maun to Cupar. For the sake o' Robin and his family, and no for the neighbourhood o' this whilly-wha of a young witch, I shall gi'e the body that finds her half as muckle."

"And I," said Robin, "shall gi'e the same, which will make up the reward to twenty guineas, an' it is mair than I can weel spare in sic hard times. I never saw better come o' women's schemes, as I say whiles to my titty Meg."

The company parted, not on the most social terms; and that night, before Robin dismissed his servants to their beds, he said, "Lads, my master informs me that I am to be plaguit wi' the law for putting away that lassie Jeany an' her bit brat atween term days. I gie ye a' your liberty frae my wark until the end o' neist week, if she be not found afore that time, to search for her; and whoever finds her, and brings her back to her cottage, shall have a reward o' twenty guineas in his loof."

A long conversation then ensued on the best means of recovering her; but Barnaby did not wait on this, but hasted away to the stable loft, where his chest stood at the head of his bed, dressed himself in his Sunday clothes, and went without delay to the nearest stage where horses were let out for hire, got an old brown hack equipped with a bridle, saddle, and pad, and off he set directly for his father's cottage, where he arrived next morning by the time the sun was up.

To describe all Barnaby's adventures that night would take a volume by itself, for it was the very country of the ghosts and fairies that he traversed. As his errand was, however, solely for good, he was afraid of none of them meddling with him, save the devil and the water-kelpie; yet so hardly was he beset with these at times, that he had no other resource than to shut his eyes close, and push on his horse. He by this resolute contrivance got on without interruption, but had been so near his infernal adversaries at times that twice or thrice he felt a glow on his face, as if a breath of lukewarm air had been breathed against it, and a smell exactly resembling (he did not like to say brimstone, but) *a coal fire just gaun out!* But it is truly wonderful what a man, with a conscience void of offence towards God and towards his neighbour, will go through!

When the daylight began to spring up behind the hills of Glenrath, what a blithe and grateful man was Barnaby! "The bogles will be obliged to thraw aff their black claes now," said he, "an' in less than half an hour the red an' the green anes too. They'll hae to pit on their pollonians o' the pale colour o' the fair daylight, that the e'e o' Christian maunna see them; or gang away an' sleep in their dew-cups an' foxter-leaves till the gloaming come again. O, but the things o' this warld are weel contrived!"

Safely did he reach the glen, at the head of which his father's cottage stood, with its little kail-yard in the forkings of the burn; there was no dog, nor even little noisy pup, came out to give note of his approach, for his father and canine friends had all gone out to the heights at a very early hour to look after the sheep. The morning was calm and lovely; but there was no sound in the glen save the voice of his mother's gray cock, who was perched on the kail-yard dike, and crowing incessantly. The echoes were answering him distinctly from the hills; and as these aerial opponents were the only ones he ever in his life had to contend with, he had learned to value himself extremely on his courage, and was clapping his wings, and braving them in a note louder and louder. Barnaby laughed at him, although he himself had been struggling with beings as unreal and visionary during the whole night; so ready we are to see the follies of others, yet all the while to overlook our own!

The smoke was issuing from his mother's chimney in a tall blue spire that reached to the middle of the hill: but when there, it spread itself into a soft hazy cloud, and was resting on the side of the green brae in the most still and moveless position. The rising sun kissed it with his beams, which gave it a light woolly appearance, something like floating down; it was so like a vision that Barnaby durst scarcely look at it. "My mither's asteer," said he to himself, "I ken by her morning reek: she'll be

fiking up an' down the house, an' putting a' things to rights; an' my billies they'll be lying grumphing and snoring i' their dens; an' Jeany will be lying waking, listening what's gaun on, an' wee George will be sniffing an' sleeping sound in her bosom. Now I think, of a' things i' the warld a young mother an' her first son is the maist interesting—if she has been unfortunate it is ten times mair sae—to see how she'll sit an' look at him!—(here Barnaby blew his nose.)—I was my mother's first son; if she had been as bonny, an' as gentle, an' as feele as Jeany, aih! but I wad hae likit weel!"

No one being aware of Barnaby's approach, he rode briskly up to the door and rapped, causing at the same time his horse's feet make a terrible clamping on the stones. His mother, who had been sweeping the house, came running out with the heather besom in her hand. "Bless my heart, callant, is that you? Sic a gliff as I hae gotten w'ye! What's asteer w'ye? or whar ir ye gaun sae early i' the morning on that grand cut-luggit beast?"

"I'm turned a gentleman now, mother, that's a'; an' I thought I wad g'ye a ca' as I gaed by for auld lang syne—Hope ye're all well?"

"Deed we're a' no that ill. But, dear Barny, what ir ye after?—Hae ye a' your senses about ye?"

"I thank ye, I dinna miss ony o' them that I notice. I'm come for my wife that I left w'ye—How is she?"

"*Your* wife! Weel I wat ye'll never get the like o' her, great muckle hallanshaker-like guff.

"Haud your tongue now, mother, ye dinna ken wha I may get; but I can tell ye o' something that I'm to get. If I take hame that lassie Jeany safe to her house, ony time these ten days, there's naebody kens where I hae her hidden, an' I'm to get twenty guineas in my loof for doing o't."

"Ay, I tauld ye sae, my dear bairn."

"Ye never tauld me sic a word, mother."

"I hae tauld ye oft, that ae good turn never misses to meet wi' another, an' that the king may come i' the beggar's way."

"Ramsay's Scots Proverbs tell me that."

"It will begin a bit stock to you, my man; an' I sal say it o' her, gin I sude never see her face again, she's the best creature, ae way an' a' ways, that ever was about a poor body's house. Ah, God bless her!—she's a dear creature!—Ye'll never hae cause to rue, my man, the pains ye hae ta'en about her."

Jane was very happy at meeting with her romantic and kind-hearted Barnaby again, who told her such a turn as affairs had taken in her favour, and all that the laird had said to him about her, and the earnest inquiries he had made; and likewise how he had put Robin to his shifts. She had lived very happy with these poor honest people, and had no mind to leave them; indeed, from the day that she entered their house she had not harboured a thought of it; but now, on account of her furniture, which was of considerable value to her, and more particularly for the sake of Barnaby's reward, she judged it best to accompany him. So, after they had all taken a hearty breakfast together at the same board, the old shepherd returned thanks to the Bestower of all good things, and then kissing Jane, he lifted her on the horse behind his son. "Now, fare-ye-weel, Jeany, my woman," said he; "I think you will be happy, for I'm sure you deserve to be sae. If ye continue to mind the thing that's good, there is Ane wha will never forsake ye; I come surety for him. An' if ever adversity should again fa' to your lot, ye shall be as welcome to our bit house as ever, and to your share o' ilka thing that's in it; an' if I should see you nae mair, I'll never bow my knee before my Maker without remembering you. God bless you, my bonny woman! Fareweel."

Jane dropped a tear on her benefactor's hand. for who could stand such unaffected goodness! Barnaby, who had folded his plaid and held little George on it before him, turned his face towards the other side of the horse, and contracted it into a shape and contortion that is not often seen, every feature being lengthened extremely the cross way; but after blowing his nose two or three times he recovered the use of his rod, with which he instantly began a thrashing his nag, that he might get out of this flood of tenderness and leave-taking. It is not easy to conceive a more happy man than he was that day; he was so proud of his parents' kindness to Jane, and of the good he thought he was doing to all parties, and, besides, the twenty guineas was a fortune to him. He went on prating to George. who was quite delighted with the ride on such a grand horse; yet at times he grew thoughtful, and testified his regret for the horse, lest he should be tired with carrying them all. "Geoge vely solly fol poole holse, Balny! Geoge no like to be a holse."

Many were the witch and fairy tales that Barnaby related that day to amuse his fellow travellers. He set down Jane and George safe at their cottage before evening, and astonished Robin not a little, who was overjoyed to see his lost gimmer and lamb (as he termed them) so soon. He paid Barnaby his twenty guineas that night in excellent humour, making some mention, mean time, of an old proverb. "They that hide ken where to seek," and without delay sent information to the mansion-house that Jane was found, and safely arrived at her own house. a piece of news which created no little stir at Earlhall.

The old lady had entertained strong hopes that Jane would not be found; or that she would refuse to return after the treatment she had met with, and the suspicions that were raised against her; in short. she wished her not to return, and she hoped she would not; but now all her fond hopes were extinguished, and she could see no honourable issue to the affair. It was likely to turn out a love intrigue, a low and shameful business, let her son pretend what he chose. She instantly lost all command of

her temper, hurried from one part of the house to another, quarrelled with every one of the maid servants, and gave the two prettiest ones warning to leave their places.

Lindsey was likewise a little out of his reason that night, but his feelings were of a very different kind. He loved all the human race; he loved the little birds that sang upon the trees almost to distraction. The deep blue of the heavens never appeared so serene—the woods, the fields, and the flowers, never so delightful; such a new and exhilarating tone did the return of this beautiful girl (child, I mean) give to his whole vital frame. "What a delightful world this is!" said he to himself; "and how happy might all its inhabitants live, if they would but suffer themselves to do so!" He did not traverse the different apartments of the house with the same hasty steps as his mother did, but he took many rapid turns out to the back garden, and in again to the parlour.

In the middle of one of these distant excursions his ears were assailed by the discordant tones of anger and reproach—proud and haughty contumely on the one side, and the bitter complaints of wronged but humble dependence on the other.

"This is some one of my mother's unreasonable imputations," said he to himself; "it is hard that the fairer and more delicate part of my servants, who are in fact *my* servants, receiving meat and wages from me, and whom I most wish to be happy and comfortable in their circumstances, should be thus harassed and rendered miserable—I will interfere in spite of all obloquy." He went in to the fore-kitchen; "What is the matter? What is the meaning of all this disturbance here?"

"Matter, son! The matter is, that I will not be thus teased and wronged by such a worthless scum of menials as your grieve has buckled on me. I am determined to be rid of them for the present, and to have no more servants of his hiring."

So saying, she bustled away past him, and out of the kitchen. Sally, one of the maidens that wrought a-field, whose bright complexion and sly looks had roused the lady's resentment, was standing sobbing in a corner. "What is this you have done, Sally, thus to irritate my mother?"

"I hae done naething ava that's wrang, sir; but she's never aff my tap; an' I'm glad I'm now free frae her. Had she tauld me my fault, an' turned me away, I wad never hae regrettit; but she has ca'd me sic names afore a' these witnesses, that I'll never get mair service i' the country. I see nae right ony body has to guide poor servants this gate."

"Nor I either, Sally; but say no more about it; I know you to be a very faithful and conscientious servant, for I have often inquired; remain in your place, and *do not* go away—remember I order it. Give no offence to my mother that you can avoid—be a good girl, as you have heretofore been, and here is a guinea to buy you a gown at next fair."

"Oh, God bless him for a kind good soul!" said Sally, as he went out, and the benediction was echoed from every corner of the kitchen.

He rambled more than half-way up the river side to Todburn; but it was too late to call and see *the dear child* that night, so he returned, joined his mother at supper, was more than usually gay and talkative, and at last proposed to invite this fair rambler down to Earlhall to breakfast with them next morning. The lady was almost paralyzed by this proposal, and groaned in spirit!

"Certainly, son! certainly! your house is your ain; invite onybody to it you like; nane has a better right! a man may keep ony company he chooses. Ye'll hae nae objections, I fancy, that I keep out o' the party?"

"Very great objections, mother; I wish to see this girl, and learn her history; if I call privately you will be offended; is it not better to do this before witnesses? And I am likewise desirous that you should see her, and be satisfied that she is at all events worthy of being protected from injury. Let us make a rustic party of it, for a little variety; we will invite Robin, and his sister Miss Margaret, and any other of that class you choose."

"O certainly! invite them ilk ane, son—invite a' the riff-raff i' the parish; your mother has naething to say."

He was stung with this perversity, as well as with his love for *the child* on the other hand: he did invite them, and the invitation was accepted. Down came Robin Muckerland, tenant of the Todburn, dressed in his blue and gray thread-about coat, with metal buttons, broader than a Queen Ann's half-crown, dark corduroy breeches, and drab-coloured leggums (the best things, by the bye, that ever came in fashion); and down came haverel Meg, his sister, *alias* Miss Peggy for that day, with her cork-heeled shoon, and long-waisted gown, covered with broad stripes, like the hangings of an ancient bed. She had, moreover, a silken bonnet on her head for laying aside in the lobby, under that a smart cap, and under that again an abundance of black curly hair, slightly grizzled, and rendered more outrageously bushy that morning by the effects of curl-papers over night. Meg was never seen dressed in such style before, and I wish from my heart that any assembly of our belles had seen her. She viewed the business as a kind of *show of cattle* before the laird, in the same way as the young ladies long ago were brought in before King Ahasuerus; and she was determined to bear down Jane to the dust, and carry all before her. The very air and swagger with which she walked was quite delightful, while her blue ribbon-belt, half a foot broad, and proportionally long, having been left intentionally loose, was streaming behind her like the pennon of a ship. "It is rather odd, billy Rob," said she, "that we should thus be invited alang wi' our ain cottar. Howevcr, the laird's ha' levels a'; if she be fit company for

him, she maunna be less for us: fock maun bow to the bush that they seek beild frae."

"E'en sae, Meg; but let us see you behave yoursel' like a woman the day, an' no get out wi' ony o' your volleys o' nonsense."

"Deed, Rob, I'll just speak as I think; there sall naething gyzen i' my thrapple that my noddle pits there. I like nane o' your kind o' fock that dare do naething but chim chim at the same thing ower again, like the gouk in a June day. Meg maun hae out her say, if it sude burst Powbeit on her head."

As they came down by the washing-green, Jane joined them, dressed in a plain brown frock, and leading little George, who was equipped like an earl's son; and a prettier boy never paddled at a mother's side.

The old lady was indisposed that day, and unable to come down to breakfast; and it was not till after the third visit from her son, who found he was like to be awkwardly situated with his party, that she was prevailed on to appear. Robin entered first, and made his obeisance; Meg came in with a skip and a courtesy, very like that of the water-owzel when she is sitting on a stone in the middle of the stream. Poor Jane appeared last, leading her boy; her air was modest and diffident, yet it had nothing of that awkward timidity inseparable from low life, and a consciousness that one has no right to be there. The lady returned a slight nod to her courtesy, for she had nearly dropped down when she first cast eyes upon her beauty, and elegance of form, and manner. It was the last hope she had remaining, that this girl would be a vulgar creature, and have no pretensions to that kind of beauty admired in the higher circles; now that last hope was blasted. But that which astonished every one most was the brilliancy of her eyes, which all her misfortunes had nothing dimmed; their humid lustre was such, that it was impossible for any other eye to meet their glances without withdrawing abashed. The laird set a seat for her, and spoke to her as easily as he could, but of that he was no great master; he then lifted little George, kissed him, and setting him on his knee fell a talking to him. "And where have you been so long away from me, my dear little fellow? Tell me where you have been all this while."

"Fal away, at auld Geoldie's, little Davie's falel, ye ken; him at has 'e fine bonny 'halp wi' a stipe down hele and anolel down hele. Little Davie vely good to Geoge, and vely queel callant."

Every one laughed aloud at George's description of the whelp, and his companion little Davie, save Jane, who was afraid he would discover where their retreat had been rather prematurely. Breakfast was served; the old lady with forced complaisance chatted to Meg, who answered her just with what chanced to come uppermost, never once to the point or subject on which she was previously talking; for all the time the good old dowager was addressing her she was busied in adjusting some part of her dress—looking at the shape of her stays—casting a glance at the laird, and occasionally at Jane—then adjusting a voluptuous curl that half hid her gray eye. She likewise occasionally uttered a vacant hem! when the lady paused, and as soon as she ceased began some observation of her own. Robin was quite in the fidgets. "Dear Meg, woman, that's no what her ladyship was speaking about. That's no to the purpose ava."

"Speak ye to the purpose then, Rob. Ye think naebody can speak but yoursel, hummin an' hawin. Let us hear how weel ye'll speak to the purpose.—Whisht, sirs! haud a' your tongues; my billy Rob's gaun to mak a speech."

"Humph!" quoth Robin, and gave his head a cast round.

"Humph!" returned Meg, "what kind of a speech is that? Is that to the purpose? If that be to the purpose, a sow could hae made that speech as weel as you, and better. The truth is, mem, that our Rob's aye wantin to be on his high horse afore grit folk; now I says till him, Rob, says I, for you to fa' to afore your betters, and be tryin to speak that vile nicky-nacky language they ca' English, instead o' being on your high horse then, ye are just like a heron walkin on stilts, and that's but a daft-like beast. Ye sude mind, says I, Rob, man, says I, that her ladyship's ane o' our ain kind o' fock, an' was bred at the same heck an' manger wi' oursels; an' although she has lightit on a good tethering, ye're no to think that she's to gi'e hersel airs, an' forget the good auld haemilt blude that rins in her veins."

The lady's cheek was burning with indignation, for of all topics Meg was fallen on the most unlucky; nothing hurt her feelings half so much as hints of her low extraction. Lindsey, though vexed, could not repress a laugh at the proud offence on the one side, and the untameable vulgarity on the other. Meg discerned nothing wrong, and if she had would not have regarded it. She went on: "Ah, Meg, woman! quo' he, ye ken little thing about it, quo' he; when the sole of a shoe's turned uppermost, it maks aye but an unbowsome overleather; if ye corn an auld glide-aver weel, she'll soon turn about her heels and fling i' your face."

Robin's whole visage changed; his eyes were set on Meg, but his brows were screwed down, and his cheeks pursed up in such a manner that those were scarcely discernible; his mouth had meanwhile assumed the form and likeness of one of the long S's on the belly of a fiddle. Meg still went on. "Dear Rob, says I, man, says I, that disna apply to her ladyship ava, for everything that she does and everything that she says shows her to be a douse hamely body; the very way that she rins bizzin through the house and flyting on the servants, proves that she maks nae pretensions to high gentility."

Lindsey, who now dreaded some explosion of rage

subversive of all decorum, began and rallied Meg, commended her flow of spirits and fresh looks, and said she was very much of a lady herself.

"I wat, laird," said she, "I think aye if a body behaves wi' ease, an' without ony stiffness an' precision, that body never behaves ill; but, to be sure, you grand fock can say an' do a hantle o' things that winna be ta'en aff our hands. For my part, when the great fike rase about you an' Jeany there, I says—says I"——

This was a threatening preface. Lindsey durst not stand the sequel. "I beg your pardon for the present, Miss Peggy," said he; "we shall attend to your observations on this topic after we have prepared the way for it somewhat. I was, and still am convinced that this young woman received very harsh and unmerited treatment from our two families. I am desirous of making her some reparation, and to patronize her as well as this boy if I find her in any degree deserving of it. This protection shall, moreover, be extended to her in a manner that neither suspicion nor blame shall attach to it; and, as we are all implicated in the wrong, I have selected you as judges in this matter. It is impossible," continued he, addressing himself to Jane, "to be in your company half an hour and not discern that your education has been much above the sphere of life which you now occupy; but I trust you will find us all disposed to regard you with the eye of friendship, if you will be so good as relate to us the incidents of your life which have contributed to your coming among us."

"The events of my life, sir," said she, "have been, like the patriarch's days, few and evil, and my intention was never to have divulged them in this district—not on my own account, but for the sake of their names that are connected with my history, and are now no more. Nevertheless, since you have taken such an interest in my fortunes, it would both be ungrateful and imprudent to decline giving you that satisfaction. Excuse me for the present in withholding my family name, and I will relate to you the incidents of my short life in a very few words.

"My father was an eminent merchant. Whether ever he was a rich one or not I cannot tell, but he certainly was looked upon as such, for his credit and dealings were very extensive. My mother died twelve years ago, leaving my father with no more children than another daughter and myself. I received my education in Edinburgh along with my sister, who was two years older than I. She began to manage my father's household affairs at thirteen years of age, and I went to reside with an aunt in East Lothian, who had been married to a farmer, but was now a widow, and occupied a farm herself.

"Whether it originated in his not finding any amusement at home, or in consciousness of his affairs getting into confusion, I know not, but our father about this time fell by degrees from attending to his business in a great measure, and sunk into despondency. My sister's letters to me were full of regret; my aunt being in a declining state of health I could not leave her for some months. At last she died, leaving me a legacy of five hundred pounds, when I hastened home, and did all in my power to aid my sister in comforting our father; but he did not long survive, and dying insolvent we not only lost our protector, but had nothing to depend on save my little legacy and our own industry and exertions. We retired to a small lodging; none of our friends thought proper to follow us to our retreat; and now, bereaved as we were of our natural protector, we could not help perceiving that we were a friendless and helpless pair. My sister never recovered her spirits; a certain dejection and absence of mind from this time forth began to prey upon her, and it was with real sorrow and concern that I perceived it daily gaining ground, and becoming more and more strongly marked. I tried always to console her as much as I could for our loss, and often to cheer her assumed a gaiety that was foreign to my heart; but we being quite solitary, her melancholy always returned upon her with double weight. About this time I first saw a young officer with my sister, who introduced him carelessly to me as *the captain*. She went out with him, and when she returned I asked who he was. 'Bless me, Jane,' said she, 'do you not know the Captain?' I was angry at the flippancy of her manner, but she gave me no further satisfaction."

At the mention of this officer Lindsey grew restless and impatient, changing his position on the seat every moment.

"Things went on in this manner," continued Jane, "for some time longer, and still my sister grew more heartless and dejected. Her colour grew pale, and her eye heavy, and I could not help feeling seriously alarmed on her account.

"For nine or ten days she went out by herself for an hour or so every day, without informing me where she had been. But one morning when I arose my sister was gone. I waited until noon before I took any breakfast; but nothing of my sister appearing, I became distracted with dreadful apprehensions. I went about to every place where I thought there was the least chance of hearing any news of her, yet durst I not ask for her openly at any one for fear of the answer I might receive; for, on considering the late dejected state of her mind, I expected nothing else than to hear that she had put an end to her existence. My search was fruitless; night came, and still no word of my sister; I passed it without sleep; but, alas! the next night, and many others, came and passed over without bringing a trace of her steps, or throwing a gleam of light on her fate. I was now obliged to set on foot a strict and extensive search, and even to have her advertised; yet still all my exertions proved of no avail.

"During this long and dreadful pause of uncertainty I thought there could not be conceived a

human being more thoroughly wretched than I was. Only seventeen years of age; the last of all my father's house; left in a lodging by myself; all my neighbours utter strangers to me, and not a friend on earth to whom I could unbosom my griefs; wretched I was, and deemed it impossible to be more so; but I had over-rated my griefs, and was punished for my despondency.

"When some months had passed away, one spring morning, I remember it well! after a gentle rap at the door, the maid entered, and said, *a man* wanted to see me. 'A man!' said I; 'What man wishes to speak to me?'

"'I don't know, mem, he is like a countryman.'

"He was shown in; a pale man, of a dark complexion, and diminutive size. I was certain I had never seen him before, for his features were singularly marked. He asked my name, and seemed at a loss to deliver his message, and there was something in his air and manner that greatly alarmed me. 'So you said your name is so so?' said he again.

"'I did; pray, tell me what is your business with me?'

"'There is a lady at our house, who I suppose wishes to speak with you.'

"'What lady wishes to see me? Where is your house?'

"He named some place on the London road towards Berwick.

"'What lady can possibly be there,' said I, 'that knows anything of me?'

"He looked at me again—'Pray, mem, have you a sister? Or had you ever any that you know of?'

"This query paralyzed me. I sunk down on the sofa; but as soon as I could speak, I asked how long the lady had been with him?

"'Only since Friday evening last,' said he. 'She was taken ill at the inn on her way to Edinburgh, from whence she was conveyed to my house, for the sake of better and more quiet accommodation; but she has been very ill—*very* ill indeed. There is now hope that she will recover, but she is still *very* ill. I hope you are the lady she named when all was given over; at all events, you must go and see.'

"Scarcely knowing what I did, I desired the man to call a post-chaise. We reached the place before even. I entered her apartment, breathless and impatient; but how shall I relate to you the state in which I found her! My heart bleeds to this day, when remembrance presents me with the woeful spectacle! She was lying speechless, unable to move a hand or lift an eye, and posting on, with rapid advances, to eternity, having some days before given birth to this dear child on my knee."

At this moment the eyes of all the circle were fixed on Jane, expressing strongly a mixture of love, pity, and admiration. Lindsey could contain himself no longer. He started to his feet—stretched his arms toward her, and, after gasping a little for breath—"Wh—wh—what!" said he, sighing, "are you not then the *mother* of little George?"

"A poor substitute only for a better, sir; but the only parent he has ever known, or is likely to know."

"And you have voluntarily suffered all these privations, trouble, and shame, for the sake of a poor little orphan, who, it seems, is no nearer akin to you than a nephew? If ever the virtuous principles and qualities of a female mind deserved admiration—But proceed. I am much to blame for interrupting you."

"I never for another moment departed from my sister's bed-side until she breathed her last, which she did in about thirty hours after my arrival. During that time, there was only once that she seemed to recollect or take the slightest notice of me, which was a little before her final exit; but then she gave me such a look!—so full of kindness and sorrow, that language could not have expressed her feelings half so forcibly. It was a farewell look, which is engraven on the tablets of my mind, never to be obliterated while that holds intercourse with humanity.

"The shock which my feelings received by the death of the only friend of my heart, with the mysterious circumstances which accompanied it, deprived me for some time of the powers of recollection. My dreams by night, and my reflections during the day, were all so much blent and intermingled, and so wholly of the same tendency, that they became all as a dream together; so that I could not, on a retrospect, discover in the least, nor ever can to this day, what part of my impressions were real, or what were mere phantasy, so strongly were the etchings of fancy impressed on my distempered mind. If the man I mentioned before, who owned the house, had not looked after the necessary preparations for the funeral, I know not how or when it would have been set about by any orders of mine. They soon enticed me away from the body, which they suffered me to visit but seldom, and, it seems, I was perfectly passive. That such a thing as my sister's funeral was approaching, occurred but rarely to my mind, and then, it in a manner surprised me as a piece of unexpected intelligence was wont to do, and it as suddenly slipped away, leaving my imagination again to wander in a maze of inextricable confusion.

"The first thing that brought me to myself was a long fit of incessant weeping, in which I shed abundance of tears. I then manifested an ardent desire to see the child, which I recollect perfectly well. I considered him as the only remembrance left to me of a respectable and well-descended family, and of the dearest friend ever I remembered upon earth. When I first saw him, he was lying on an old woman's knee; and when I stooped to look at him, he, with a start of his whole frame, fixed his young unstable eyes on me, and stretched out his little spread hands toward me, in which position he remained steadily

for a considerable time. This was so marked and uncommon, that all the standers by took notice of it; and the woman who held him said, 'See! saw ye ever the like o' that? I never saw the like o' that a' my life! It is surely impossible he can ken ye!'

"It was, without doubt, an involuntary motion of the babe, but I could not help viewing it as a movement effected by the Great Spirit of universal nature. I thought I saw the child beseeching me to protect his helpless innocence, and not to abandon him to an injurious world, in which he had not another friend remaining, until he could think and act for himself. I adopted him that moment in my heart as my son—I took him into my arms as a part of myself!—That simple motion of my dear child fixed my resolution with respect to him at once, and that resolution never has been altered nor injured in the smallest part.

"I hired a nurse for him; and, it being term time, gave up my house, and sold all my furniture, save the little that I have still, and retired to a cottage at Slateford, not far from Edinburgh. Here I lived frugally with the nurse and child; and became so fond of him, that no previous period of my life, from the days of childhood, was ever so happy; indeed, my happiness was centred solely in him, and if he was well, all other earthly concerns vanished. I found, however, after paying the rent of the house, the expenses of the two funerals, and the nurse's wages, that my little stock was reduced nearly one-third; and fearing that it would in a little while be wholly exhausted, I thought the sooner I reconciled myself to hardships the better; so leaving the remainder of my money in the bank as a fund in case of sickness or great necessity, I came and took this small cottage and garden from your farmer. I had no ambition but that of bringing up the child, and educating him, independent of charitable assistance; and I cannot describe to you how happy I felt at the prospect, that the interest of my remaining property, with the small earnings of my own industry, were likely to prove more than an equivalent to my yearly expenses. I have from the very first acknowledged little George as my own son. I longed for a retirement, where I should never be recognized by any former acquaintance. In such a place I thought my story might gain credit; nor could I think in any degree to stain the name of my dear departed sister by any surmises or reflections that might in future attach to it by telling the story as it was. How I should have felt had he really been my son I cannot judge; but instead of feeling any degradation at being supposed his mother, so wholly is my existence bound up in him, that I could not bear the contrary to be supposed.

"Who his father is, remains a profound, and to me, unaccountable mystery. I never had the slightest suspicion of the rectitude of her behaviour, and cannot understand to this day how she could possibly carry on an amour without suffering me to perceive any signs of it. She had spoken but little to the people with whom I found her; but their impressions were, that she was not married, and I durst not inquire farther; for, rather than have discovered his father to be unworthy, I chose to remain in utter ignorance concerning it, and I could not think favourably of one who had deserted her in such circumstances. There was no man whom I had ever seen that I could in the least suspect, if it was not the young officer that I formerly mentioned, and he was the least likely to be guilty of such an act of any man I ever saw."

Here Lindsey again sprang to his feet. "There is something occurs to my mind—the most extraordinary circumstance—if it be really so. You wished to be excused from giving your surname, but there is a strange coincidence in your concerns with my own, which renders it absolutely necessary that I should be informed of this."

Jane hesitated, and said she could not think of divulging that so as to make it public, but that she would trust his honour, and tell it him in his ear. She then whispered the name M'————y.

"What!" said he aloud, forgetting the injunction of secrecy, of the late firm M'————y and Reynolds?"

"The same, sir."

The positions into which he now threw himself, and the extravagant exclamations that he uttered, cannot here be all described. The other three personages in the room all supposed that he was gone out of his reason. After repeating, till quite out of breath, "It is she! it is she! it is the same! it is the same!" and, pressing both her hands in his, he exclaimed, "Eternal Providence! how wonderful are thy ways, and how visible is thy superintendence of human affairs, even in the common vicissitudes of life! but never was it so visible as in this! My dear child," continued he, taking little George in his arms, who looked at him with suspicion and wonder, "by how many fatal and untoward events, all seemingly casual, art thou at last, without the aid of human interference, thrown into the arms of thy natural guardian! and how firmly was my heart knit to thee from the very first moment I saw thee! But thou art my own son, and shalt no more leave me; nor shall your beautiful guardian either, if she will accept of a heart that her virtues have captivated. This house shall henceforth be a home to you both, and all my friends shall be friends to you, for you are my own."

Here the old lady sprang forward, and laying hold of her son by the shoulder, endeavoured to pull him away. "Consider what you are saying, Lindsey, and what you are bringing on yourself, and your name, and your family. You are raving mad—that child can no more be yours than it is mine. Will you explain yourself, or are we to believe that you have

indeed lost your reason? I say, where is the consistency in supposing that child can be yours?"

"It is impossible," said Robin.

"I say it's nae sic a thing as unpossible, Rob," quoth Meg. "Haud your tongue, ye ken naething about it—it's just as possible that it may be his as another's—I sal warrant whaever be aught it, it's no comed there by sympathy! Od, if they war to come by sympathy"———

Here Meg was interrupted by Lindsey, who waved his hand for silence—a circumstance that has sorely grieved the relater of this tale—for of all things he would have liked to have had Meg's ideas, at full length, of children being produced by sympathy.

"I beg your pardon," said Lindsey, "I must have appeared extravagant in my rapturous enthusiasm, having forgot but that you knew all the circumstances as well as myself. The whole matter is, however, very soon and very easily explained."

He then left the room, and all the company gazing upon one another. Jane scarcely blushed on receiving the vehement proffer from Lindsey, for his rhapsody had thrown her into a pleasing and tender delirium of amazement, which kept every other feeling in suspense.

In a few seconds he returned, bringing an open letter in his hand. "Here is the last letter," said he, "ever I received from my brave and only brother; a short extract from which will serve fully to clear up the whole of this very curious business."

He then read as follows:—"Thus, you see, that for the last fortnight the hardships and perils we have encountered have been many and grievous; but TO-MORROW will be decisive one way or another. I have a strong prepossession that I shall not survive the battle; yea, so deeply is the idea impressed on my mind, that with me it amounts to an absolute certainty; therefore, I must confide a secret to you which none in the world know, or in the least think of, save another and myself. I was privately married before I left Scotland to a young lady, lovely in her person, and amiable in her manners, but without any fortune. We resolved, for reasons that must be obvious to you, to keep our marriage secret, until I entered to the full possession of my estate, and if possible till my return; but now (don't laugh at me, my dear brother), being convinced that I shall never return, I entreat you, as a last request, to find her out and afford her protection. It is probable that by this time she may stand in need of it. Her name is Amelia M'————y, daughter to the late merchant of that name of the firm M'————y and Reynolds. She left her home with me in private, at my earnest request, though weeping with anguish at leaving a younger sister, a little angel of mercy, whom, like the other, you will find every way worthy of your friendship and protection. The last letter that I had from her was dated from London, the 7th of April, on which day she embarked in the packet for Leith, on her way to join her sister, in whose house, near Bristo-Port, you will probably find her. Farewell, dear brother. Comfort our mother; and O, for my sake, cherish and support my dear wife! We have an awful prospect before us, but we are a handful of brave determined friends, resolved to conquer or die together."

The old lady now snatched little George up in her arms, pressed him to her bosom, and shed abundance of tears over him.—"He is indeed my grandson! he is! he is!" cried she. "My own dear George's son, and he shall henceforth be cherished as my own."

"And he shall be mine too, mother," added Lindsey; "and heir of all the land which so rightly belongs to him. And she, who has so disinterestedly adopted and brought up the heir of Earlhall, shall still be his mother, if she will accept of a heart that renders her virtues every homage, and beats in unison with her own to every tone of pity and benevolence."

Jane now blushed deeply, for the generous proposal was just made while the tears of joy were yet trickling over her cheeks on account of the pleasing intelligence she had received of the honour of her regretted sister, and the rank of her child. She could not answer a word—she looked steadfastly at the carpet, through tears, as if examining how it was wrought—then at a little pearl ring she wore on her finger, and finally fell to adjusting some of little George's clothes. They were all silent—it was a quaker meeting, and might have continued so much longer, had not the spirit fortunately moved Meg.

"By my certy, laird! but ye hae made her a good offer! an' yet she'll pretend to tarrow at takin't! But ye're sure o' her, tak my word for it. Ye dinna ken women. Bless ye! the young hizzies mak aye the greatest fike about things that they wish maist to hae. I ken by mysel—when Andrew Pistolfoot used to come stamplin in to court me i' the dark, I wad hae cried (whispering), 'Get away wi' ye, ye bowled-like shurf!—whar are ye coming pechin an' fuffin' to me?' Bless your heart! gin Andrew had run away when I bade him, I wad hae run after him, an' grippit him by the coat-tails, an' brought him back. Little wist I this morning, an' little wist mae than I, that things war to turn out this way, an' that Jeany was to be our young lady! She was little like it that night she gaed away greetin wi' the callant on her back! Dear Rob, man, quo' I to my billy, what had you and my lady to do wi' them! Because her day and yours are ower, do ye think they'll no be courting as lang as the warld stands; an' the less that's said about it the better—I said sae!"

"And you said truly, Meg," rejoined Lindsey. "Now, pray, Miss Jane, tell me what you think of my proposal?"

"Indeed, sir," answered she, "you overpower me. I am every way unworthy of the honour you propose

for my acceptance; but as I cannot part with my dear little George, with your leave I will stay with my lady and take care of him."

"Well, I consent that you shall stay with my mother as her companion. A longer acquaintance will confirm that affection, which a concurrence of events has tended so strongly to excite."

It was not many months until this amiable pair were united in the bonds of matrimony, and they are still living, esteemed of all their acquaintances. Barnaby is the laird's own shepherd, and overseer of all his rural affairs, and he does not fail at times to remind his gentle mistress of his dream about the *eagle* and the *corbie*.

A TALE OF PENTLAND.

Wodrow mentions the following story, but in a manner so confused and indefinite, that it is impossible to comprehend either the connection of the incidents with one another, or what inference he wishes to draw from them. The facts seem to have been these. Mr. John Haliday having been in hiding on the hills, after the battle of Pentland, became impatient to hear news concerning the suffering of his brethren who had been in arms, and in particular if there were any troops scouring the district in which he had found shelter. Accordingly, he left his hiding-place in the evening, and travelled towards the valley until about midnight; when, coming to the house of Gabriel Johnstone, and perceiving a light, he determined on entering, as he knew him to be a devout man, and one much concerned about the sufferings of the Church of Scotland.

Mr. Haliday, however, approached the house with great caution, for he rather wondered why there should be a light there at midnight, while at the same time he neither heard psalms singing nor the accents of prayer. So, casting off his heavy shoes, for fear of making a noise, he stole softly up to the little window from whence the light beamed, and peeped in, where he saw, not Johnstone, but another man, whom he did not know, in the very act of cutting a soldier's throat, while Johnstone's daughter, a comely girl about twenty years of age, was standing deliberately by, and holding the candle to him.

Haliday was seized with an inexpressible terror; for the floor was all blood, and the man was struggling in the agonies of death, and from his dress he appeared to be a cavalier of some distinction. So completely was the Covenanter overcome with horror, that he turned and fled from the house with all his might; resolved to have no participation in the crime, and deeply grieved that he should have witnessed such an act of depravity as a private deliberate murder, perpetrated at such an hour, and in such a place, by any who professed to be adherents to the reformed religion of the Scottish church. So much had Haliday been confounded that he even forgot to lift his shoes, but fled without them; and he had not run above half a bowshot before he came upon two men hastening to the house of Gabriel Johnstone. As soon as they perceived him running towards them they fled, and he pursued them, for when he saw them so ready to take alarm, he was sure they were some of the persecuted race, and tried eagerly to overtake them, exerting his utmost speed, and calling on them to stop. All this only made them run the faster, and when they came to a feal-dike they separated, and ran different ways, and he soon thereafter lost sight of them both.

This house where Johnstone lived is said to have been in a lonely concealed dell, not far from West Linton, in what direction I do not know; but it was towards that village that Haliday fled, not knowing whither he went till he came to the houses. Having no acquaintances here whom he durst venture to call up, and the morning having set in frosty, he began to conceive that it was absolutely necessary for him to return to the house of Gabriel Johnstone, and try to regain his shoes, as he little knew when or where it might be in his power to get another pair. Accordingly he hastened back by a nearer path, and coming to the place before it was day, found his shoes. At the same time he heard a fierce contention within the house, but as there seemed to be a watch, he durst not approach it, but again made his escape.

Having brought some victuals along with him, he did not return to his hiding-place that day, which was in a wild height south of Biggar, but remained in the moss of Craigengaur; and as soon as it grew dark he descended again into the valley, determined to have some communication with his species, whatever it might cost. Again he perceived a light at a distance, where he thought no light should have been. But he went toward it, and as he approached he heard the melody of psalm-singing issuing from the place, and floating far on the still breeze of the night. The Covenanter's spirits were cheered, he had never heard anything so sweet; no, not when

enjoying the gospel strains in peace, and in their fullest fruition. It was to him the feast of the soul, and rang through his ears like a hymn of paradise. He flew as on hinds' feet to the spot, and found the reverend and devout Mr. Livingston in the act of divine worship, in an old void barn on the lands of Slipperfield, with a great number of serious and pious people, who were all much affected both by his prayers and discourse.

After the worship was ended, Haliday made up to the minister, among many others, to congratulate him on the splendour of his discourse, and implore "a further supply of the same milk of redeeming grace, with which they found their souls nourished, cherished, and exalted." Indeed, it is quite consistent with human nature to suppose, that the whole of the circumstances under which this small community of Christians met, could not miss rendering their devotions impressive. They were a proscribed race, and were meeting at the penalty of their lives; their dome of worship, a waste house in the wilderness, and the season, the dead hour of the night, had of themselves tints of sublimity which could not fail to make impressions on the souls of the worshippers. The good man complied with their request, and appointed another meeting at the same place, on a future night.

Haliday having been formerly well acquainted with the preacher, convoyed him on his way home, where they condoled with one another on the hardness of their lots; and Haliday told him of the scene he had witnessed at the house of Gabriel Johnstone. The heart of the good minister was wrung with grief, and he deplored the madness and malice of the people who had committed an act that would bring down tenfold vengeance on the heads of the whole persecuted race. At length it was resolved between them, that as soon as it was day, they would go and reconnoitre; and if they found the case of the aggravated nature they suspected, they would themselves be the first to expose it, and give the perpetrators up to justice.

Accordingly, next morning they took another man into the secret, a William Rankin, one of Mr. Livingston's elders, and the three went away to Johnstone's house, to investigate the case of the cavalier's murder; but there was a guard of three armed men who opposed them, and neither promises, nor threatenings, nor all the minister's eloquence, could induce them to give way one inch. They said they could not conceive what they were seeking there, and as they suspected they came for no good purpose, they were determined that they should not enter. It was in vain that Mr. Livingston informed them of his name and sacred calling, and his friendship for the owner of the house, and the cause which he had espoused; the men continued obstinate; and when he asked to speak a word to Gabriel Johnstone himself, they shook their heads, and said, "he would never see him again." The men then advised the intruders to take themselves off without any more delay, lest a worse thing should befall them; and as they continued to motion them away, with the most impatient gestures, the kind divine and his associates thought meet to retire, and leave the matter as it was; and thus was this mysterious affair hushed up in silence and darkness for that time, no tongue having been heard to mention it further than as above recited. The three armed men were all unknown to the others, but Haliday observed, that one of them was the very youth whom he saw cutting off the soldier's head with a knife.

The rage and cruelty of the popish party seemed to gather new virulence every day, influencing all the counsels of the king; and the persecution of the nonconformists was proportionably severe. One new act of council was issued after another, all tending to root the Covenanters out of Scotland, but it had only the effect of making their tenets still dearer to them. The longed-for night of the meeting in the old hay-barn at length arrived, and it was attended by a still greater number than that on the preceding. A more motley group can hardly be conceived than appeared in the barn that night, and the lamps being weak and dim, rendered the appearance of the assembly still more striking. It was, however, observed, that about the middle of the service, a number of fellows came in with broad slouch bonnets, and watch coats or cloaks about them, who placed themselves in equal divisions at the two doors, and remained without uncovering their heads, two of them being busily engaged in taking notes. Before Mr. Livingston began the last prayer, however, he desired the men to uncover, which they did, and the service went on to the end, but no sooner had the minister pronounced the word *Amen*, than the group of late comers threw off their cloaks, and drawing out swords and pistols, their commander, one General Drummond, charged the whole congregation, in the king's name, to surrender.

A scene of the utmost confusion ensued; the lights being extinguished, many of the young men burst through the roof of the old barn in every direction, and though many shots were fired at them in the dark, great numbers escaped; but Mr. Livingston, and other eleven, were retained prisoners and conveyed to Edinburgh, where they were examined before the council, and cast into prison; among the prisoners was Mr. Haliday, and the identical young man whom he had seen in the act of murdering the cavalier, and who turned out to be a Mr. John Lindsay, from Edinburgh, who had been at the battle of Pentland, and in hiding afterwards.

Great was the lamentation for the loss of Mr. Livingston, who was so highly esteemed by his hearers: the short extracts from his sermons in the barn, that were produced against him on his trial, prove him to have been a man endowed with talents somewhat above the greater part of his contemporaries. His text that night, it appears, had been

taken from Genesis: "And God saw the wickedness of man that it was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." One of the quoted passages runs thus:—

"And while we have thus ample experience of the *effects* of sin, we have also abundance of examples set before us of sin itself, yea, in its most hideous aspect; for behold how it abounds among us all, but chiefly among the rulers and nobles of the land! Dare I mention to you those crimes of theirs which cause the sun of heaven to blush and hide his head as ashamed of the sight of their abominations? Dare I mention to you the extent of their blasphemies against that God who made them, and the Saviour who died to redeem them?—their cursing and swearing, Sabbath-breaking, chambering, and wantonness: and, above all, their trampling upon the blood of the covenant, and pouring out the blood of saints and martyrs like water on the face of the earth? Because of those the land mourneth, and by these, multitudes, which no man can number, are plunging their souls into irretrievable and eternal ruin. But some say, O these are honourable men! amiable, upright, and good moral men—though no great professors of religion. But I say, my brethren, alack and well-a-day for their uprightness and honour! which, if ever they come to be tried by the test of the divine law, and by the example of him who was holiness itself, will be found miserably shortcoming. So true it is that the kings of the earth have combined to plot against the Lord and his anointed. Let us, therefore, join together in breaking their bands and casting their cords from us. As for myself, as a member of this poor persecuted Church of Scotland, and an unworthy minister of it, I hereby call upon you all, in the name of God, to set your faces, your hearts, and your hands against all such acts, which are or shall be passed, against the covenanted work of reformation in this kingdom; that we here declare ourselves free of the guilt of them, and pray that God may put this in record in heaven."

These words having been sworn to, and Mr. Livingston not denying them, a sharp debate arose in the council what punishment to award. The king's advocate urged the utility of sending him forthwith to the gallows; but some friends in the council got his sentence commuted to banishment; and he was accordingly banished the kingdom. Six more, against whom nothing could be proven, farther than their having been present at a conventicle, were sentenced to imprisonment for two months; among this number Haliday was one. The other five were condemned to be executed at the cross of Edinburgh, on the 14th of December following; and among this last unhappy number was Mr. John Lindsay.

Haliday now tried all the means he could devise to gain an interview with Lindsay, to have some explanation of the extraordinary scene he had witnessed in the cottage at midnight, for it had made a fearful impression upon his mind, and he never could get rid of it for a moment; having still in his mind's eye a beautiful country maiden standing with a pleased face, holding a candle, and Lindsay in the meantime at his horrid task. His endeavours, however, were all in vain, for they were in different prisons, and the jailer paid no attention to his requests. But there was a gentleman in the privy council that year, whose name, I think, was Gilmour, to whose candour Haliday conceived that both he and some of his associates owed their lives. To this gentleman, therefore, he applied by letter, requesting a private interview with him, as he had a singular instance of barbarity to communicate, which it would be well to inquire into while the possibility of doing so remained, for the access to it would soon be sealed for ever. The gentleman attended immediately, and Haliday revealed to him the circumstances previously mentioned, stating that the murderer now lay in the Tolbooth jail, under sentence of death.

Gilmour appeared much interested, as well as astonished at the narrative, and taking out a notebook, he looked over some dates, and then observed, "This date of yours tallies exactly with one of my own, relating to an incident of the same sort, but the circumstances narrated are so different, that I must conceive, either that you are mistaken, or that you are trumping up this story to screen some other guilty person or persons."

Haliday disclaimed all such motives, and persevered in his attestations. Gilmour then took him along with him to the Tolbooth prison, where the two were admitted to a private interview with the prisoner, and there charged him with the crime of murder in such a place and on such a night; but he denied the whole with disdain. Haliday told him that it was in vain for him to deny it, for he beheld him in the very act of perpetrating the murder with his own eyes, while Gabriel Johnstone's daughter stood deliberately and held the candle to him.

"Hold your tongue, fellow!" said Lindsay, disdainfully, "for you know not what you are saying. What a cowardly dog you must be by your own account! If you saw me murdering a gentleman cavalier, why did you not rush in to his assistance?"

"I could not have saved the gentleman then," said Haliday, "and I thought it not meet to intermeddle in such a scene of blood."

"It was as well for you that you did not," said Lindsay.

"Then you acknowledge being in the cottage of the dell that night?" said Gilmour.

"And if I was, what is that to you? Or what is it now to me, or any person? I *was* there on the night specified; but I am ashamed of the part I there acted, and am now well requited for it. Yes, requited as I ought to be, so let it rest; for not

one syllable of the transaction shall any one hear from me."

Thus they were obliged to leave the prisoner, and forthwith Gilmour led Haliday up a stair to a lodging in the Parliament Square, where they found a gentleman lying sick in bed, to whom Mr. Gilmour said, after inquiring after his health, "Brother Robert, I conceive that we two have found out the young man who saved your life at the cottage among the mountains."

"I would give the half of all I possess that this were true," said the sick gentleman; "who or where is he?"

"If I am right in my conjecture," said the privy councillor, "he is lying in the Tolbooth jail there under sentence of death, and has but a few days to live. But tell me, brother, could you know him, or have you any recollection of his appearance?"

"Alas! I have none!" said the other, mournfully, "for I was insensible, through the loss of blood, the whole time I was under his protection; and if I ever heard his name I have lost it: the whole of that period being a total blank in my memory. But he must be a hero of the first rank; and therefore, O my dear brother, save him whatever his crime may be."

"His life is justly forfeited to the laws of his country, brother," said Gilmour, "and he must die with the rest."

"He shall not die with the rest if I should die for him," cried the sick man, vehemently; "I will move heaven and earth before my brave deliverer shall die like a felon."

"Calm yourself, brother, and trust that part to me," said Gilmour; "I think my influence saved the life of this gentleman, as well as the lives of some others, and it was all on account of the feeling of respect I had for the party, one of whom, or, rather I should say two of whom, acted such a noble and distinguished part toward you. But pray undeceive this gentleman by narrating the facts to him, in which he cannot miss to be interested." The sick man, whose name it seems, if I remember aright, was Captain Robert Gilmour, of the volunteers, then proceeded as follow:—

"There having been high rewards offered for the apprehension of some south-country gentlemen, whose correspondence with Mr. Welch, and some other of the fanatics, had been intercepted, I took advantage of information I obtained regarding the place of their retreat, and set out, certain of apprehending two of them at least.

"Accordingly I went off one morning about the beginning of November, with only five followers, well armed and mounted. We left Gilmerton long before it was light, and having a trusty guide, rode straight to their hiding-place, where we did not arrive till towards the evening, when we started them. They were seven in number, and were armed with swords and bludgeons: but, being apprised of our approach, they fled from us, and took shelter in a morass, into which it was impossible to follow them on horseback. But perceiving three men more on another hill, I thought there was no time to lose; so giving one of my men our horses to hold, the rest of us advanced into the morass with drawn swords and loaded horse pistols. I called to them to surrender, but they stood upon their guard, determined on resistance; and just while we were involved to the knees in the mire of the morass, they broke in upon us, pell-mell, and for about two minutes the engagement was very sharp. There was an old man struck me a terrible blow with a bludgeon, and was just about to repeat it when I brought him down with a shot from my pistol. A young fellow then ran at me with his sword, and as I still stuck in the moss, I could not ward the blow, so that he got a fair stroke at my neck, meaning, without doubt, to cut off my head; and he would have done it had his sword been sharp. As it was, he cut it to the bone, and opened one of the jugular veins. I fell, but my men firing a volley in their faces at that moment, they fled. It seems we did the same, without loss of time; for I must now take my narrative from the report of others, as I remember no more that passed. My men bore me on their arms to our horses, and then mounted and fled; trying all that they could to staunch the bleeding of my wound. But perceiving a party coming running down a hill, as with the intent of cutting off their retreat, and losing all hopes of saving my life, they carried me into a cottage in a wild lonely retreat, commended me to the care of the inmates, and, after telling them my name, and in what manner I had received my death wound, they thought proper to provide for their own safety, and so escaped.

"The only inmates of that lonely house, at least at that present time, were a lover and his mistress, both intercommuned Whigs; and when my men left me on the floor, the blood, which they had hitherto restrained in part, burst out afresh and deluged the floor. The young man said it was best to put me out of my pain, but the girl wept and prayed him rather to render me some assistance. 'O Johnny, man, how can you speak that gate?' cried she, 'suppose he be our mortal enemy, he is ay ane o' God's creatures, an' has a soul to be saved as well as either you or me; an' a soldier is obliged to do as he is bidden. Now Johnny, ye ken ye war learned to be a doctor o' physic: wad ye no rather try to stop the blooding and save the young officer's life, as either kill him, or let him blood to death on our floor, when the blame o' the murder might fa' on us?'

"'Now, the blessing of heaven light on your head, my dear Sally!' said the lover, 'for you have spoken the very sentiments of my heart; and, since it is your desire, though we should both rue it, I here vow to you that I will not only endeavour to save his life, but I will defend it against our own party to the last drop of my blood.'

"He then began, and in spite of my feeble struggles, who knew not either what I was doing or suffering, sewed up the hideous gash in my throat and neck, tying every stitch by itself; and the house not being able to produce a pair of scissors, it seems that he cut off all the odds and ends of the stitching with a large, sharp gully knife, and it was likely to have been during the operation that this gentleman chanced to look in at the window. He then bathed the wound for an hour with cloths dipped in cold water, dressed it with plaster of wood-betony, and put me to bed, expressing to his sweetheart the most vivid hopes of my recovery.

"These operations were scarcely finished, when the maid's two brothers came home from their hiding-place; and it seems they would have been there much sooner had not this gentleman given them chase in the contrary direction. They, seeing the floor all covered with blood, inquired the cause with wild trepidation of manner. Their sister was the first to inform them of what had happened; on which both the young men gripped to their weapons, and the eldest, Samuel, cried out with the vehemence of a maniac, 'Blessed be the righteous avenger of blood! Hoo! Is it then true that the Lord hath delivered our greatest enemy into our hands!' 'Hold, hold, dearest brother!' cried the maid, spreading out her arms before him, 'Would you kill a helpless young man, lying in a state of insensibility? What, although the Almighty hath put his life in your hand, will he not require the blood of you, shed in such a base and cowardly way?'

"'Hold your peace, foolish girl,' cried he, in the same furious strain, 'I tell you if he had a thousand lives I would sacrifice them all this moment! Woe be to this old rusty and fizenless sword, that did not sever his head from his body, when I had a fair chance in the open field! Nevertheless he shall die; for you do not yet know that he hath, within these few hours, murdered our father, whose blood is yet warm around him on the bleak height.'

"'Oh! merciful heaven! killed our father!' screamed the girl, and flinging herself down on the resting-chair, she fainted away. The two brothers regarded not, but with their bared weapons, made towards the closet, intent on my blood, and both vowing I should die if I had a thousand lives. The stranger interfered, and thrust himself into the closet door before them, swearing that, before they committed so cowardly a murder, they should first make their way through his body. A long scene of expostulation and bitter altercation then ensued, which it is needless to recapitulate; both parties refusing to yield. Samuel at the last got into an ungovernable rage, and raising his weapon, he said, furiously, 'How dare you, sir, mar my righteous vengeance when my father's blood calls to me from the dreary heights? Or how dictate to me in my own house? Either stand aside this moment, or thy blood be upon thine own head!'

"'I'll dictate to any one, if he will not hearken to reason,' said the young surgeon; 'therefore strike at your peril.'

"Samuel retreated one step to have full sway for his weapon, and the fury depicted on his countenance proved his determination. But in a moment, his gallant opponent closed with him, and holding up his wrist with his left hand, he with the right bestowed on him a blow with such energy, that he fell flat on the floor, among the soldier's blood. The youngest then ran on their antagonist with his sword, and wounded him, but the next moment he was lying beside his brother. He then disarmed them both, and still not thinking himself quite safe with them, he tied both their hands behind their backs, and had then time to pay attention to the young woman, who was inconsolable for the loss of her father, yet deprecated the idea of murdering the wounded man. As soon as her brothers came fairly to their senses, she and her lover began and expostulated with them on the impropriety and unmanliness of the attempt, until they became all of one mind, and the two brothers agreed to join in the defence of the wounded gentleman from all of their own party, until he was rescued by his friends, which they did. But it was the maid's simple eloquence that finally prevailed with the fierce Covenanters, in whom a spirit of retaliation seemed inherent.

"'O my dear brothers,' said she, weeping, 'calm yourselves, and think like men and like Christians. There has been enough o' blood shed for a'e day, and if ye wad cut him a' to inches it couldna restore our father to life again. Na, na, it couldna bring back the soul that has departed frae this weary scene o' sin, sorrow, and suffering; and if ye wad but mind the maxims o' our blessed Saviour ye wadna let revenge rankle in your hearts that gate. An' o'er an' aboon a', it appears that the young officer was only doing what he conceived to be his bounden duty, and at the moment was really acting in defence of his own life. Since it is the will of the Almighty to lay these grievous sufferings on our covenanted church, why not suffer patiently, along with your brethren, in obedience to that will; for it is na like to be a private act of cruelty or revenge that is to prove favourable to our forlorn cause.'

"When my brothers came at last, with a number of my men, and took me away, the only thing I remember seeing in the house was the corpse of the old man whom I had shot, and the beautiful girl standing weeping over the body; and certainly my heart smote me in such a manner that I would not experience the same feeling again for the highest of this world's benefits. That comely young maiden, and her brave intrepid lover, it would be the utmost ingratitude in me, or in any of my family, ever to forget; for it is scarcely possible that a man can ever be again in the same circumstances as I was, having been preserved from death in the house of the man whom my hand had just deprived of life."

Just as he ended, the sick nurse peeped in, which she had done several times before, and said, "Will your honour soon be disengaged, d'ye think? for ye see, because there's a lass wanting to speak till ye."

"A lass, nurse? what lass can have any business with me? what is she like?"

"Oo 'deed, sir, the lass is weel enough, for that part o't, but she may be nae better than she should be for a' that; ye ken, I's no answer for that, for ye see, because *like* is an ill mark: but she has been aften up, speering after ye, an' gude troth she's fairly in nettle-earnest now, for she winna gang awa till she see your honour."

The nurse being desired to show her in, a comely girl entered, with a timid step, and seemed ready to faint with trepidation. She had a mantle on, and a hood that covered much of her face. The privy councillor spoke to her, desiring her to come forward, and say her errand; on which she said that "she only wanted a preevat word wi' the captain, if he was that weel as to speak to ane." He looked over the bed, and desired her to say on, for that gentleman was his brother, from whom he kept no secrets. After a hard struggle with her diffidence, but on the other hand, prompted by the urgency of the case, she at last got out, "I'm unco glad to see you sae weel comed round again, though I daresay ye'll maybe no ken wha I am. But it was me that nursed ye, an' took care o' ye, in our house, when your head was amaist cuttit off."

There was not another word required to draw forth the most ardent expressions of kindness from the two brothers; on which the poor girl took courage, and after several showers of tears she said, with many bitter sobs, "There's a poor lad wha, in my humble opinion, saved your life, an' wha is just gaun to be hanged the day after the morn. I wad unco fain beg your honour's interest to get his life spared."

"Say not another word, my dear good girl," said the councillor, "for though I hardly know how I can intercede for a rebel who has taken up arms against the government, yet, for your sake and his, my best interest shall be exerted."

"Oh, ye maun just say, sir, that the poor Whigs were driven to desperation, and that this young man was misled by others in the fervour and enthusiasm of youth. What else can ye say? but ye're good! oh, ye're very good! and on my knees I beg that ye winna lose ony time, for indeed there is nae time to lose!"

The councillor lifted her kindly by both hands, and desired her to stay with his brother's nurse till his return, on which he went away to the president, and in half an hour returned with a respite for the convict, John Lindsay, for three days, which he gave to the girl, along with an order for her admittance to the prisoner. She thanked him with the tears in her eyes, but added, "Oh, sir, will he and I then be obliged to part for ever at the end of three days?"

"Keep up your heart, and encourage your lover," said he, "and meet me here again on Thursday at this same hour, for till the council meet nothing further than this can be obtained."

It may well be conceived how much the poor forlorn prisoner was astonished when his own beloved Sally entered to him, with the reprieve in her hand, and how much his whole soul dilated when, on the Thursday following, she presented him with a free pardon. They were afterwards married, when the Gilmours took them under their protection. Lindsay became a highly qualified surgeon, and the descendants of this intrepid youth occupy respectable situations in Edinburgh to this present day.

EWAN M'GABHAR.

In my peregrinations through the North Highlands I came upon a large and romantic lake, in the country of the M'Kenzies, called Loch Mari, or St. Mary's Loch, the same designation with that of my own beloved lake, but originating in a different language. It is one of the most romantic places in the world; speckled with beautiful islets, and overhung by tremendous mountains, some of them quite spiral, and white as snow. I spent a number of days about this enchanting lake, sailing, fishing, and shooting gulls, with the M'Kenzies of Ardlair, and M'Intire of Lutterewe. With this latter gentleman I made a day's excursion towards the north part of the Lutterewe estate, and certainly was highly gratified; for such groups of grandeur, horror, and sublimity I have never yet seen. Sequestered dells, surrounded by inaccessible cliffs, vistas of grim, vast, and yawning caverns, were everywhere opening upon us, so that we were soon entangled in a wilderness of wonders, out of which none but a well experienced guide could have extricated us.

At length he said he would show me the greatest curiosity of all, and led me a long way to the south-west, to see a remarkable cavern. It was a place of horrid grandeur, and most difficult of access, and is called Uadha-na Kigh, or the King's Son's Cave. I asked Mr. M'Intire how it came to receive that dignified title. "I will tell you that," said he, "once we have got our dinner eaten and our whisky drunk;" and I saw by the quick and silent way in which he despatched his meal, that he weened he had recollected a theme which would please and interest me; for a more obliging little fellow never breathed than John M'Intire. Before I had half done eating, he returned thanks very shortly in Gaelic, and thus began:—

"Well, do you know, sir, that you are now sitting in a place where some of the most remarkable events have happened that ever took place since the world was made? Do you remember the steading grown green with age to which I bade you pay particular attention?" I answered that I did, and would never forget it. "Well, in that sequestered home there lived, some time long ago, a young man and his mother, whose subsistence depended chiefly on hunting and fishing; but they had also a few goats, and among others a large and most valuable one, called Earba. She was the colour of a hind, a dim chestnut, and almost invisible; and tradition says she gave more milk than any cow. She was a pet and well fed, and some of those animals will give more milk than could well be believed by a Sassenach. Well, but all at once Earba begins to give less and less, to the great consternation of old Oighrig, who fed and better fed her favourite to no purpose. She complained to her son Kenet of the astounding circumstance; but he only laughed at her, and said she was not very easily pleased with the quantity of milk, that she had not fed poor Earba well enough, or the good creature had perhaps been unwell.

"The next day when Kenet came in from the hills, his mother says, 'I tell you, Kenet, something must be done about Earba, else we may all starve. I declare she has not given me a green-horn spoonful of milk this morning.'

"'That is very extraordinary, mother,' said Kenet, 'but how can I help it?'

"'Why, the truth is, Kenet, that I am sure the fairies milk her, or else she has picked up some poor motherless fawn, for it is a kindly creature; and that either some fairy or this motherless fawn sucks her evening and morning. For, do you know, Kenet, that though she comes evening and morning for her meals, yet she gives me nothing in return for them. Besides, she shows a sort of impatience to get away, and does not lick my hand as she was wont to do; and then she takes always one path, up through the middle of these rocks, and I hear her often bleating as she ascends; but, plague on her, nobody can keep sight of her.'

"'It is very singular indeed,' says Kenet; 'we must tether her.'

"'No, no, son Kenet, I cannot consent to that. Were we to put a rope about poor Earba's neck and tether her, it would break her heart, and she would never come home to us again. I'll tell you what you must do, Kenet; you must watch her the whole day, and never let her know that you see her, for it is a cunning beast; and if she knows that you see her, she will not go near her fairy or her fawn, but wait till it be dark, and then give us the slip.'

"Kenet promised that he would, and early next morning went and hid himself among the rocks that overhung his cottage, to cheat Earba. He also took a lump of dried salmon with him, that he might not be hungry for a whole day, determined to find out Earba's secret. Nevertheless, for all his precaution she cheated him; she went by paths on which he could not follow her, and before he got round by passable parts of the rock he had lost sight of her; and, when once lost sight of, it was almost impossible to discover her again, owing to her invisible

colour. She actually appeared often to vanish when scarcely a bow-shot off among the rocks.

"'It will be as well for us to keep on good terms with you, Earba,' said Kenet to himself, 'for if it should come into your head to absent yourself, long would it be before we found you again. But I'll be about with you! for I'll watch till you return, and see where you come from, for you will pay us a visit for your meal.'

"Kenet watched and watched, but he might as well have watched for a spirit. The first sight that he saw of her she was with his mother on the green at the cottage door. Kenet was terribly chagrined at being thus outwitted, and more so when he returned to his mother and learned that Earba had not given a green-horn spoonful of milk, having been newly sucked.

"They could ill subsist without Earba's milk: further exertion was necessary; so Kenet went higher up among the rocks next day. He saw her pass by him, but again lost her. He went farther and farther on the track, till at last he saw her enter this very cavern. Kenet, quite overjoyed, came posting to the foot of the rock there, where we began to climb, and called out in his native tongue, 'Hilloa, dear Earba! are you in? Come out! come out!' Earba came forward, and looked over at him from this very spot, uttering a kindly bleat, and then posted down the rock to her owner. 'What have you got in there, dear Earba? I must see what you have got in there.' Earba looked up in his face with a countenance of the utmost distress. He began to climb, Earba mounted the rock like lightning before him, and placed herself there on the verge, and with a decided inveteracy defended the mouth of the cave. She popped her master on the forehead as it reared above the verge, gently at first, but when he tried to force himself up she smote him hard, letting him know that there he should not come; and as he had no footing he was obliged to retreat.

"As soon as he got fairly down upon the green sward there beneath, she came at his call, and accompanied him on his way home, but left him. Her secret was now discovered, and she did not choose to trust herself any more in the power of her owners. What was to be done? Their darling and chief support was lost to them, and that by a sort of mystery which they could not comprehend. They slept none all that night, consulting what was best to be done, and at length came to the resolution to go together and storm the cave. Kenet hesitated; but the curiosity of his mother prevailed, though she attributed it all to necessity. So, after stuffing her lap with all the herbs and good things that Earba loved, the two sallied out at dawn, and reached this cave by sunrising. They had resolved to take Earba by surprise; but a woman's tongue, even in a whisper, long as it is, proved not longer than a goat's ears. Before they were half-way up by different routes, the one coming by that step there, and the other by this one here, Earba appeared on the verge with looks of great uneasiness. She answered to her name by a shrill bleat; but when Oighrig held out kail-blades to her, and the finest herbs, she would not taste them, but stood there tramping with her foot and whistling through her nostrils, determined to resist all encroachments on her premises to the death.

"But instinct is unfairly opposed to reason: by throwing a noose over her horns, and holding down her head, Kenet succeeded in mounting to this platform where we sit. Till that instant all had been quiet; but, when the goat fell a struggling and bleating, there issued from that dark corner there a beautiful little child, creeping with great velocity, and crying out 'Mam-mam, mam-mam.'

"'Sirre gleidh Dia more!' roared Kenet, and half threw himself over that precipice, not taking two steps on the whole. Oighrig still held by the rope that kept down Earba's head; and abusing her son for his cowardice in no very measured terms, ordered him to come and hold Earba, and she would enter the cave herself. 'Sithiche, sithiche! le mair Dia!' shouted Kenet, and made signs for his mother to run for her life.

"'What, you fool!' cried Oighrig in her native tongue, 'and do you think a fairy would be so unreasonable as to wreak any vengeance on us for claiming our own? Come and hold down the rope here, and keep that perverse beast in order, and I'll face the fairy.'

"Kenet took a long grip of the rope at the bottom of the rock, and Earba, finding that he now had it in his power to pull her headlong over, stood quiet, still bleating always in answer to the child's 'mam-mam.' But when Oighrig succeeded in getting up here, where my foot is placed, there the goat was standing with her head held down, and there on that spot was the loveliest boy sucking her that ever the eye of woman beheld; so Oighrig said, and so I believe she thought. She started back as she saw, and held up her hands at such an extraordinary sight, crying out—'Did not I tell you, Earba, that you were sucked by the fairies!'

"Oighrig, I believe, never told her any such thing; but, though convinced in her own mind that the lovely child was a fairy, there is something in woman's feeling heart that clings to a fellow-creature in extremity. It is out of her power to abandon such a being, whatever privations she may suffer in her efforts to mitigate human suffering. But let a helpless infant once come in her way, then all the sympathies of her generous nature overflow as with a spring-tide. A lovely boy sucking a goat in a cave of the wilderness was more than poor Oighrig's heart could stand—she flew to him, snatched him up in her arms, and shed a flood of tears over him, exclaiming—'Be you a fairy, or be you a fiend, you shall lie in my bosom and have good Earba for your nurse still. Blessings on you, poor and kind-hearted

Earba, for preserving the life of this dear child!' 'Anam bhur ceaduich comhnuich neamhuidh.'[1]

"The child held out his hands to Earba, wept, and continued to cry out 'mam-mam,' while poor Earba answered every cry with a bleat. Oighrig caressed the child and blessed him, and promised him that he should lie in her bosom and be fed with Earba's milk, and ride upon her back on a pretty level green. The boy would not be comforted nor soothed, but screamed to be at Earba; and so Oighrig set him down, when he instantly clasped his little arms round the animal's neck, and laid his cheek to hers; she muttered sounds of kindness over him and licked his hands. Kenet now ascended into the cave, but was in utter terror for the fairy, and kept wildly aloof, threatening at the same time to fling the creature headlong over the rocks.

"'But you shall first fling the mother that bore you over the rocks,' cried Oighrig. 'Would you take the life that God has preserved by a miracle, or dash an innocent babe to pieces that a brute beast has taken pity on and saved?'

"'Do you think that being would dash to pieces?' said Kenet. 'A fairy dash to pieces! You may throw him over there, he will light on a bed of down. You may throw him into the flame, he will mount up into the air like a living spark, and laugh at you. You may throw him into the sea, he will swim like a marrot. Do you not see his green dress, his flaxen hair, and light blue eyes?—a fairy, as I breathe!'

"'He is no such thing, hind, but as good flesh and blood as you;'—'and a great deal better,' cried a voice from that darksome den, right behind Kenet, who almost jumped out of his skin with fright. And instantly there rushed forth a comely girl to the heart of the stage here, as we may call it. Her air was wild, her apparel torn, and famine painted in her youthful features, which, nevertheless, bore decisive traces of youth and beauty. 'The child is mine!' cried she. 'The dear babe is mine! in woe and in weakness have I watched over him; and journeyed both by sea and land to save his dear life, until now that my strength is exhausted, and had it not been for this dear creature, which I wiled and bribed into the cave for our assistance, we should both long ago have perished of want.'

"'Your child, dear heart!' said Oighrig. 'If he had been your child would you not have nursed him yourself, and not set him out to nurse on a poor old woman's goat, which is her principal dependence? Your son, indeed! Now, I wish I were as sure of living in heaven as that you never had a child in your life.'

"The girl blushed exceedingly, and hid her face and wept. But the sight of this youthful and half-famished beauty wrought a great change in Kenet's mind with regard to the child of the fairies. He now perceived a glimmer of human nature to beam through the mystery, or rather through the eyes of a lovely female, which often convey powerful arguments to the hearts of young men.

"'Come, come now, mother, don't be going too strictly into your researches; for though you be exceedingly wise in your own conceit, yet you may be mistaken. Many a mother has had a child who could not nurse it, and so young a one as she is may well be excused. One thing only is certain at present, and that is, that the helpless couple must go home with us, for we cannot leave them to perish here.'

"'And that is most certain, indeed,' said Oighrig, wiping her eyes; 'and God be blessing you for a dear lad for first making the proposal; for if you had left them here I would have stayed with them. And now I know that when mercy, and kindness, and necessity require it, you will hunt double and fish double, and we shall live more sumptuously than ever we did before.'

"'Ay, and that I will, mother. And now, M'Gabhar (son of the goat), come you on my back, and we'll march in grand battle array home.'

"Kenet had now got a new stimulus. His success in hunting and fishing astonished even old Oighrig herself, who daily declared that if Kenet had ten of a family it would be all the same to him, for he would maintain them all, and more. The girl's name was Flora; and she told them that the boy's Christian name was Ewan, but she would not say the patronymic of either, so the boy got the name of M'Gabhar until his dying day.

"They lived as happily together as ever a little group did in such a wilderness; Earba got kids of her own, and Ewan herded and fed them, with a daily acknowledgment of their fraternity. Flora grew as plump as a doe in autumn, and far, far too lovely for the peace of poor Kenet's heart. From the moment that he first saw her in the cavern here, when she came out of that dark hole, with her ragged array and dishevelled locks, there was a spontaneous leaning of affection towards her, which at once disarmed him of his rancour against the child of the fairies: but now, when well fed and living at ease, and in the full blow of her beauty, Kenet found himself fairly her slave. Though he had never spoken of love to her, there were, nevertheless, a kindness and suavity of manner expressed towards him in all their field labours and daily transactions, which made him hope and believe that the affection between them was mutual. But before entering on such a serious concern as a life-rent lease of Flora, he, like a dutiful son, thought proper to consult his mother about it.

[1] I am not sure if this is the very expression used by Mr. M'Intire, not being a Gaelic scholar, but it is something like it; for he used in his narrative some strong short Gaelic sentences, which he swore would not translate, and I believe it. One time I was with a party of gentlemen in Balquhidder, and after dinner, the reverend clergyman of the parish told us a story of a Balquhidder lad and a young game cock. It was no story at all. I wondered at it. "It is impossible to tell it in English," said he, and told it shortly in Gaelic, with a triumphant look. The effect was like electricity. The Highland gentlemen rolled upon the floor and laughed at it.

"'Do you think Flora is really the mother of little Ewan? because, if she is, it is not fair to call him M'Gabhar—he should be called M'Aillaidh (son of the beautiful). Tell me truly what you think of this, mother.'

"'Do I think that you are the mother of the boy, son Kenet? That would not be a very natural thought for me to take up, would it? Then you are just as much the mother of the boy as maighdean Flora is. Do you think I have lived so long in the world and not know oigh neochirramach from bean muither? Just as well as you know a red deer from a goat, Kenet; and you may take my word for it that Flora is a virgin as pure as on the day that she was born.'

"'I rejoice to hear you say so, my dear old mother; for I am going to take Flora for a wife to me, and I should not have much liked to take another man's wife, or his mistress, in that capacity.'

"'You take Flora for a wife, son Kenet! You may as well think of taking the queen of heaven for a wife, which is the moon. Cannot you perceive that Flora is a great-born lady, and doubtless the daughter of a king; and for a poor young forester to think of marrying a king's daughter is a vain thought. That sword and mantle, which she preserves with such care for the boy, and which were his father's, show that he is at least the son of a king; and I have no doubt that she is his sister, who has fled with the boy from some great and imminent danger—for she has told me that both their lives depend on the strictest concealment. Let us therefore be kind to them and protect them in close concealment, and our fortunes by and by will be made. But, as I said before, you may as well expect that the moon will stoop down to be your wife as that Flora will; so never bring your kind heart into any trouble about that.'

"This was a cutting speech to Kenet, and made his spirit sink within him, for he had calculated on the beauty as his own, thrown as she was on his special protection. But he bowed to his mother's insinuation, and remained respectful and attentive, sighing for love in secret, and cherishing the dangerous passion more and more, but never made mention of it to Flora. Young Ewan grew apace, was a healthy and hardy boy, of a proud, positive disposition; and though clad in the homeliest mountain array, had an eye, a form, and an expression of features which could never be mistaken for a peasant's child; for over all this country the two classes are a distinct species.

"They were surprised and greatly deranged one day by the great Lord Downan, the chief, coming to their cottage with his train; nor did they ever see him till he alighted at the door; and Kenet being one of his own foresters, he entered without ceremony, and jocosely blamed him for not being out with them at the hunt. Kenet excused himself in an embarrassed, confused way, as not knowing of it; but Lord Downan, casting his eyes on the beautiful and blushing Flora—'Ah, Kenet! I excuse you, I excuse you,' exclaimed he; 'I did not know you had brought a wife home to Corry-dion; and, upon my word, Kenet, a prettier one never tripped over the hills of Lutterewe. How comes it that I knew nothing of this?'

"'Oh, you do not know the half that is done among your mountains and forests, my lord,' said Kenet.

"'But I ought to have known, and to have been at the wedding, too, you know, Kenet;' said Lord Downan. 'You have not recognized your chief's right there. But pray, tell me where you got that flower; for I am sure she was not a Kenetdale maiden, else my eye would have caught her before now.'

"'No; I got her not so far from home,' said Kenet, terribly perplexed, and changing colours.

"'I perceive there is some secret here, Kenet,' said Downan; 'but with your chief there ought to be none. Tell me, then, where you found this maiden, for I do not think she is of my vassals; and I have a peculiar reason for wishing to know where you got her, and who she is.'

"'I got her on your own lands, my lord. She is of your own clan, for anything I know to the contrary; and you know my wife must be your vassal.

"'Your wife, Kenet? No, that gem cannot be your wife; she was formed for the chamber of a lord or a king.'

"'Then, where is this boy come from, my lord, if she is not my wife?'

"'Not from you. It is a mystery, I perceive that well enough; a runaway story—a matter of deep concealment; but I'll probe it, as it may concern myself perhaps too nearly: and, to make sure of coming to the real truth, I shall take the maiden along with me; so you may make ready, my pretty dear, for your immediate journey to Downan Castle.'

"'O no, no, my good lord and chief, do not speak of a thing so unjust and cruel. If you take her, you shall take me too; for you shall never part Flora and me.'

"'Flora! Flora!' cried Lord Downan; 'that is no name of our clan; no, but a polite one among our enemies. Why won't you tell me the truth, hind? I charge you to do it, then, before I sever your head from your body at one stroke.'

"Kenet trembled, for he had nothing to tell, and knew not what to say; but Flora sprung forward, and kneeling, with tears in her eyes, she implored him to leave her with her poor husband and child, for that her life was bound up in them; and for him to take the wife of a poor forester of his own to his lordly halls would bring disgrace upon himself, and ruin her own peace of mind for ever."

"Lord Downan raised his eyes with astonishment. 'I cannot comprehend this!' exclaimed he. 'Your address proves it to me beyond a doubt that you are of the best blood of the land, or of some other land,

for your tongue differs from ours. But the avowal, from your own lips, that you are the wife of my own young forester, confounds me. Yet I do not believe it; women are deceitful. Go with me, Flora, I will be kind to you; and whatever has been your fate, you may confide in my honour.'

"Then all the little group set up a lamentation; and Kenet, in the plenitude of his misery, exclaimed, 'And poor little M'Gabhar, what will become of you!'

"At the name, Lord Downan started again to his feet. 'M'Gabhar! What is the meaning of that name?' cried he. 'There is something ominous to our family and name in that patronymic; for there is a legend of a thousand years which bears that—

> "'The son of the goat shall triumphantly bear
> The mountain on flame and the horns of the deer—
> From forest of Loyne to the hill of Ben-Croshen—
> From mountain to vale, and from ocean to ocean.'

'Thou art a stem worthy to be looked after, little blue-eyed M'Gabhar; the first, I am sure, who ever bore the name. So thou and thy lovely protectress shall both go with me.'

"'I will not go, my lord; that is peremptory,' said Flora. 'If you take me, you shall force me; and if you proffer force, I'll die before I yield. So take your choice—to leave me at peace, or kill both me and my dear boy.'

"'I yield for the present,' said Lord Downan, 'for forcibly on a woman shall my hand never be laid. But, Kenet, I trust the beautiful pair with you, and keep them safe till my return, as you shall answer with your head. I will make inquiries, and see them soon again; and, lovely Flora, whatever your secret may be, you may depend on my honour. I make a present to you of the best stag of my quarry, to help your fare, and hope soon to place you in a situation that better becomes your rank and condition;' and then kissing her, he bade her adieu; but left a bold kinsman with them as a guard upon both, being a little jealous of their future movements.

"Their situation was now most critical, and Flora's distress extreme; yet she showed no signs of it before Hector, Lord Downan's friend, who accompanied Kenet to the fishing and hunting, and both were equally well received when they came home, and kindly treated. The circumstance of having been acknowledged as the husband of Flora by her own lips, had raised the poor fellow's spirits, so that, for all their jeopardy, he perhaps never was so happy. But one evening when they came home, all the three were a-missing. Kenet called here and called there; and then, with troubled looks, said, 'they will be out milking the goats and will be home anon. God grant they may not have wandered among the rocks.'

"'Is not this some stratagem, Kenet?' said Hector; 'for it appears strange to me that two women and a boy should desert by themselves, without any to protect them; therefore, take you care and do not you desert too, else the best shaft that I have shall overtake you.'

"'As I live and breathe,' said Kenet, 'any intention of desertion was utterly unknown to me; and, therefore, I am certain, that if they are gone, they must have been carried off by force. We will search to-morrow, and if we find them not we will both haste to my lord for assistance. If my wife, my child, and my parent, are lost, what is to become of me!'

"The two young men went to no bed, nor slept they any that night. They went often to the door and called, but they were only mocked by a hundred echoes from the rocks that surrounded them. Even Earba answered not to her name; and that was the first circumstance which made Kenet suspect some deep-laid and desperate plot.

"Next morning they were standing ready at break of day to begin the search. Kenet had strong hopes that he should find them once more here in Tol-au-Kigh; but Hector was sulky and ill-humoured, suspecting that he was duped, and likewise that his neck might suffer on account of his remissness.

"Kenet knew that no living man was aware of the cave, and there were many hundreds of yawning openings among the rocks much liker a cave than it, he was therefore very cautious how he approached it in view of Hector; but found means in the course of the day, to make a signal, which was answered, and then he knew all was right. The only remaining difficulty now was to get quit of Hector; but that proved easier than was apprehended, for he vanished that very day on the hill, and hasted home with the news to his lord, convinced that he was duped, and that the party had planned an escape to another country.

"What to do the party knew not. They could not abide in the cave, for Kenet durst not go out either to fish or to hunt, and they were terrified for the sloth-hounds; so they decamped that night and went down to the shore, where they hid themselves, and waited the appearance of some boat to take them from Lord Downan's dominions, that being their chief concern for the present, Flora having imbibed a terror for that family which was to the rest quite unaccountable. Earba followed them with her two remaining kids, she being still as much attached to Ewan as any of them.

"The next day, towards evening, a vessel approached as from the coast of Skye, and came into Pool-ewe, where she cast anchor, and a boat came towards the shore. Kenet and Flora went down, hand in hand, to ask for a passage to the islands, old Oighrig remaining on the top of the promontory, with the boy, the goats, and the stuff, until the two returned to help her to remove them. But never, till the barge's prow was within half a stone-cast of the land, did Kenet and Flora know or suspect that

this was a party of Lord Downan's men, sent for the express purpose of preventing their escape; while another party, with the sloth-hounds, were behind them. The two took to their heels and fled like two deers taken by surprise; but the roughness of the ground entangled the maiden; they were soon overtaken, seized, and carried to the vessel, with loud rejoicings of the crew for their instant success; but oh! what a grievous scene it was to the two captives, as well as to Oighrig and little Ewan, to be separated from them, and know not to what quarter of the world they were taken. Flora's distress it is impossible to describe; she wept incessantly, and called on the name of the boy; and had Lord Downan been there, he doubtless would have caused his men to return for Oighrig and the boy; but as their lord's great anxiety seemed to be the attainment of the young lady and his disingenuous forester, the men returned with their prize, looking for nothing further.

"Oighrig, altogether forlorn and destitute, wist not what to do. She thought of returning to her cot, but, with her baggage, was not able; neither had she any mode of subsistence when there. All places were now alike to her, only she wished to sail or to travel southward after her son and darling Flora. Some of her poor clansmen on the shore protected her and her little store, consisting of three goats, three baskets, and a small locked chest or cage, in which were the boy's sword, mantle, and some jewels, for several days; and at length they spoke a vessel, which promised to take them to Castle Downan, where Oighrig was sure she would hear some news of her son, either good or bad. But, whether by chance or design, certain it is they took the hapless pair into the country of a great chief, plunderer, and freebooter, called Colin Gillespick.

"Oighrig and Ewan were taken by the captain of the vessel and deposited in one of his out-houses, with their three goats; but before he left them he searched all their baggage; and what was his astonishment when he found the scarlet velvet mantle of state, all fringed and bound with pure gold, and the sword with a handle of gold and ivory, and some mystic characters on it! The captain then adjured Oighrig to tell him who this boy was; and she for herself having no secret to keep, told him all—that he was the king's son, and that she found him in a cave with that same old goat nursing him.

"The man was amazed, as may well be supposed. He made straight to his chief, Colin More, with the story and the trophies, who was no less amazed than he; and being certain that he had a great prize in his power, he lost no time in providing liberally for the boy. He placed Oighrig in a little hut beside his castle, provided well for her goats, and gave her a cow; and Ewan he took into his own family, and brought him up with his own sons in all the liberal and warlike arts, with liberty to visit his old protectress daily.

"But, as the proverb goes, 'blood is thicker than water.' Oighrig grew restless and impatient to learn something of the fate of her own son Kenet; and finding that the great Colin disapproved of it, for fear of the secret of the illustrious boy being discovered to a rival chief who appeared to have prior claims, the poor old matron decamped by herself; and what became of her, or whether she reached Castle Downan or not, tradition has brought down no record.

"But young Ewan, in the meantime, grew in strength and in favour with all. There was none who could match him in warlike exercises, though these were practised every day at the castle of Colin.

"A great and bloody war now commenced between Colin More and the king of the country that should have been Ewan's own, of which he knew nothing. Lord Downan was joined with Colin More in this great enterprise, which they hoped to accomplish easily, a queen (lady) only being at the head of the enemy's affairs. They took one whole kingdom from her, which they plundered and burned (probably Mull); and then, proceeding to the mainland with a fleet under which the ocean groaned, they went into a long bay which winded twenty miles into the country, and there they landed 20,000 men, who immediately began to burn and plunder, without opposition.

"At night the chiefs and a few followers went to their ships for the night, as a safe and comfortable retreat. Their army was encamped at from ten to twenty miles' distance, having seen no appearance of a foe. But before daybreak the chiefs and their attendants got a disagreeable wakening by the lady's captains, who had come quietly up the loch by night, and inclosed the fleet of their enemies with few on board to defend it. The conquest was easy. They boarded, and took every man of them prisoners, not above twenty being slain in a fruitless attempt at defence. Colin More was taken, with two of his sons, and Ewan M'Gabhar. Lord Downan also, and three of his brothers, with sixty gentlemen besides, were made prisoners. The land forces were attacked at the same time, and, though taken by surprise, they defended themselves stoutly, retreating towards their ships. Most of their captains were slain; and when the retreaters reached the head of the bay, expecting encouragement and aid from their chiefs, they were saluted with the hurrahs of their enemies. They had no more power; they were pursued and slaughtered like sheep, and those who escaped were hunted from day to day, till few of all that puissant army were left alive.

"When the orders came from the Scottish court for the prosecution of this war, and the great clans began to arise, Ewan was all fire and eagerness for the glorious enterprise, having got the command of a thousand men. During the bustle one morning, a Highlander came to him and proffered himself as his page: he was of middle age, rather small of stature, and not like a form calculated for the battle-

field, which Ewan told him by way of rejection. But every subsequent day the young hero found this page in waiting, and ready to assist with everything, whether called or not; so that he soon contrived to establish himself in the good graces of his master, who felt his services and manner peculiarly agreeable to him, and finally he gave him the charge of making up his baggage and attending to it.

"The nobles and chiefs were conducted prisoners before that gallant and ruthless queen. They found her seated on high beneath a canopy of ermine, supported by great numbers of her chiefs and kinsmen. She rose and made a long and vehement speech to them, accusing them as the slaves of a tyrant, and of having persecuted, hunted, and destroyed every remnant of her royal race; but she said that now the judgment of Heaven had overtaken them, and her word was, Vengeance for vengeance!

"She then gave orders that the next morning, beginning at nine of the clock, the whole of the prisoners should be brought again into her presence, and hanged by sevens at a time, beginning with the youngest, that the fathers might have the pleasure of beholding the dying throes of their sons, and that the old men should be reserved for the last.

"Her guards and executioners were then ordered to begin, who, selecting the seven youngest, led them across the court to make their obeisance to the queen before they were hung up. No sooner had they made their appearance than the queen's hands began to move slowly upwards, her colour went and came, her bosom palpitated, her lips quivered, and at length she shrieked out, 'O God of heaven! what do I see? Stop the execution—stop!' and down she fell in a swoon. Her maids came to her assistance, and now a hundred shouts rent the air—'A M'Olaw More! a M'Olaw More!' (a son of Olaw the Great)—and instantly all the queen's chiefs and kinsmen were kneeling around one of the condemned prisoners. This was a tall, goodly, and graceful youth, who approached at the head of the other six, clothed in his father's scarlet robe of state, and his ancient sword of state by his side. It was Ewan. There was no mistaking his identity by any one who had seen his father in the days of his prosperity and glory. His mother's heart at once acknowledged her son; and ere our young hero could comprehend what was in the wind, his hands were loosed, and he was borne on the arms of kinsmen, seated on his father's throne, and acknowledged as sole lord and governor of the country, while the shouts of 'A M'Olaw More!' still increased, till all the rocks round the castle of Dunskaigh rang, and the firmament was rent.

"This great noise and hubbub brought the queen to herself, who again mounted the temporary throne. 'Give place, young stranger!' cried she, 'I yield not the throne of my husband's ancient house on the shallow ground of a mere personal likeness with those of a pilfered robe and sword. That you are my husband's son my own heart tells me; but my own son you cannot be, for my child, my beloved Ewan, was foully murdered in his bed by hired ruffians and conspirators, whom I had blindly trusted, and with his innocent life the last lineal heir of the great M'Olaw perished. Therefore declare your lineage and your name, or dare not to approach this honoured and dangerous seat!' And saying this she again seated herself on the regal chair.

"'Madam, I was hurried, I know not why, from the foot of the gallows to that dignified chair,' said he, 'to which I claim no pretensions. I am called Ewan M'Gabhar. Of my lineage I know nothing, nor is there any one here who can prove it. My lot has been a strange one; but I know, from one who has long been lost, that this robe and that sword were my father's.'

"The assembled crowd once more began to shout 'A M'Olaw More!' But the queen ordered silence, and declared that though her senses convinced her of the truth that the youth was a son of M'Olaw, yet unless he was *her own son* he could not be the heir of his father, and no illegitimate should ever sway that ancient sceptre.

"A lady clothed in dark silk was now admitted, who, kneeling at the queen's knee, said, in a vehement voice, so loud that all the vassals might hear, 'Madam, I appear as an important witness here today: I am Flora—your own youngest sister Flora! and that gallant youth who stands by your side is your own son Ewan, the only surviving son of the great M'Olaw.'

"The queen then embraced her son and sister alternately, and placed Ewan on his father's throne amid the most extravagant shouts of approbation. Flora then related in their hearing how that love had whispered to her that the conspirators were in the castle who had undertaken, for a great bribe, to murder at night that last remaining stem of a dangerous house, and how she gave up her bed to the wife and child of one of the conspirators, whose cruel deaths satisfied the ruffians and procured them their reward, while at the same time it prevented any pursuit or subsequent search after Flora and her precious charge, though of that circumstance she remained long ignorant, which kept her in great alarm. The rest of her story has already been related, saving the last scene. When she heard that Ewan was going to engage in that unnatural and exterminating war against his mother and kinsmen, she left her husband and family, and, in the habit of a page, had accompanied her young hero on the enterprise. She had taken care to bring the precious proofs along with her, and, as a page, her own hands had arrayed him in the very mode in which his father was wont to wear them, certain of the effect.

"Ewan's first act of authority was to go and loose all his condemned associates with his own hands. Their joy and astonishment may well be conceived. He entertained them gallantly at his castle for many days, and there a friendly league was framed which

has preserved the peace and tranquillity of those realms to this day. Ewan afterwards married Mary, Lord Downan's youngest daughter, and by his bravery and policy greatly increased the dominions of that potent house; so that the old prophecy relating to the 'son of the goat' was literally fulfilled."

THE BRIDAL OF POLMOOD.

CHAPTER I.

NORMAN HUNTER of Polmood, the ninth of that name, and chief forester to the King of Scotland in all those parts, was a gentleman of high courage and benevolence, much respected by his majesty, and all the nobles of the court who frequented the forests of Frood and Meggat-dale for the purpose of hunting. He had repeatedly entertained the king himself at his little castle of Polmood; and during the harvest months, while the king remained at his hunting seat of Crawmelt, Norman of Polmood was never absent from his side, for besides his other qualifications he was the best marksman then in Scotland; and so well could his eye measure distances, that when the deer was running at full speed, and the arrows of all the courtiers flying like meteors, some this way some that, whenever Polmood's arrow reached its destination she was seen to founder.

While the king and his nobles were enjoying the chase on Meggat-dale and the mountains of the Lowes, the queen remained at the castle of Nidpath, where his majesty went to visit her once a week; but when the weather was fine, and the mountains of the forest clear, the queen and her maidens frequently made excursions to the hunting quarters, and spent a few days in diversions with the king and his nobles.

It was during one of those excursions that the Laird of Polmood fell desperately in love with one of the queen's maidens, a very young lady, and supposed to have been the greatest beauty of her time. Her name was Elizabeth Manners; she was of English extraction, having followed the Queen of Scots from her native home when only a little girl. Many of the young courtiers admired her opening charms, which were every day ripening into new beauties, and some of them were beginning to tease and flatter her; but she being an orphan from a strange country, destitute of titles or inheritance, and dependent on the bounty of the queen, by whom she was greatly beloved, none of them had the generosity to ask her in marriage. The principal of these her admirers, were the young Baron Carmichael, and the Duke of Rothesay, brother to the king. They were both goodly knights. Carmichael admired and loved her with all his heart, but diffidence or want of opportunity had prevented him from making his sentiments known to her otherwise than by his looks, which he had always flattered himself were returned in a way that bespoke congeniality of feeling. As for Rothesay, he had no other design than to gain her for his mistress, a scheme on which his heart had for some time been intent. But no sooner had Norman of Polmood seen her than he fell violently in love with her, and shortly after asked her of the king and queen in marriage. Polmood being at that time a man of no small consequence, both in possessions and respectability, the royal pair, judging this to be a good offer, and an advantageous settlement for their ward, approved readily of the match, provided that he gained the young lady's consent. The enamoured forester, having so successfully *started his game*, lost no time in *the chase;* and, by the most determined perseverance, to use his own expression, *he ran her down* in the course of one week. He opened his proposals in presence of the king and queen, and encouraged by their approbation pressed his suit so effectually that the young Elizabeth, not being able to offer any plausible reason why she could not consent, and weening that it would be bad manners to give a disinterested lover an absolute refusal, heard him at first in thoughtful silence, and in a few days finally acquiesced, though Polmood was considerably past the bloom of youth.

Every young lady is taught to consider marriage as the great and ultimate end of her life. It is that to which she looks forward for happiness, and in which she hopes to rival or excel her associates; and even *the first* to be married in a family, or court, is a matter of no small consideration. These circumstances plead eloquently in favour of the first lover who makes the dear proposal. The female heart is naturally kind and generous—it feels its own weakness, and its inability to encounter singly the snares and troubles of life; and in short, that it must lean upon another, in order to enjoy the delights most congenial to its natural feelings, and the emanation of those tender affections, in the exercise of which the enjoyments of the female mind chiefly consist. It is thus that the hearts of many young women be-

come by degrees irrevocably fixed on those, whom they were formerly wont to regard with indifference, if not with contempt; merely from a latent principle of generosity existing in the original frame of their nature; a principle which is absolutely necessary towards the proper balancing of our respective rights and pleasures, as well as the regulation of the conduct of either sex to the other.

It will readily be conjectured, that it was the power of this principle over the heart of young Elizabeth, that caused her to accept, with such apparent condescension, the proposal of marriage made to her by the Laird of Polmood; and this, without doubt, influenced her conduct in part; but it was only to her mind like the rosy streaks of the morning, that vanish before a brighter sun-rise. From the second day after the subject was first proposed to her, Polmood was of all things the least in her mind. She thought of nothing but the splendour of her approaching nuptials, the deference that would be paid by all ranks to the lovely bride, and the mighty conquest she was about to have over all her titled court associates, every one of whom she was told by the queen would have been blithe to be the wife of Polmood. Elizabeth had been brought up an eye-witness to the splendour of a court, and had learned to emulate, with passionate fondness, every personal qualification, and every ornament of dress, which she had there so often seen admired or envied. Her heart was as yet a stranger to the tender passion. If she felt an impatience for anything, she knew not what it was, but believed it to be the attainment of finery and state; having never previously set her heart upon anything else, she thought the void which she began to feel in her heart was in consequence of such privations. Of course her bridal ornaments—the brilliant appearance she would make in them—the distinguished part that she was to act in the approaching festivity—her incontested right of taking place of all those court ladies, to whom she had so long stooped, and even of the queen herself—the honour of leading the dance in the hall and on the green, as well as the procession to the chapel of St. Mary of the Lowes, and the more distant one to the shrine of St. Bothans—these gay phantoms wrought so powerfully upon the mind of the fair Elizabeth, as to set aside all intervening obstacles which placed themselves in array before the wedding; and the line beyond it vanished from her mind's eye, or only attracted it occasionally by a transient meteor ray, which, like the rainbow, retired when she approached it, refusing a nearer inspection.

Polmood became every day more enamoured of his betrothed bride; and indeed, though she was little more than arrived at woman's estate, it was impossible not to consider her as a model of all that was lovely and desirable in woman. She played upon the lute, and sung so exquisitely, that she ravished the hearts of those who heard her; and it is even reported, that she could charm the wild beasts and birds of the forest, to gather around her at eventide. Her air and countenance were full of grace, and her form displayed the most elegant symmetry. Her colour outvied the lily and the damask rose; and the enamel of her eye, when she smiled, it was impossible to look steadfastly on.

Instead of any interchange of fond endearments, or any inquiries about the mode of life they were in future to lead, in all their short conversations, she only teased Polmood about such and such articles of dress and necessary equipage, and with proposals for plans of festivity and pleasure of such a nature, as had never before entered our forester's head. He however yielded to everything with cheerful complacency, telling her that, as she had been bred at court and understood all those matters, and as the king and court were to be their guests on that occasion, everything should be provided and executed according to her directions. He would then kiss her hand in the most affectionate manner, while she would in return take her leave with a courtesy, and smile so bewitchingly, that Polmood's heart was melted with delight, and he congratulated himself as the happiest of men. At one time, in the height of his ardour, he attempted to kiss her lips, but was astonished at seeing her shrink involuntarily from his embrace, as if he had been a beast of prey; but as she instantly recovered her gaiety, this was no more thought of, and everything went on as usual.

CHAPTER II.

When the news came to the courtiers' ears, that Elizabeth was instantly to be given away by the king, into the arms of Polmood, they were all not a little startled. For even those who had never designed to take any particular notice of her, could not bear the thought of seeing such a flower cropped by the hand of a country baron, and removed from their circle for ever. Even the lords who had spouses of their own were heard to say, "that they wished her well, and should rejoice at seeing her married, if it conduced to her happiness; but that indeed they should have been glad of her company for a few years longer, for, upon the whole, Polmood could not have taken one from them who would be as much missed." These remarks drew sharp retorts from their ladies. They wondered what some people saw about some people—there were some people in the world who were good for nothing but making a flash, and there were others so silly as to admire them. Happy at getting quit of so formidable a rival, the news of her approaching marriage were welcome news to them—they tossed up their heads, and said, "it was the luckiest occurrence that could have happened to her; there was no time to lose:—If Polmood had not taken her from the court in that

manner, possibly no other would, and she would in all probability soon have left it in some other way —there were some who knew, and some who did not know about those things."

Alexander, Duke of Rothesay, was not at that time along with the court, though he arrived shortly after, else it is conjectured that his violent and enterprising spirit would never have suffered the match to go on. Having had abundance of opportunities, he had frequently flattered Elizabeth, and from her condescending, and, as he judged, easy disposition, he entertained no doubts of gaining his dishonourable purpose. Young Carmichael was with the king; and when he was told, that in a few days his dear Elizabeth was to be given in marriage to his kinsman Polmood, together with the lands of Fingland, Glenbreck, and Kingledoors, as her dowry, it is impossible to describe his sensations. He was pierced to the heart, and actually lost for a time all sense of feeling and power of motion. On recovering a little, he betook himself to the thickest part of the wood, to ponder on the best means of preventing this marriage. Elizabeth had before appeared to his eyes a gem of the first water; but when he heard of the sovereign's favour, and of the jointure lands, which lay contiguous to his own, he then saw too late the value of the jewel he was about to lose. He resolved and re-resolved—formed a thousand desperate schemes, and abandoned them again, as soon as suggested, for others more absurd. From this turmoil of passion and contrivance, he hastened to seek Elizabeth; she was constantly surrounded by the queen and the court ladies; and besides, Polmood was never from her side; therefore, though Carmichael watched every moment, he could not once find an opportunity of imparting his sentiments to her in private, until the very day previous to that which was fixed for the marriage ceremony. About noon that day, he observed her steal privately into the linn, to wash her hands and feet in the brook —sure such hands and such feet were never before, nor since that time, bathed in the Crawmelt burn! Thither Carmichael followed her, trembling with perturbation; and, after begging pardon for his rude intrusion, with the tear rolling in his eye he declared his passion in the most ardent and moving terms, and concluded by assuring her, that without her it was impossible for him to enjoy any more comfort in this world. The volatile and unconscionable Elizabeth, judging this to be matter of fact, and a very hard case, after eyeing him from head to foot, observed carelessly, that if he got the king's consent, and would marry her to-morrow, she had no objection. Or, if he chose to carry her off privately that night, she hinted that she was willing to accompany him. "Either of those modes, my dear Elizabeth," said he, "is utterly impossible. The king cannot and will not revoke his agreement with Polmood; and were it possible to carry you away privately to-night, which it is not, to do so in open defiance of my sovereign, would infallibly procure me the distinguished honour of losing my head in a few days. But you have everything in your power. Cannot you on some pretence or other delay the wedding? and I promise to make you my own wife, and lady of my extensive domains, as soon as circumstances will permit." Elizabeth turned up her blue eyes, and fixed them on the summit of the dark Clockmore, in a kind of uneasy reverie; she did not like that *permission of circumstances*—the term was rather indefinite, and sounded like something at a distance. Upon the whole, the construction of the sentence was a most unfortunate one for Carmichael. The wedding had taken such absolute possession of Elizabeth's mind, that she thought of nothing else. The ardent manner and manly beauty of Carmichael had for a moment struggled for a share in the movements of her heart, which even in its then fluctuating state never lost its hold of the favourite object. But the mention of *the wedding* brought all the cherished train of delightful images with it at once; nor could she connect it with that hated word *delay* —a verb which, of our whole vocabulary, is the most repugnant to every feeling of woman. The wedding could not be delayed!—All was in readiness, and such an opportunity of attracting admiration might never again occur; it was a most repulsive idea; the wedding could not be delayed! Such were the fancies that glanced on Elizabeth's mind during the time that she sat with her feet in the stream, and her lovely eyes fixed on the verge of the mountain. Then turning them softly on Carmichael, who waited her decision in breathless impatience, she drew her feet from the brook, and retiring abruptly, said with emphasis, "I wish you had either spoken of this sooner or not at all."

Carmichael was left standing by himself in the linn like a statue; regret preying on his heart, and that heart the abode of distraction and suspense. The voice of mirth, and the bustle of preparation, soon extinguished in the mind of Elizabeth any anxiety which her late conversation had excited there; but the case was widely different with Carmichael. The lady's visible indifference for Polmood, while it somewhat astonished him, left him assured that her affections were yet unengaged; and the possession of her maiden heart appeared now to him an attainment of such value, that all other earthly things faded from the comparison. The equivocal answer with which she had left him, puzzled him most of all; he could gather nothing from it unfavourable to himself, but to his hopes everything, as she went away seemingly determined to follow the path chalked out to her by her royal guardians. He stalked up the glen, at every two or three steps repeating these words, "I wish you had mentioned this sooner or not at all." He could at first decide upon nothing, for his ideas were all in confusion, and the business was of so delicate a nature that he durst not break it to any of the courtiers. The

resolutions which he at last came to were therefore of a hasty and desperate nature; but what will not love urge a man to encounter?

On his return to the castle he found that orders had been given to spend the remainder of the day in such sports as in that country they were able to practise, by way of celebrating the bridal eve. They first had a round of tilting, from which King James himself came off victorious, owing, as was said, to the goodness of his charger. Polmood's horse was very untractable, and when it came to his turn to engage with Carmichael, the latter unhorsed him in a very rough and ungracious manner. Polmood said he was nothing hurt; but when he arose, the ladies being all on-lookers, his cheek was burning with vexation and anger. There were no plaudits of approbation from the ring, as Carmichael expected there would be, for all the company weened that he had acted rather unhandsomely. He, however, won the race fairly, though nine lords and knights started for the prize, and held him at very hard play. Marr, in particular, kept so stoutly by his side, that in the end he lost only by one step. When Carmichael received the prize from the fair hand of Elizabeth, he kissed it, pressed it hard, and, with a speaking eye, pointed to a pass among the mountains of the forest, pronouncing at the same time in a low whisper the words "to-night." Elizabeth courtseyed smiling, but in so careless a manner that he doubted much if she comprehended his meaning.

The sports went on. A number were by this time stripped in order to throw the mall. Each candidate was to have three throws. When the rounds were nearly exhausted, his majesty continued foremost by a foot only; but Carmichael, by his last throw, broke ground a few inches before his mark. It was then proclaimed that if there were no more competitors Carmichael had gained the prize.

Polmood had declined engaging in the race, though strongly urged to it. He had taken some umbrage at the manner in which Carmichael had used him in the tournament. He likewise refused to enter the lists on this occasion; but when he saw the king beat by Carmichael, and that the latter was about to be proclaimed victor a second time, his blood warmed—he laid hold of the mall—retired in haste to the footing post, and threw it with such violence that he missed his aim. The mall took a direction exactly on a right angle from the line he intended; flew over the heads of one-half of the spectators, and plunged into the river, after having soared to an immense height. The incensed forester having at the same time, by reason of his exertion, fallen headlong on the ground, the laughing and shouting were so loud that the hills rang again, while some called out to measure the altitude, for that the bridegroom had won. He soon recovered the mall; came again to the footing post; threw off his blue bonnet; and, with a face redder than crimson, flung it a second time with such inconceivable force, that, to the astonishment of all the beholders, it went about one-third further than any of the rest had cast it. Polmood was then proclaimed the victor with loud and reiterated shouts. His heart was a prey to every passion in its fiercest extreme. If he was affronted before, he was no less overwhelmed with pleasure when presented with the prize of honour by his adorable Elizabeth.

But here a ridiculous circumstance occurred, which however it is necessary to relate, as it is in some measure connected with the following events.

The gray stone on which Queen Margaret and the beautiful Elizabeth sat, during the celebration of those games, is still to be seen at the bottom of the hill, a small distance to the eastward of the old castle of Crawmelt. The rest of the ladies, and such of the nobles as did not engage in those violent exercises, are said to have leaned on a bank below: but the situation which the queen and the bride held fairly overlooked the field where the sports were. For lack of a better seat, on this stone was placed a small pannel or sack filled with straw. Now it so happened that the prize for the victor in throwing the mall was a love knot of scarlet ribbon, and two beautiful plumes, which branched out like the horns of a deer. When Polmood went up to receive the prize from the hands of his betrothed and adored bride, she, in a most becoming manner, took his blue bonnet from his hand, and fixing the knot and the plumes upon it in a most showy and tasteful mode, placed it upon his head. Polmood, in the most courtly style he was master of, then kissed her hand, bowed to the queen, and placed Elizabeth by her side on the seat of straw. But when he faced about, the appearance which he made struck every one so forcibly, that the whole company, both men and women, burst out into a roar of laughter; and Carmichael, in whose heart a latent grudge was still gaining ground, valuing himself upon his wit, cried out, "It is rather a singular coincidence, Polmood, that you should place Mistress Elizabeth upon the straw, and she a pair of horns on your head, at the same instant." The laugh was redoubled—Polmood's cheek burned to the bone. He could not for shame tear off the ornaments which his darling had so lovingly and so recently placed in his bonnet, but he turned them to one side, at which the laugh was renewed. He was anything but pleased at Carmichael.

CHAPTER III.

The next trial of skill was that of shooting at a mark; but in this the competition was of no avail. Polmood struck the circle in the middle of the board each time with so much exactness, that they were all astonished at his dexterity, and unanimously

yielded him the prize. It was a silver arrow, which he also received from the hands of Elizabeth. Carmichael, having been successful in his former philippic, took occasion to break some other jests on that occasion, too coarse to be here repeated, although they were not in those days considered as any breach of good manners.

Sixteen then stripped themselves to try their skill in wrestling, and it having been enacted as a law that he who won in any one contest, was obliged to begin the next, Polmood was of course one of the number. They all engaged at once, by two and two, and eight of them having been overthrown, the other eight next engaged by two and two, and four of these being cast, two couples only remained.

Some of the nobles engaged were so expert at the exercise, and opposed to others so equal in strength and agility, that the contests were exceedingly equal and amusing. Some of them could not be cast until completely out of breath. It had always been observed, however, that Polmood and Carmichael threw their opponents with so much ease that it appeared doubtful whether these opponents were serious in their exertions, or only making a sham wrestle; but when it turned out that they two stood the last, all were convinced that they were superior to the rest either in strength or skill. This was the last prize on the field, and on the final throw for that prize the victory of the day depended, which each of the two champions was alike vehemently bent to reave from the grasp of the other. They eyed each other with looks askance, and with visible tokens of jealousy; rested for a minute or two, wiped their brows, and then closed. Carmichael was extremely hard to please of his hold, and caused his antagonist to lose his grip three or four times, and change his position. Polmood was however highly complaisant, although it appeared to every one beside that Carmichael meant to take him at a disadvantage. At length they fell quiet; set their joints steadily, and began to move in a circular direction, watching each other's motions with great care. Carmichael ventured the first trip, and struck Polmood on the left heel with considerable dexterity. It never moved him; but in returning it, he forced in Carmichael's back with such a squeeze that the by-standers affirmed they heard his ribs crack; whipped him lightly up in his arms, and threw him upon the ground with great violence, but seemingly with as much ease as if he had been a boy. The ladies screamed, and even the rest of the nobles doubted if the knight would rise again. He however jumped lightly up, and pretended to smile; but the words he uttered were scarcely articulate. A squire who waited the king's commands then proclaimed Norman Hunter of Polmood the victor of the day, and consequently entitled, in all sporting parties, to take his place next to the king until by other competitors deprived of that prerogative. This distinction pleased Elizabeth more than anything she had yet seen or heard about her intended husband, and she began to regard him as a superior character, and one whom others were likely to value. The ruling passions of her heart seem to have been hitherto levelled only to the attainment of admiration and distinction, an early foible of the sex, but though a foible, one that leads oftener to good than evil. For when a young female is placed among acquaintances who know how to estimate the qualities of the heart, the graces of a modest deportment and endearing address, how then does this ardent and amiable desire of rendering herself agreeable stimulate to exertions in the way of goodness! But, on the contrary, when she is reared in a circle where splendour is regarded as the badge of superiority, and title as the compendium of distinction, it is then, as in the case of the beauteous Elizabeth, that this inherent principle "leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind." The flowers of the forest and garden are not more indicative of the different soils that produce them, than the mind of a young woman is of the company she keeps. It takes its impressions as easily and as true as the wax does from the seal, if these impressions are made while it is heated by the fire of youth; but when that fire cools, the impressions remain, and good or bad remains indelible for ever. With how much caution these impressions ought at first to be made, let parents then consider, when on them depends not only the happiness or misery of the individual in this life, but in that which is to come; and when thousands of the same stock may be affected by them from generation to generation.

When Polmood went up and received the final prize from the hand of Elizabeth, she delivered it with a smile so gracious and so bewitching that his heart was almost overcome with delight; some even affirmed that they saw the tears of joy trickling from his eyes. Indeed his love was from the beginning rather like a frenzy of the mind than a passion founded on esteem, and the queen always remarked that he loved too well to enjoy true conjugal felicity.

When Carmichael perceived this flood of tenderness and endearment, his bosom was ready to burst, and he tried once more to turn the laugh against Polmood by cutting jests. The prize was a belt with seven silver buckles; and when he received it from Elizabeth, Carmichael cried out that it was of sufficient length to go about them both; and that Polmood could not do better than make the experiment; and when he once had her buckled fairly in, he would be wise to keep the hold he had, else they would not be one flesh.

The sports of the evening were closed with a dance on the green, in which the king and queen and all the nobles joined. The king's old harper was then placed on the gray stone and the sack of straw, and acquitted himself that evening so well, that his strains inspired a hilarity quite unusual. It being so long since such a scene was beheld in Scotland, scarcely will it now be believed, that a king and

queen, with the lords and ladies of a court, ever danced on the green in the wild remote forest of Meggat-dale; yet the fact is well ascertained, if tradition can be in aught believed. Nay, the sprightly tunes which the king so repeatedly called for that night, *O'er the Boggy*, and *Cutty's Wedding*, remain, on that account, favourites to this day in that country. Crawmelt was then the most favourite hunting retreat of the Scottish court, on account of the excellent sport that its neighbourhood, both in hunting and angling, afforded; and it continued to be the annual retreat of royalty, until the days of the beauteous and unfortunate Queen Mary, who was the last sovereign that visited the forest of Meggat, so long famed for the numbers and fleetness of its deer.

James and Elizabeth led the ring and the double octave that evening; and so well did she acquit herself, that all who beheld her were delighted. Polmood made but an indifferent figure in the dance. The field on which he appeared to advantage was overpast, that of Elizabeth's excellence was only commencing. She was dressed in a plain white rail; her pale ringlets were curled and arranged with great care, yet so, that all appeared perfectly natural. Her movements were so graceful, and so easy that they looked rather like the motions of a fairy or some celestial being, than those of a mortal composed of flesh and blood. The eyes of the nobles had certainly been dazzled while they gazed at her, for they affirmed that they could not convince themselves that the grass bent beneath her toe. The next to her among the court ladies, both in beauty and accomplishments, was one Lady Ann Gray, a great favourite with the king, and of whom it was supposed the queen had good reason to have been jealous; but she being a lady of an easy and unassuming character, never showed any symptoms of suspicion. During the dance, however, it was apparent that the king's eyes were oftener fixed upon her than either upon his partner or his queen. They continued their frolics on the green till after the setting of the sun, and then, retiring into the pavilion before the castle, they seated themselves promiscuously in a circle, and drank large bumpers to the health of Polmood and Elizabeth, and to other appropriate toasts given by the king; the ladies sung —the lords commended them—and all became one flow of music, mirth, and social glee.

Carmichael alone appeared at times absent and thoughtful, which by the king, and all the rest, was attributed to the defeats he received in the sports of the day; but his intents towards his kinsman Polmood were evil and dangerous, and there was nothing he desired more than an occasion to challenge him; but no such occasion offering, as the mirth and noise still continued to increase, he slipped away to his chamber in the castle without being missed. He lay down on his bed, dressed as he was, and gave himself up to the most tormenting reflections. The manner in which he had been baffled by Polmood in the sports hung about his heart, and much he feared that circumstances had lessened him in the eyes of the young Elizabeth, and exalted his more fortunate rival. Polmood had not only baffled and dishonoured him in presence of all the court, but was moreover on the very eve of depriving him of one he believed more dear to him than life—it was too much to be patiently borne. In short, love, envy, revenge, and every passion were up in arms, exciting him to counteract and baffle his rival, with regard to the possession of Elizabeth. The night was short; it was the last on which she was free, or could with any degree of honour be taken possession of; that opportunity once lost, and she was lost to him for ever. The result of all those reflections was, a resolution to risk everything, and rather to die than suffer himself to be deprived of her without an effort.

CHAPTER IV.

The castle of Crawmelt was fitted up in such a manner as to accommodate a great number of lodgers. In the uppermost story were twelve little chambers, all distinct from one another; in each of these was a bed laid with rushes, and above these, by way of mattress, a bag filled with a kind of light feathery bent, which they gathered on the hills in abundance, and which made a bed as soft as one of down. When the queen and her attendants visited the hunting quarters, that floor was given wholly up by the gentlemen, who then slept in the pavilion or secondary castle; and each lady had a little chamber to herself, but no curtains to her bed, nor any covering, save one pair of sheets and a rug. The rushes were placed on the floor between a neat seat and the wall, and this was all the furniture that each of these little chambers contained, each bed being only intended for the accommodation of one person. The king's chamber was on the second floor. In it there was a good bed, well fitted up, and on the same flat were five other little chambers, in one of which lay Carmichael, with his bosom in a ferment.

Shortly after his retreat from the pavilion, the queen and ladies, judging from the noise which the wine had excited, that it was proper for them to retire, bade the jolly party good-night. The king, the lord-chamberlain, and a few others, having conveyed them to the bottom of the staircase, they compelled them to return to the rest of the company in the tent, which they knew they would gladly comply with, and proceeded in a body to their attic story.

In the meantime Carmichael, hearing their voices approach, began to quake with anxiety; and placing his door a little open, he stood by it in such a

way that he could both see and hear them without being seen. When they arrived at the door of the king's apartment, which was hard by his own, they halted for a considerable time, giggling and speaking very freely of the gentlemen they had just left; and at last, when they offered to take leave of the queen for the night, she said, that as his majesty seemed inclined to enjoy himself for some time with his lords, she would leave him his apartment by himself, that he might not be restrained in his mirth, nor have the opportunity of disturbing her. She then went up with the rest to one of the little chambers in the upper story.

Though Carmichael had taken pains previously to ascertain in which of the chambers Elizabeth slept, he nevertheless followed quietly after them, and, from a dark corner, saw her enter it. That was the decisive moment—he had no resource left but to attempt an interview; the adventure was attended with imminent danger, both of shame and disgrace, but he hoped that the ardour of his passion would plead some excuse for his intrusion in the eyes of Elizabeth.

Judging it necessary that he should surprise her before she undressed, though not one of the other ladies was yet gone to sleep, he lifted the latch softly, and entered behind her; for there was not one of the chambers, save the king's, that bolted on the inside. Elizabeth bore no similitude to a number of our ladies, who are so squeamish as to fall into fits when anything surprises or affects them. On the contrary, she was possessed of uncommon calmness and equanimity of temper, which sometimes savoured not a little of insensibility; and instead of being startled, and screaming out, when she saw a knight enter her chamber at that time of night, she being busied in putting up her ringlets, did not so much as discontinue her employment, but only reprimanded him in a calm whisper for his temerity, and desired him to withdraw instantly, without any farther noise. But, falling on his knees, he seized both her hands, and, in the most passionate manner, besought her by all the endearments of love, and by the estimation in which she held the life of one who adored her, and who was willing to sacrifice his life for her, instantly to elope with him, and become his through life, for good or for evil. "This is the last, and the most favourable moment," said he; "the ladies are gone to their chambers; the king and nobles are drinking themselves drunk; I know all the passes of the forest; we shall easily elude them to-night, if indeed we are once missed, which I do not conceive we will. To-morrow perhaps we may be able to reach a place of safety." Elizabeth was about to reply, but he interrupted her. "Consider, my dearest Elizabeth," continued he, "before you answer me finally; consider that Polmood is nowise worthy of you; his years will outnumber yours three times," added he; "his manners are blunt and uncourtly; and it is well known that his estates, honours, and titles, cannot once be compared with mine."

These were weighty considerations indeed. Elizabeth hesitated, and looked him steadfastly in the face, while a ray of joyful anticipation seemed to play on her lovely countenance. "It will make a great noise," said she; "the ladies will be terribly astonished." "Yes, my dear Elizabeth, they will be all astonished indeed; and some, without doubt, will be highly displeased. But if we can escape to the court of England, or France, until the first fury of the blast is overblown, your kind god-mother, the queen, will be happy to receive you again into her arms and household, as Lady Hyndford." That title sounded charmingly in Elizabeth's ears—she smiled—Carmichael, observing it, pursued the theme. "Consider," continued he, "which of the two titles is most likely to command respect at court—the plain, common, vulgar designation, Dame Elizabeth Hunter of Polmood; or, Lady Carmichael of Hyndford?—The right honourable Countess of Hyndford?" It was all over with Polmood—Elizabeth uttered a sigh of impatience—repeated the title three or four times to herself, and forthwith asked what course he proposed for their procedure. "Come directly with me to my chamber," said he: "I will furnish you with a suit of my clothes—I have a couple of good horses and a trusty squire in readiness—we shall pass the steps of Glendearg before the rising of the sun, and disappoint Polmood, the king, and all his court, of a wedding for once." —"Wedding!—Disappoint the king and all his court of a wedding for once!"—unfortunate and rash expression! It had no business there. The term *wedding* was itself enough and too much. It glanced on Elizabeth's mind like electricity, and came not alone, but with all its concatenation of delights. "We shall have no wedding then?" said she. "Perhaps we may contrive to have one by and by," said Carmichael. Elizabeth sighed deeply, and rested her rosy cheek upon her left shoulder, while the pressure of her chin dimpled the polish of her fair breast.

Whether she was at that time balancing the merits of each side of the alternative which she had in her offer has never yet been thoroughly ascertained; for at that instant they were alarmed by hearing the king tapping at some of the adjoining chamber doors, and asking who slept in each of them; and besides, adding inquiries, in which of them he would find Elizabeth. The door of the apartment in which they stood not being quite close, they were greatly alarmed, as they knew not what was the matter, but, as they had good reason, dreaded the worst. The light and the footsteps were fast approaching; there was not a moment to lose; and if Elizabeth had not been more alert than her lover, they would certainly have been caught in that questionable condition. But the mind of woman is ever fruitful in expedients. It is wonderful

to behold with what readiness they will often avert the most sudden and fatal surprises, even before the other sex have leisure to think of their danger. In proportion with the liability of censure to which they are exposed, and the dangerous effects of that censure in their future respectability and moral conduct, is bestowed that superior activity in managing all the little movements and contingents of life. If it were not for this inventive faculty, many thousands of female characters would be ruined in the eyes of the world, that are fair and unblameable, and which this alone enables the lovely wanderer among snares and toils to preserve without blemish, till the dangerous era of youth and inexperience is overpast.

There being, as was observed, not a moment to lose, so neither was there a moment lost from the time that Elizabeth was fully apprised of the danger to which they were both exposed. She flung off her rail, uncovered her bosom, and extinguished the light in her chamber, all ere Carmichael could once move from the spot. Determined to make one effort for the preservation of her honour, and the life of a lover who at all events had treated her with respect, she placed herself close behind the door, awaiting the event with firmness and resolution. But here we must leave them for a few minutes, till we explain the cause of this indecorous invasion.

CHAPTER V.

The party that conveyed the queen and her ladies from the pavilion to the castle on the way to their chambers having returned to the rest, they all, at the king's request, joined in drinking a bumper to the bride's health. Polmood in return proposed one to the queen, which was likewise drunk off; the health of all the ladies was next drunk, and afterwards several of them by name, and amongst others the beautiful Madam Gray. By that time the most steady were affected by the fumes of the wine, and some of them were become considerably drunk. The battles of the bygone day, in their various sports, were all fought over again, and every man was stouter and swifter in his own estimation than his compeers. Many bets were offered, and as readily accepted, without ever being more thought of; even the lord-chamberlain Hume, who was by no means a strong man, proffered to wrestle with Polmood for 1000 merks. The latter paid little attention to all these rhodomontades, having entered into a close and humorous argument with his majesty, who was rallying him most unmercifully about his young wife, and who at length, turning to him with a serious countenance, "Polmood," said he, "you have forgot one particularly important and necessary ceremony, and one which, as far as I know, has never been dispensed with in this realm. It is that of asking the bride at parting with her on the bridal eve if she had not rued. Many a bridegroom has been obliged to travel far for that very purpose, and why should you neglect it when living under the same roof?" Polmood acknowledged the justice of the accusation, and likewise the fact that such a custom was prevalent, but excused himself on the grounds that if she had relented she had plenty of opportunities to have told him so. His majesty however persisted in maintaining that it was an omission of a most serious nature, and one that gave her full liberty to deny him to-morrow even before the priest, which would prove an awkward business, and that therefore he ought, in conformity with the good old custom, to go and ask the question, even though the lady were in bed. Polmood objected that it was a manifest breach of decorum; but that only excited further raillery against him, for they all cried out, "He dares not! he dares not!" Polmood was nettled, and at that instant offered to go if his majesty would accompany him as a witness.

Whether the king had any sinister motives for this procedure cannot be ascertained, but certain it is that he went cheerfully along with Polmood on the expedition, carrying a lighted torch in his hand and leading the way. Every chamber door that he came to he tapped, asking at the same time who slept there, until he came to that behind which Elizabeth stood with her lover at her back, and observing it not to be quite shut, instead of tapping he peeped in, holding the torch before him. Elizabeth at that moment put her face and naked bosom bye the edge of the door full in his view, and instantly pushed the door in his face, exclaiming, "What does your majesty mean? I am undressed; you cannot come in now." And having by this manœuvre, as she particularly intended, put out the light, she waited the issue; but instead of being agitated with terror, as most women would have been in the same situation, she could scarcely refrain from laughter; for the king, instead of returning her any answer, fell a puffing and blowing at the wick of the flambeau, thinking to make it rekindle, but not being able to succeed, he fell a groping for his companion. "Confound her, Polmood," said he, "she has extinguished our light; what shall we do now?" "We had better ask the question in the dark, if it please your majesty," said Polmood. "No," said the king, "come along with me; we will try to get it relumined;" then groping his way along with Polmood at his back he tapped at every chamber door he came at around the circle, asking each of the ladies if she had any light. Several denied, but at length he came to one, below which on stooping he espied a little glimmering light, and having by this time learned what lady was in each chamber, he called at that too, but was not a little startled at hearing the voice of her within—it was the queen—but, affecting not to know, he lifted the

latch, and pretending great modesty did not so much as look in, but only held in the torch with the one hand, begging of her to relight it, which she did, and returned it to his hand.

Carmichael having by these means escaped quietly and with perfect deliberation to his own chamber, Elizabeth laid herself down, not a little pleased at the success of her expedient, but somewhat astonished at this extraordinary scrutiny. The two champions returned to Elizabeth's door; the king tapped gently and asked if she was in undress still. She begged a thousand pardons of his majesty for the trouble she had caused him, which happened solely from the circumstance of his having surprised her in dishabille; and told him that he might now enter, and let her know what his royal pleasure was with her. James entered cautiously, keeping his flambeau behind him in case of further accidents, and then began by asking pardon in his turn of Elizabeth for his former abrupt entrance; but seeing that her door was not altogether shut, he said he judged the chamber to be unoccupied—that he had come at her lover's request, in order to be a witness to a question he had to propose to her. He then desired Polmood to proceed, who, stepping forward much abashed, told her bluntly that all he had to ask was, whether or not she had repented of the promise she had made him of marriage? Elizabeth, not having been previously instructed of any such existing ceremony in Scotland, did not readily comprehend the meaning or drift of this question; or else, thinking it proper to avail herself of it in order to provide for certain subsequent arrangements which had very lately been proposed to her, answered with perfect good humour that she understood Polmood had himself relented, and wished to throw the blame upon her. "I therefore tell you, sir," said she "that I *have* rued our agreement, and that most heartily." "Bravo!" cried the king as loud as he could shout, pushing Polmood out at the door before him. He then closed it, and without waiting a moment ran down the stair laughing, and shouting aloud "Hurra! hurra! The bride has rued! the bride has rued! Polmood is undone." He hasted to the pavilion, and communicated the jest to his nobles, who all laughed abundantly at Polmood's expense.

The staircase of the Crawmelt castle was in one of the turrets, and from that there were doors which opened to each of the floors. The upper story that contained the twelve chambers in which the queen and ladies were that night lodged, was fitted up so that it formed a circle. All the chamber doors were at equal distances, and the door which led to the staircase was exactly in the circle with the rest, and in every respect the same. Now, Polmood not being at all satisfied with the answer he had received from Elizabeth, and unwilling to return to the company without some further explanation, turned round as the king departed, dark as it was, and putting his mouth to the latch-hole of the door, began to expostulate on the subject. Elizabeth, perceiving that he was somewhat intoxicated, desired him to withdraw, for that it was highly improper for him to remain there in the dark alone, and added that she would tell him all about it to-morrow.

Now Polmood was not only half drunk, but he was besides greatly stunned with the answer he had received; and moreover, to add to his misfortune, the king had either in the midst of his frolic shut the door behind him, or else it had closed of itself. The consequence of all this was, that when Polmood turned about to depart, he soon discovered that it was like to be a very intricate business. By means of going round the circle with one hand pressed against the wall, he found that the doors were all shut, and that there was no possibility of distinguishing one of them from another. He could easily have opened any of them, because none were bolted; but in doing so he had no assurance that he would not light upon the queen or some sleeping countess, which might procure him much disgrace and ridicule. He was a modest bashful gentleman, fearful of giving offence, and would not have been guilty of such a piece of rudeness for the world: he knew not what to do; to call was in vain, for the apartment was vaulted below, therefore he could alarm none save the ladies. He had but one chance to find the right door for twelve to go wrong; the odds were too great for him to venture. He would gladly have encroached again upon Elizabeth, but he knew no more of her door than the others.

There is every reason to believe that the fumes of the wine tended greatly to increase Polmood's dilemma. Be that as it may, he could think only of one expedient whereby to extricate himself from his whimsical situation, and the idea had no sooner struck him than he proceeded to put it in practice. It was to listen at each door if there was any person breathing within, and if there was no person breathing within he thought he might conclude that to be the door he wanted. To effect this with more certainty, he kneeled softly on the floor and laid his ear close to the bottom of each door, creeping always to the next as soon as he had discovered that a lady was within. It was a long time ere he could be satisfied of some, they breathed so softly. He kept an account in his memory of the doors he passed, and had nearly got round them all when he heard, as he thought, a door softly and cautiously opened. No light appearing, Polmood judged that he was overheard, and that this was one of the ladies listening to what he was about. He was on the point of speaking to her, and begging for pardon and assistance, when he heard the sound of footsteps approaching behind him. He was resting on his hands and knees at a chamber door, with his head hanging down in the act of listening: he kept his position, pricking up his ears, and scarcely able to hear for the palpitations of his heart; but it was not long ere a man stumbled on his feet, fell above him, and

crushed his face against the floor. Polmood swore a loud oath, and being irritated he laid furiously hold of the stranger's heel, and endeavoured to detain him; but he wrenched it from his grasp, and in a moment was gone. Polmood then judging that it must have been some one of the courtiers stealing to his mistress, and hearing the door close behind him, hasted to his feet and followed the sound, hoping to escape after him—opened the same door, as he thought, and rushed forward; but at the third step he foundered over something that interposed his progress, and, to his utter confusion, found that he had alighted with all his weight across a lady in bed, who screamed out murder, fire, and ravishment in a voice so loud and so eldritch that Polmood's ears were deafened, and his joints rendered powerless through vexation and dismay. He tried to get up and escape, but the injured fair laid hold of his coat, pulled it over his head; and as he scorned to hurt her, or resist her frantic violence by violence in return, in that manner she held him fast, continuing all the while her outcries. The rest of the ladies awakening, set up one universal yell of murder—sprang from their beds and endeavoured to escape, some one way and some another, running against each other, and screaming still the louder. Their cries alarmed the guards, and these the courtiers, who all rushing in promiscuously with lights, beheld one of the most ludicrous scenes ever witnessed by man—a whole circular apartment full of distressed dames, skipping into their holes as the light appeared like so many rabbits; and in one apartment, the door of which was shut, but to which they were directed by the cries, the right honourable Lady Hume holding the worthy bridegroom, the invincible Norman of Polmood! with his coat drawn over his head in her own bed-chamber, and abusing him all the while as a depraved libertine and a ravisher. Polmood was speechless, or at least all he attempted to advance by way of palliation was never once heard, so loud was the mixed noise of laughter, ridicule, and abuse; and the king with a grave face observed, that unless he could give security for his future good behaviour he would be obliged to confine him in the keep until such time as he could be got married, that then perhaps the virtue of other men's wives might be preserved from his outrageous violence.

CHAPTER VI.

The transactions of that night were not brought to a conclusion by the unlucky adventure of the Laird of Polmood. On the contrary, that was only a prologue to further mistakes, of greater atrocity, and of consequences more serious.

The king did not again return to the pavilion, but retired to his chamber as they came down stairs. The Earl of Hume, having got extremely drunk, and fallen into an argument with another knight, who was much in the same condition, about some affair of border chivalry, of which their ideas totally differed, they were both become so warm and so intent upon the subject, that they never once perceived when the late alarm was given, nor when the company left them, in order to succour the distressed ladies. But when they returned with Polmood guarded as a prisoner in jest, and related the circumstances, the earl got into a furious passion, and right or wrong insisted on running Polmood through the body. "What, sir!" said he: "because you cannot get a wife of your own, does that give you a right to take violent possession of mine? No, sir! draw, and I'll give you to know the contrary; I'll carve you, sir, into a great number of pieces, sir."

When the earl was in the height of this passion, and had stripped off part of his clothes to fight a duel with Polmood by torch light, one of the lords whispered in his ear, that Polmood only *mistook the bed*, that was all; and that Lady Hume had acquitted herself in such a manner, by taking him prisoner, that it reflected immortal honour upon her and all her connections.

This pleased the lord-chamberlain so well, that he was never weary of shaking hands with Polmood, and drinking to him; but he did not forget to observe each time, that he thought Polmood would take care in future how he mistook Lady Hume for another. The earl grew every minute more and more pleased on account of his lady's intrepid behaviour, and being a sprightly ingenious gentleman, began singing a song, which he swore was extempore, and which was indeed believed to be so by all present, as none of them had ever heard it before. It is said to be still extant, and to be yet sung in several parts of Scotland, which certainly is not very probable. It began "I hae ane wyffe o' mi ain." In short his admiration of his lady arose to such a height, that he took up a resolution to go and spend the remainder of the night in her company. A number of his merry associates encouraged this proposal with all the plausible arguments they could suggest, reminding him that the chamber was in sooth his own—that he had only given it up in favour of her ladyship for a few nights, and she could in nowise grudge him a share of it for one night, especially as there was no rest to be had in the pavilion. Thus encouraged, the earl arose and went towards the castle, singing with great glee—

"I hae ane wyffe o' mi ain;
I'll be behadden til nae bodye;
I'll nowther borey nor lenne,
Swap nor niffer wi' nae bodye."

The porter and guards at the gate objected to his admission, and began to remonstrate with his lordship on its impropriety: but he drew his sword, and swore he would sacrifice them, every mother's son,

if they offered to debar his entrance to his own wife. It was in vain that they reminded him there was no room in her ladyship's apartment for any person beside herself, which they said he himself well knew. He called them liars and officious knaves, who meddled with matters about which they had no business; said it was his concern to find room, and theirs to obey his orders, or abide the consequences; at the same time, he fumbled at his sword-hilt, in order forthwith to begin the slaughter of the porters: and as they were afraid of resisting the determined resolutions of the lord-chamberlain, they suffered him to pass, after leaving his sword behind him, and promising on his honour to make no noise.

The earl, by dint of perseverance, found his way, amid utter darkness, to the upper story of the castle, where his beloved lady and her fair associates were all enjoying sweet repose after the sports and merriment of the late day. He entered with great caution —counted the doors to the right hand with accurate exactness, in order to ascertain his lady's chamber —opened the door softly, and advanced stooping, in search of her lowly but desirable couch—but when he proceeded to clasp her in his arms in a transport of love and admiration—"O horrible! most horrible!" he found that she was already lying fast locked in the arms of a knight. It is impossible to conceive the fury into which this discovery threw the enamoured earl. He entertained not the slightest doubt but that it was Polmood, and resolving to make an example of him, he laid hold of him by the beard with one hand, and by the throat with the other, determined to strangle him on the spot. But the desperate inamorato sprung upon his assailant like a tiger from his den—struck the lord chamberlain violently on the head—overturned him on the floor, and forthwith escaped. The earl followed as fast as he was able to the door—gave the alarm with a loud voice, and hastily returned to secure the other accomplice in wickedness and shame. He flung himself upon the bed—laid violent hands upon her —swearing that she too should not escape, and that he would inflict upon her the most condign punishment. The lady bore all with silence and meekness, until she heard the rest of the courtiers approaching, and then she took hold of him by the hair of the head with both hands, held him down thereby, and screamed as loud as she was able.

The waggish lords, who had excited the earl to this expedition, certain that in the state he then was, he was sure to breed some outrage in the castle, were all in waiting without the gate, ready to rush in on the least alarm. Consequently it was not long before they entered with lights, and among the rest the king in his night-gown and slippers. They entered the chamber from which the cries proceeded; and, to their no small astonishment, discovered the lord-chamberlain engaged in close combat—not with his own lady, as he had unwarrantably supposed—but with the beauteous Lady Ann Gray, who was weeping bitterly, and crying out to revenge her on that wicked and barbarous lord.

The merriment of the party at this discovery would have been without bounds, had not the king appeared to be seriously displeased. He ordered Lord Hume to be carried down stairs instantly, and confined in the keep until he should answer for his conduct. The earl attempted to remonstrate; assuring his majesty that he had only *mistaken the bed;* but his ebriety being apparent, that had no effect upon the king, who declared he could not suffer such liberties to be taken with any lady under the royal protection with impunity, and that perhaps the lord-chamberlain might have yet to atone for his rudeness and temerity by the loss of his head.

The courtiers were all astonished at the king's peremptory manner and resentment, as no one could for a moment suppose that the earl had indeed any designs upon the person of Lady Ann Gray; and when at length he protested that he actually caught another man in the chamber with her, the king was still more wroth, asserting that to be impossible, guarded as the castle then was, unless it were himself who was there, which he hoped Lord Hume did not mean to insinuate in the presence, or at least in the hearing, of his royal consort—that, as far as he knew, there was not another knight within the walls of the castle, and that such a malicious attempt to asperse the young lady's honour was even worse than the other crime. "Let the castle be instantly searched," cried he, "and if there is no other person found in it, save the ladies, and those now admitted, I shall order the head to be taken from this uncourtly and slanderous earl early in the morning. Was it not enough that he should attempt the violation of a royal ward, of the highest birth and respect, but that, when frustrated, he should endeavour to affix a stain upon her honour, and in the accusation implicate his sovereign! Let the castle be searched strictly and instantly."

The earl was confined in the keep—the castle gate was double guarded—the castle was searched for men throughout, and at last Carmichael was found concealed in his own chamber, and half dressed. No doubt then remained with the courtiers that he was the guilty person with regard to Madam Gray.

The king appeared visibly astonished when Carmichael was discovered, but affecting to be of the same opinion as the rest, he accompanied them down stairs—locked Carmichael in the keep beside the lord-chamberlain—dismissed the rest to the pavilion, charging them on pain of death not to attempt entering the gate of the castle again, till once they received his orders; and having caused it to be locked, he retired to his apartment.

The displeasure of the king jarred on the minds of the hitherto jovial party. Their organs of sensation were benumbed at once, and their risibility completely quashed. They durst not even speak

their minds freely to one another on the subject, afraid of having their remarks overhauled at next day's examination; but they all judged Carmichael to be in a bad predicament, considering how great a favourite Lady Ann was with the king. It was then first discovered, that Carmichael had been absent from the pavilion, from the time that the ladies retired, and how long previously to that could not be recollected; consequently they were all satisfied that they were two lovers, and that the meeting had been preconcerted, although their passion had hitherto been concealed from the eyes of all the court. The whole matter appeared now to them perfectly obvious; whereas there was not a single incident save one, on which they put a right construction.

A short and profound sleep ushered that group of noble sportsmen into the healthful morning breeze of the mountain, and the beams of the advancing sun, and finished the adventures of that memorable night, but not their consequences. The examination which follows in the next chapter, will assist somewhat in the explication of the one, and the subsequent narrative of the other.

CHAPTER VII.

Fair and lovely rose that morning on the forest of Meggat-dale—it was the third of September—the day destined by the king and queen for the marriage of their beloved Elizabeth. The dawning first spread a wavy canopy of scarlet and blue over all the eastern hemisphere; but when the sun mounted from behind the green hills of Yarrow, the fairy curtain was updrawn into the viewless air. The shadows of the mountains were then so beauteously etched, and their natural tints so strongly marked, that it seemed as if the mountains themselves lay cradled in the bosom of the lovely lake; but while the eye yet rested on the adumbrated phenomenon, the spectre hills, with all their inverted woods and rocks, melted away in their dazzling mirror.

It was a scene that might have stirred the most insensate heart to raptures of joy; yet the Queen of Scotland and her ladies were demure and sullen, even though their morning walk was over a garnish of small but delicate mountain flowers, belled with the dews of heaven—though fragrance was in every step, and health in every gale that strayed over the purple heath.

The king and his nobles were even more sullen than they. The king took his morning walk by himself—his nobles sauntered about in pairs, but they discoursed only to their hounds, whose gambols and mimic hunts were checked by the unwonted gloom on the brows of their masters. The two aggressors were still lying in the dismal keep, both in the highest chagrin; the one at his disappointment in love, the other at his disgrace. Such are the motley effects of intemperance, and such the importance attached by the inebriated fancy to trifles, which, in moments of calm reflection, would never have been regarded.

The king returning, threw himself into his easy chair; the queen paid her respects to him, and interceded for the imprisoned lords. He ordered them to be brought before him, and summoned the rest of the nobles to attend. When the news of the examination spread the ladies came running together, some of them dressed, and some only half-dressed, to hear it. A trial of a delinquent who has come under any suspicions with respect to their sex is to them a most transcendent treat. But the king rising, beseeched them kindly to withdraw, because, in the course of elucidating the matter, some things might be expressed offensive to their modesty. They assured his majesty that there was no danger of such a circumstance occurring; but he persisted, and they were obliged to retire.

The king first called on Polmood to give an account of all that befell him in the vault of the twelve chambers; and how he came to make the unmannerly attack on the Lady Hume, all which he was required to answer on oath. The speeches which follow are copied literally from the handwriting of *Archembald Quhitelaw airtshdeiken of Lowden and cekreter to kinge Jemys.* The MSS. are now in the possession of Mr. J. Brown, Edinburgh, and fully confirm the authenticity of the story, if any doubts remain of the tradition. The first, as being the most original, is given at full length; it is entitled, *Ane speetsh and defenns maide by Normaund Huntyr of Poomoode on ane wyte of royet and lemanrye with Elenir Ladye of Hume.*

"Mucht it pleiz mai sovrayne lege, not to trowe sikkan euil and kittel dooins of yer ain trew cervente, and maist lethfu legeman; nor to lychtlefye myne honer sa that I can ill bruke; by eyndling, that, withoutten dreddour I shulde gaung til broozle ane fayir deme, ane honest mannis wyffe, and mynnie to twa bairnis; and that in the myddis of ane loftful of queenes. I boud haife bein dementyde to kicke ane stoure, to the skaithinge of hir preclair pounyis, and hairshillynge myne ayin kewis. Nethynge mai lege was ferder fra myne heid thanne onye sikkan wylld sneckdrawinge and pawkerye. But quhan yer maigestye jinkyt fra me in the baux, and left me in the darknesse, I was baiss to kum again wi' sikkan ane ancere; and stude summe tyme swutheryng what it avysat me neiste to doo in thilke barbulye. At the launge, I stevellit backe, and lowten downe, set mai nebb to ane gell in the dor, and fleechyt Elcesabett noore to let us torfell in the waretyme of owir raik. But scho skyrit to knuife lownly or siccarlye on thilke sauchning, and heiryne that scho was wilsum and glunchye, I airghit at keuillyng

withe hirr in that thraward paughty moode, and baidna langer to haigel. But ben doitrifyed with thilke drynke and sachless and dizzye with lowtyn, and thilke lofte as derke as pick, I tint ilka spunk of ettlyng quhair the dor laye. And thaun I staupyt and gavit about quhille I grewe perfitlye donnarit, and trowit the castil to be snuiffyng and birlyng round; foreby that it was heezing upon the tae syde, and myntyng to whommil me. I had seendil watherit a selwyn raddour, but boddin that I wad coup, that I muchtna gie a dooffe, I hurklit litherlye down, and craup forret alang on myne looffis and myne schynes, herkyng at ilka dorlief gyffe ther was onye ane snifteryng withyn side. Outhir I owirharde, or thocht I owirharde sliepyng soughs ahynte thilk haile, and begoude to kiep sklenderye houpes of wynning out of myne revellet fank unsperkyt with scheme or desgrece. Ben richt laith to rin rashlye, with ane posse, on the kyttes or the chaftis of thilke deir eichil kimmers, that war lying doveryng and snuffyng, and spelderyng, rekelesse and mistrowyns of all harmis, I was eidentlye hotteryng alang with muckle paishens. I was lyinge endslang at ane dor, quhan I harde ane chylde unhaspe thilke sneck, as moothlye as ane snail quhan scho gaungs snowking owir thilk droukyt swaird; but thilk dor gyit ay thilk tother whesk, and thilk tother jerg, and oore I gatt tyme til syne mysel, ane grit man trippyt on myne feit, and fell belly flaught on me with ane dreadful noozle, quhille myne curpin was jermummlyt, and myne grunzie knoityd with ane cranch against thilke lofte. I cursyt him in wraith, and mynding to taigel him, claught haud of his koote whilke I gyit ane hele of ane nibble. Oore I gatt to myne knye he elyit, garryng thilk dor clashe ahint him. I strifflit till thilke samen plesse as gypelye as I culde—puit up thilk samen dor as I thoucht and ran on—but quhair suld I lichte! but on thilke dafte syde of ane feil madame! Myne heid mellyt thilk biggyng, and I was klien stoundyt and daveryt. Myne ledde sychit and mummlyt, pittyng me in ane dreidfulle fyke; and sae fummylyng til ryse, scho trowit I had bein gumpyng, and sett up sic ane yirlich skrighe that my verie sennyns sloomyt and myne teith chackyt in myne heid. Scho brainzellyt up in ane foorye and dowlicappyd me, and ben richt laithe to lay ane laitless finger on her, I brankyt in myne gram, and laye smooryng quhille ye claum fra the barmykene and redde us. Thys is thilke hale and leil troothe, as I houpe for merse bye ouir blissyt Ladye."

The king then asked him if he was certain it was a man that stumbled over him in the dark? Polmood swore he was certain, for that it was weightier and stronger than any three women in the forest, and besides he was farther certified by feeling his clothes and leg. The king still continued to dwell on that subject, as seeming to doubt of it alone; but Polmood having again sworn to the certainty of the whole, he was dismissed and forgiven, on condition that he asked pardon of Lady Hume, her majesty, and all the ladies.

The lord-chamberlain was then called up, and being accused of "*Misleeryt racket and gruesome assault on thilke body of Lady Anne Grey*," he began as follows:—

"Mai maist grashous and soveryne lege, I do humblye beseetsh yer pardonne for myne grit follye and mismainners, and do intrete you til attrybute thatn haile frolyke to yer majestye's liberalitye, and no til nae roode and wuckit desyne. I hae nae pley to urge, only that in fayth and troothe I mystuke thilke bed, as myne ayin guid deme, and Lady Grey well baith weil allow; and gin I didna fynde ane man in thilke bed——"

Here it appears the king had interrupted him; for there is no more of this speech in Whitlaw's hand, save some broken sentences which cannot be connected. His majesty is said to have called out angrily, "Hold, hold, no more of that: we have heard enough. Carmichael," continued he, turning about to him, "tell me on your honour, and tell me truly; were you in the room of the twelve chambers last night in the dark, or were you not?" Carmichael answered, with great promptness, that he was. "Was it you who stumbled over Polmood?" "It was, indeed." "Then tell me, sir, what was your business there?" Carmichael bowed, and begged to be excused, assuring his majesty that, though he would willingly yield his life for him, that secret he would not yield at that time. "I thank you," said the king, "I know it all. I am glad you have some honour left; had you publicly divulged your motives, you should never have seen the noon of this day. Carmichael! you have been ungrateful, unwary, and presumptuous! I have trusted you near my person for three years, but we must take care that you shall never insult royalty again. Conduct him to the keep till our farther pleasure is manifested. My lord-chamberlain, you must ask pardon of Madam Gray, the queen, and all the ladies." The nobles did not comprehend the king's awards, but he knew more, and saw farther into the matter than they did.

CHAPTER VIII.

The lords having, by desire, retired, the ladies were next sent for, and examined one by one, after being informed that none of them were required to divulge anything relating to themselves, but only what they heard passing with regard to others.

There was such a flood of mystery and surmise now poured in upon the king, that he felt himself utterly at a loss to distinguish truth from fiction. According to their relations there had been great battles—men cursing and swearing, and occasionally

falling down upon the floor with such a shock as if the roof of the castle had fallen in. There were besides whisperings heard, and certain noises which were well described, but left to the judge for interpretation. In a word, it appeared from the relations of the fair enthusiasts, that all the nobles of the court had been there, and the king himself among them; and that every lady in the castle had been engaged with one paramour *at least*—the narrator always excepted. James would gladly have put a stop to this torrent of scandal and insinuation, but, having once begun, he was obliged to hear them all out; each being alike anxious to vindicate herself by fixing the guilt upon her neighbours.

One circumstance however came out, which visibly affected James. It was affirmed by two different ladies, one of whom at least he had good reasons for believing, that there was actually one in the chamber with Elizabeth, when he and Polmood came up in their frolic, and when she contrived so artfully to extinguish the light. Several circumstances occurred to his mind at once in confirmation of this accusal, but he affected to receive it with the same indifference that he received the rest. He cast one look at Elizabeth, but he was too much of a gentleman to suffer it to remain—he withdrew his piercing eye in a moment—smiled, and asked questions about something else. When they had done, Elizabeth rose to explain, and had just begun by saying, "My dear lord, it is very hard indeed that I cannot pay my evening services to the Virgin, but I must be suspected of———" Here she paused, and the lively and petulant Ann Gray, springing up and making a low courtesy, said, in a whimpering tone, "My dear lord! it is very hard indeed, that Carmichael cannot pay his evening services to a virgin but he must be suspected of———" The manner in which she pronounced this, and in particular the emphasis which she laid upon the concluding preposition, set all the ladies a giggling; and the king, being pleased with the sly humour of his favourite, and seeing Elizabeth put to the blush, he started up, and said, "There is no need of any defence or apology, my dear Elizabeth; I am too well convinced of your purity to regard the insinuations of that volatile imp. We all know whereto her sarcasms tend; she has the Earl of Hume in her mind, and the gentleman who knocked him down last night; she wishes you to be thought like herself, but it will not do. We shall soon see you placed in a situation beyond the power of her wicked biting jests, and of court scandal; while she may continue to sigh and ogle with knights, wreck her disappointment on all her acquaintances, and sigh for that she cannot have." "Heigh-ho!" cried the shrewd minx, in a tone which again set all the party in a titter.

After this, the king, having dismissed them, sent for Carmichael, and said to him, "Carmichael, I am shocked at your behaviour. The attempt you have made on a royal ward, on the very eve of her marriage with a man whom we esteem, manifests a depravity of mind, and a heart so dead to every sense of gratitude, that I am ashamed at having taken such a knight into my household. Whatever were your motives for this disgraceful and clandestine procedure, whether the seduction of her person or of her affections from the man who adores her, and who has obtained our sanction to her hand, they must have been wrong, and far from that line of respect which, in return for our confidence, it was your bounden duty to pursue. I therefore will, that you immediately quit, for the space of three years, the society of which you have been an unworthy member; and if at any time within that period you are found within twenty miles of our residence, your life shall answer for it—this I shall cause to be proclaimed to the country at large. I desire to hear no entreaty or excuse."

Carmichael bowed, and retired from the presence in the utmost trepidation. He and his groom, the only attendant he had, were both ready mounted in less than ten minutes; and being driven, in some degree, to a state of desperation, he rode boldly up to the castle gate, and desired a word with Elizabeth. This was a most imprudent action, as it in some degree divulged the cause of his expulsion from the court, which it was the king's chief design to conceal, or gloss over with some other pretence.

When the squire in waiting carried up his demand, Elizabeth was sitting between the queen and the Lady Hamilton; and acting from the impulse of the moment, as she too often did, she was rising to comply with the request, when a look from the king, which she well knew how to interpret, caused her to sink again into her seat, like a deer that has been aroused by a false alarm. "What answer shall I return?" said the squire, who had only witnessed her spontaneous motion, but received no order: "that Mistress Elizabeth has nothing to say to him," said the king. The squire returned down stairs. "Mistress Elizabeth has nothing to say to you, my lord." Carmichael turned his horse slowly around, as if not knowing what he did. "Was it she that returned me this answer?" said he; "Yes sir," said the man, walking carelessly back into the castle. That word pierced Carmichael to the heart; he again turned his horse slowly around, and the porter said he seemed as if he had lost sight of the ground. He appeared desirous of leaving some message, but he rode off without uttering another syllable, and instead of shaping his course homeward as was expected, he crossed the Meggat, went round the Breaken Hill, and seemed bound for the border.

Though it is perhaps understood, it may not be improper here to mention, that when Carmichael escaped from Elizabeth's chamber in the dark, and had slunk quietly down to his own, in a few minutes he heard the king come running down the stair, laughing, and calling out that the bride had rued; and not having the slightest suspicion that Polmood

would remain among the ladies in the dark, he judged him to have gone along with the king. He was extremely happy on hearing the king exclaiming that Elizabeth had taken her word again, not doubting but that it was in consequence of the conversation he had with her; and in order to strengthen her resolution, or prevail upon her instantly to elope with him, he took the opportunity of stealing again to her apartment before any other irruption of the revellers into the castle should take place. But in his way, and when at the very point at which he aimed, he stumbled upon the forlorn Polmood, whose voice and grasp he well knew, and from whom he narrowly escaped.

Carmichael was now gone, and Elizabeth did not believe that any person knew of her amour with him. She thought that the king was merely jealous of him and Lady Ann Gray; yet she could not help considering herself as the cause of the noble youth's disgrace, and for the first time in her life felt her *heart* interested in the person or concerns of another. Perhaps her passion for admiration prompted the feeling, for the circumstance had deprived her of a principal admirer; but it is probable that a sentiment more tender mixed with the regret she felt at his departure.

The king, who perceived well how matters stood, was considerably alarmed for his fair ward, both on account of her bewitching beauty and accomplishments, and her insatiable desire of excelling all others of her sex; but more on account of her rash thoughtless manner of acting. He entertained no doubt of her stainless purity, but he knew that a great deal more was required in order to maintain her character uncontaminated in the eyes of the world—that caution and prudence were as requisite as the others, and that purity of heart and innocency of intention, instead of proving shields against the aspersions of calumny, often lead to that gaiety and freedom of demeanour, which attract its most venomous shafts. Of this caution and prudence Elizabeth seemed destitute. Her own word, with that of both her royal guardians, was pledged to Polmood, yet notwithstanding all this, he dreaded that she had admitted a knight into her chamber at midnight, and had artfully effected his escape, within nine hours of the time appointed for her nuptials. He could not judge Carmichael's pretensions to have been honourable from his manner of proceeding, and he trembled for the impressions he might have made upon her inexperienced heart, subversive of honour, faith, and virtue; especially when he considered the answer she had returned to Polmood the very minute after Carmichael had left her.

As for Polmood, he had, as yet, no suspicions of Carmichael nor any man living; but the answer he had received sunk deep into his heart, for he absolutely adored Elizabeth, and feared he had offended her by some part of his behaviour, and that she had actually repented of her promise to him on that account. He knew not to whom first to address himself, and wandered about all that morning, with a countenance so rueful that nothing in this age will ever compare with it.

The king put his arm within Elizabeth's, and led her to the balcony. The day was clear, and the scene on which they looked around, wild and romantic. The high mountains, the straggling woods, the distant lake, and the limpid river, with its hundred branches, winding through valleys covered with brake and purple heath, whose wild variety of light and shade the plough never marred;—the kid, the lamb, the leveret, and the young deer, feeding or sporting together in the same green holt, formed altogether a scene of rural simplicity, and peaceful harmony, such as the eye of a Briton shall never again look upon.

"We shall have a sweet day for your wedding, Elizabeth," said the king. Elizabeth cast her eyes towards the brow of the hill, where Carmichael had but a few minutes before vanished, and remained silent. The king was agitated. "It was an effectual rub you gave the bridegroom last night," continued he; "I owe you a kiss, and a frock of purple silk beside, for it. I would not have missed the jest for a hundred bonnet pieces, and as many merks to boot; you are a most exquisite girl." Never was flattery lost on the ear of a woman, especially if that woman was possessed of youth and beauty. Elizabeth smiled and seemed highly pleased with the compliment paid to her ingenuity. "What a loss it is," continued James, "that we cannot push the jest a little farther. Suppose we should try?"

"Oh! by all means!" said Elizabeth, "let us carry the jest a little farther."

"Polmood is in sad taking already," said the king; "were you to persist in your refusal a little longer he would certainly hang himself." Elizabeth smiled again. "But the worst of it is, he will take it so heinously amiss—I know his proud heart well—that all the world will not persuade him ever to ask you again; and then, if the match is in our vain humour broke off, it is irretrievable ruin to you."

"Ruin to me! what does your majesty mean?"

"Yes, certain ruin to you; for the court and all the kingdom will say that he has slighted and refused you, and you know we cannot help what people say. You know they will say it was because he and I surprised a man in your chamber at midnight, and much more than that they will say. They know that you could not, and would not resist our will, and therefore they will infallibly regard you as an offcast, and you will be flouted and shunned by the whole court. It would almost break my heart to see those who now envy and imitate you, turning up their noses as you passed them."

"But I will inform them; I will swear to them that it was not so," said Elizabeth, almost crying.

"That is the readiest way to make them believe

that it was so," said the king. "We shall, besides, lose an excellent and splendid wedding, in which I hoped to see you appear to peculiar advantage, the wonder and admiration of all ranks and degrees; but that is nothing." Elizabeth gave him a glance of restless impatience. "After all, I think we must venture to give Polmood a farther refusal for the joke's sake: even in the worst case, I do not know but an old maid is as happy as many a married lady."

These few seemingly spontaneous sentences, presented to the mind of Elizabeth a picture altogether so repulsive, that she scarcely had patience to listen until the king concluded; and when he had done, she remained silent, first turned round the one bracelet, then the other, fetched a slight sigh, and looked the king in the face.

"I think that for the humour of the jest you ought to persist in your refusal," continued James.

"I have often heard your majesty say, that we should never let the plough stand to kill a mouse," said Elizabeth; "I never saw *long jokes* come to much good."

"Upon my soul I believe you are right after all," returned the king; "you have more sense in your little finger than most ladies have in all: it is not easy to catch you in the wrong. I suppose the wedding must go on?" "I suppose it must," said Elizabeth, pleased with the idea of her acuteness and discernment. She was again turning her eyes toward the brow of the Breaken Hill, but the king changed sides with her, linking his left arm in her right, and led her at a sharp walk round the balcony, commending her prudence as much above her years, and expatiating on the envy of the court ladies, and the joy they would have manifested if the marriage agreement had been dissolved. From that he broke off, and descanted on the amusements in which they were to be engaged, and even on the dresses and jewels in which such and such ladies were likely to appear, until he had wound up Elizabeth's fancy to the highest pitch; for it was always on the wing watching for change of place, and new treasures of vain delight. Without giving her time for any further quiet reflection, he hurried her away to the great hall, where the queen and her attendants remained. "Make haste, make haste, my ladies," said he; "you seem to forget that we have this day to ride to the Maiden Chapel, and from thence to the castle of Nidpath, where I have ordered preparations to be made for the ensuing festival. Falseat is high, and the braes of Hundleshope steep; make haste, my ladies, make haste!"

The order of the day seemed hitherto scarcely well understood, but when the king had thus expressed his will in such apparent haste and good humour, away tripped she and away tripped each lady to her little wardrobe and portable mirror. The king ran down stairs to issue the same orders in the pavilion, where a plentiful breakfast of cakes, venison, and milk was set in order, and where the nobles had begun to assemble; but on his way he perceived Polmood walking rapidly by the side of the burn, with his hands clasped behind his back and his bonnet over his brow: he heard not, nor saw what was going on. The king accosted him in a hasty careless manner—"Polmood, why are you sauntering there? the ladies are quite ready; the bride is ready for mounting her horse; fy! fy! Polmood, the ladies will all be obliged to wait for you." Polmood ran towards the burn to wash his face; but recollecting something else, he turned and ran towards the tent; then, stopping short all of a sudden, he turned back again and ran towards the burn. "I'll be shot to dead with an arrow if I know what to do," said he, as he passed the king this last time with his bonnet on. "And I'll be shot too," said the king, "if you know what you are doing just now—make haste, make haste, Polmood! you have not time to be sauntering and running to and fro in this manner; fy! fy! that the ladies should be obliged to wait for the bridegroom!"

The king was highly diverted by Polmood's agitation and embarrassment, which he attributed to his violent passion with its concomitant hopes and fears; and having thus expelled in one moment his dread of losing Elizabeth, and at the same time, while his senses were all in a flutter, put him into such a terrible hurry, he retired within the door of the tent, and watched his motions for some time without being observed. Polmood washed his hands and face in the stream without delay; and perceiving that he had nothing wherewith to dry them, he tried to do it with the tail of his coat, but that being too short, though he almost doubled himself, he could not bring it in contact with his face. He then ran across the green to the servant's hall, stooping and winking all the way, while the water poured from his beard. In his hurry he left his fine plumed bonnet by the side of the burn, which the king lifted and hid, and afterwards warned his nobles to prepare for the cavalcade, telling them that the marriage of Polmood with Elizabeth was to be celebrated at Nidpath for several days.

CHAPTER IX.

The rural breakfast over, our noble party mounted and rode away from the castle of Crawmelt. The lightness of the breeze, the presence of so much beauty, royalty, and respect, together with the joyous occasion, completely eradicated from their minds the effects of last night's intemperance and misrule. They were again all in high spirits, and scoured the links of Meggat so full of mirth and glee that every earthly care was flung to the wind, in which, too, many a lovely lock and streaming ribbon floated.

If there is any one adventitious circumstance in life which invariably exhilarates the mind and buoys

up the spirits to the highest pitch, it is that of a large party of men and women setting out on an expedition on horseback. Of this party, excluding grooms, pages, and other attendants, there were upwards of forty, the flower of the Scottish nation. The followers scarcely amounted to that number, so little was James afraid of any harm within the realm.

On their way they came to the castle of Pierce Cockburn, who then accompanied the king. He compelled them all to halt and drink wine at his gate; but when the foremost twelve had taken their glasses and were about to drink to the health of the bride and bridegroom, they looked around in vain for one of them—the bridegroom was lost, no one knew how. They were all dumb with astonishment how they had lost Polmood, or how they came to travel so far without missing him; but he was at last discovered nigh to the rear, sitting silently on his horse, dressed in an old slouch hat which had lately been cast off by one of the grooms. His horse was a good one, his other raiment was costly and elegant; and the ludicrous contrast which the old slouch hat formed to these, with the circumstance of the wearer being a bridegroom, and just going to be married to the most beautiful and elegant lady in the kingdom, altogether struck every one so forcibly that the whole company burst out in an involuntary shout of laughter. Polmood kept his position without moving a muscle, which added greatly to the humour of the scene. The king, who never till that moment recollected his having hid Polmood's bonnet, was so much tickled that he was forced to alight from his horse, sit down upon a stone, hold his sides and laugh.

"What, Polmood," said he, when he recovered breath to speak—"What, Polmood! do you prefer that courch to your own elegant bonnet?"

"No, sire," said Polmood, "but I preferred it to a bare head; for when ready to mount I found that I had mislaid my bonnet or lost it some way, I do not know how."

"I have been somewhat to blame in this, Polmood; but no matter; you cannot and shall not appear at your own nuptials in such a cap as that, therefore let us change for a day—no excuses; I insist on it." Polmood then put on his royal master's bonnet, which was beset with plumes, gold, and diamonds. That new honour made him blush deeply, but at the same time he bluntly remarked that his majesty was the greatest wag in all his dominions. The humour of the party was greatly heightened when they beheld James, the fourth of that name, the greatest and the best of all the Stuart line, riding at the head of his nobles and by the side of his queen with the old greasy slouched hat on his head. They were mightily diverted as well as delighted with the good humour of their sovereign, and his easy condescension.

In a short time they reached the Virgin's Chapel, where they were met by the prior and two monks of St. Mary's dressed in their robes of office. There Polmood was married to the lovely Elizabeth Manners by the abbot of Inchafferie, chaplain to the king. The king himself gave her in marriage; and during the ceremony Polmood seemed deeply moved, but the fair bride was studious only how to demean herself with proper ease and dignity, which she effected to the admiration of all present. Her beauty was so transcendent that even the holy brothers were struck with astonishment; and the abbot in the performance of his office prayed fervently, as with a prophetic spirit, that that beauty which, as he expressed it, "outvied the dawn of the morning, and dazzled the beholders, might never prove a source of uneasiness either to her husband or her own breast. May that lovely bloom," said he, "long dwell on the face that now so well becomes it, and blossom again and again in many a future stem. May it never be regarded by the present possessor as a cause of exultation or self-esteem, but only as a transient engaging varnish over the more precious beauties of the mind; and may her personal and mental charms be so blended that her husband may never perceive the decay of the one save only by the growing beauties of the other." The tear rolled in Polmood's eye. Elizabeth was only intent on the manner in which she stood, and on ordering her downcast looks and blushes aright; she thought not of the petition but of the compliment paid to her beauty.

Soon were they again on horseback, and ascending the high hill of Falseat they dined on its summit by the side of a crystal spring. From that elevated spot they had an immense and varied prospect, which in all directions was intercepted only by the blue haze, in which distance always screens herself from human vision. The whole southern part of the kingdom from sea to sea lay spread around them as on a map, or rather like one half of a terrestrial globe—

> Where oceans rolled and rivers ran,
> To bound the aims of sinful man.
> Man never looked on scene so fair
> As Scotland from the ambient air;
> O'er valleys clouds of vapour rolled,
> While others beamed in burning gold;
> And, stretching far and wide between,
> Were fading shades of fairy green.
> The glossy sea that round her quakes;
> Her thousand isles, and thousand lakes;
> Her mountains frowning o'er the main;
> Her waving fields of golden grain;
> On such a scene, so sweet, so mild,
> The radiant sunbeam never smiled!

But though the vales and frith of Lothian lay stretched like a variegated carpet below his feet on the one side, while the green hills and waving woods of Ettrick Forest formed a contrast so noble on the other, it was remarked that the king fixed his eyes constantly on the fells of Cheviot and the eastern borders of England. Did he even then meditate an invasion of that country? Or did some invisible power, presiding over the mysteries of elicitation

and sympathy, draw his thoughts irresistibly away to that very spot where his royal and goodly form was so soon to lie in an untimely grave?

Towards the evening, in endeavouring to avoid a morass the whole party lost their way; and the king, perceiving a young man at a little distance, rode briskly up to him in order to make inquiries. The lad, who was the son of a farmer and herding his father's sheep, seeing a cavalier with a slouched hat galloping towards him, judged him to be one of a troop of foragers, and throwing away his plaid and brogues he took to his heels and fled with precipitation.

It was in vain that the king shouted and called on him to halt, he only fled the faster; and James, who delighted in a frolic, and was under the necessity of having some information concerning the way, seeing no better would, drew his sword and pursued him full speed. As the youth ran towards the steepest part of the hill, the king, who soon lost sight of his company, found it no easy matter to come up with him. But at last the hardy mountaineer, perceiving his pursuer hard upon him, and judging that it was all over with him, faced about, heaved up his baton, and prepared for a desperate defence.

Whether the king rode briskly up in order to disarm him at once, or whether, as he pretended, he was unable to stop his horse on the steep, could not be determined, owing to the difference of the relation when told by the king and the shepherd, but certain it is that at the first stroke the shepherd stunned the king's Spanish bay, who foundered on the heath and threw his rider forward among the feet of his antagonist. The shepherd, who deemed himself fighting for life and salvation, plied his blows so thick upon the king's back and shoulders that, if he had not previously been quite exhausted by running, he had certainly maimed the king. But James, feeling by experience that there was no time to parley, sprung upon his assailant, whom he easily overthrew and disarmed, as being completely out of breath. "What does the fool mean?" said the king; "all that I wanted of you was to put us on our way to Peebles, for we have entirely lost both our path and our aim."

"But you must first tell me who you are," said the youth; "I fear you have no good design on Peebles."

"We are a wedding party going there to make merry. The king and queen are to meet us and honour us with their company; and if you will go along and direct us the way, you too shall be our guest, and you shall see the king and all his court."

"I can see plenty o' fools without ganging sae far," said the shepherd; "I account that nae great favour; I have often seen the king."

"And would know him perfectly well, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes; I could ken him amang a thousand. But tell me, are you indeed Scotsmen?"

"Indeed we are; did you not see many ladies in company?"

"I am sorry for putting you to sae muckle trouble, sir; but wha ever saw a Scot wear a bonnet like that!"

"Come, mount behind me and direct us on our way, which seems terribly intricate, and you shall be well rewarded."

The youth mounted, bare-legged as he was, behind the stalwart groom without further hesitation. They soon came in sight of the company, who were waiting the issue of the pursuit: the king waved his slouched hat, and called on them to follow, and then rode away at a distance before, conversing with his ragged guide. The eminence where the party dined is called the *King's Seat*, and the glen where they found the shepherd the *Weddinger's Hope* to this day.

CHAPTER X.

The road which they were now obliged to follow was indeed intricate; it winded among the brakes and woods of Grevington in such a manner that, if it had not been for the shepherd, the royal party could not have found their way to the town of Peebles or the castle of Nidpath that night. James and the shepherd led the way, the latter being well acquainted with it, while the rest followed. The two foremost being both on the same horse, conversed freely as they went. There being a considerable difference in the relation which the parties gave of the particulars of this conversation, the real truth could not be fully ascertained; but the following is as near a part of it as could be recovered.

King.—"So you know the king well enough by sight, you say?"

Shep.—"Perfectly well."

"Pray, what is he like?"

"A black looking, thief-like chap, about your ain size, and somewhat like you, but a great deal uglier."

"I should like of all things to see him and hear him speak."

"You would like to see him and hear him speak, would you? Well, if you chance to see him, I will answer for it, you shall soon hear him speak. There's naething in the hale warld he delights sae muckle in as to *hear himself* speak—if you are near him it will gang hard if you hear onything else; and if you do not *see* him, it will not be his fault; for he takes every opportunity of showing his *goodly person*."

"So you have no great opinion of your king, I perceive."

"I have a *great opinion* that he is a silly fellow; a bad man at heart; and a great rascal."

"I am sorry to hear that from one who knows him

so well, for I have heard, on the contrary, that he is accounted generous, brave, and virtuous."

"Ay, but his generosity is a' ostentation—his bravery has never yet been weel tried; and for his virtue—God mend it."

"Well, shepherd, you know we may here speak the sentiments of our hearts freely; and whatever you say—"

"Whatever I say! I have said nothing which I would not repeat if the king were standing beside me. I only said his courage has not yet been tried—I say sae still; and I said, for his virtue, God mend it. Was that wrong? I say sae still, too—I would say as muckle for any person; of you, or even my own father. The truth is, I like James Stuart weel enough as my king, and would fight for him to my last breath against the Englishmen; but I am unco angry at him for a' that, and would as willingly fight *wi'* him. If I had got him amang my feet as I had you lately, mercy! how I would have laid on!"

"Ha! you would!"

"That I would! But by the by, what makes you wear an iron chain? you have not killed your father too, have you? Or is it only for the purpose of carrying your master's wallet."

"No more; only for carrying my master's wallet."

"Ay, but the king wears ane sax times as big as that of yours, man—Was not that a terrible business? How can we expect any blessing or good fortune to attend a king who dethroned and murdered his father? for ye ken it was the same thing as if he had done it wi' his ain hand."

"It is well known that his father was much to blame; and I believe the king was innocent of that, and is besides very sorry for it."

"Though he was to blame, he was still his father—there's nae argument can gang against that; and as to his being sorry, it is easy for him to say sae, and wear a bit chain over his shoulder, as you do: but I firmly believe if the same temptation and the same opportunity were again to occur, he would do the same over again. And then, what a wicked man he is with women! He has a very good queen of his ain, even though she be an Englishwoman, which is certainly wonderful; nevertheless, she is a very good queen; yet he is so indifferent about her, that he is barely civil, and delights only in a witching minx that they ca' Gray—Gray by name, and Gray by nature, I wad reckon. What a terrible sin and shame it is to gallant as they do! I wonder they two never think of hell and purgatory."

"We must allow our king a little liberty in that way."

"Yes; and then he must allow it in others, and they in others again—you little think what a wicked prince has to answer for."

"Are such things indeed reported of the king?"

"Ay, and in everybody's mouth. Fy! fy! what a shame it is! If I were in his place I would 'shu the Heron away,' as the auld song says—Pray did you never hear the song of *the Heron* which one of our shepherds made; a strange chap he is!"

"Never."

"Well, it is the sweetest thing you ever heard, and I will sing it to you when I have time. I would give the best wedder in my father's flock that King James heard it; I am sure he would love our old shepherd, who well deserves his love, for there is no man in Scotland that loves his king and nation so well as he. But to return to our king's faults: the worst of the whole is his negligence in looking after the rights and interests of the common people. It is allowed on all hands that James is a good-natured and merciful prince; yet the acts of cruelty and injustice which every petty lord and laird exercises in his own domain, are beyond all sufferance. If his majesty knew but even the half that I know, he would no more enjoy his humours and pleasures so freely till once he had rectified those abuses, which it has always been the chief study of his nobles to conceal frae his sight. I could show him some scenes that would convince him what sort of a king he is."

The shepherd, about this time, observing that one of the troop behind them continued to sound a bugle at equal intervals, with a certain peculiar lilt, asked the king what the fellow meant. The king answered, "That he was only warning Mess John and the weddingers to be ready to receive them. And you will soon see them," continued he, "coming to meet us, and to conduct us into the town." "And will the king indeed be there!" "Yes, the king will indeed be there." "Well, I wish I had my hose, brogues, and Sunday clothes on; but it is all one, nobody will mind me."

Now it so happened that James had, a short time previous to that, conferred a grant of the lands of Caidmoor on the town of Peebles, on account of its great attachment and good-will towards him; and the news of his approach having been brought there by some of the servants, who had been despatched to provide accommodations at Nidpath, the townsmen had dressed themselves in their best robes, and were all prepared to receive their royal benefactor with every demonstration of joy; and, on hearing the well-known sound of his bugle, they repaired to meet him on a moor south of the river. The king being still foremost, rode up into the midst of his loyal burgesses without being discovered, and, indeed, without being regarded or looked at; then, wheeling about his horse, he made a halt until his train came up; the bare-legged youth was still riding at his back on the same horse.

The shepherd could perceive no king, nor anything like one, save Polmood, on whom the eyes of the townsmen were likewise fixed as he approached; yet they could not help thinking their king was transformed.

The courtiers with their attendants soon came up, and after arranging themselves in two rows before

the king and the queen, who had now drawn up her horse close by his side, they uncovered their heads, and all bowed themselves at once. The shepherd likewise uncovered his head, without knowing to whom, but he understood some great affair to be going on. "Are ye blind? neighbour, tak aff that ugly slouched hat of yours, man," said he to his companion, and at the same time pushed it off with one of his arms. The king catched it between his hands as it fell. "To whom shall I take it off, sirrah?—to you, I suppose," said he, and put it deliberately on again. This incident discovered his majesty to all present, and a thousand shouts, mixed with a thousand bonnets, scaled the firmament at once.

The dreadful truth now glanced upon the shepherd's mind like the bolt of heaven that preludes a storm. The station which his companion held in the middle of the ring—the queen by his side—the heads uncovered, and the iron chain, all confirmed it. He sprung from his seat, as the marten of the Grampians springs from his hold when he smells the fire—darted through an opening in the circle, and ran across the moor with inconceivable swiftness. "Hold that rascal," cried the king; "lay hold of the villain, lay hold of him." The shepherd was pursued by man, horse, and hound, and soon overtaken and secured. Their majesties entered the town amid shouts and acclamations of joy; but the unfortunate shepherd was brought up a prisoner in the rear by four officers of the king's guard, who were highly amused by the different passions that agitated his breast. At one time he was accusing himself bitterly of folly and stupidity; —at another, laughing at his mistake, and consoling himself after this manner: "Weel, the king will hang me the morn, there is no doubt of it; but he canna do it for naething, as he does to mony ane, that is some comfort; by my faith, I gae him a hearty loundering; he never gat sic dadds in his life —let him tak them." Again, when he spoke or thought of his parents, his heart was like to burst. After locking him into the tolbooth of Peebles, they left him to darkness and despair; while all the rest were carousing and making merry, and many of them laughing at his calamity.

The king, whose curiosity had been aroused, made inquiries concerning the name, occupation, and qualities of this youth, and was informed that his name was Moray (the same, it is supposed, with Murray); that he was a great scholar, but an idle, useless fellow; that the old abbot had learned him to sing, for which every one valued him; but that, unfortunately, he had likewise taught him the unprofitable arts of reading and writing, in which alone he delighted; and it was conjectured he would end in becoming a warlock, or studying the black art.

The king, though no profound scholar himself, knew well the value of education, and how to estimate it in others. He was therefore desirous of trying the youth a little further, and of being avenged on him for galling him in such a merciless manner, and sent a messenger to him that night, informing him that he would be brought to the scaffold next day; but that if he had any message or letter to send to his father, the king would despatch a courier with it. The youth replied, that if the king would send a messenger with the letter who could read it to his father, he would certainly write one instantly; but that his father could not read. The messenger, knowing that the king was particularly desirous of seeing the writing and composition of a shepherd, and of comparing it with those of his clerks, promised that such a messenger should be sent with it. The shepherd wrote one without delay, which the man took, and carried straight to the king. This letter is likewise inserted in Mr. Brown's book of ancient manuscripts, but it seems to have been written at a much later period than many others that are there; the spelling is somewhat more modern, and the ink scarcely so yellow. The following is a literal copy:—

"Dr faythr, im to be hangit the morn, for daddinge of the kingis hate; for miskaing him to his fes ahynt his bak; for devering his whors, and layinge on him with ane grit stick. i hope el no be vext, for im no theefe; it was a sayir battil, an a bete him doune wis dran sorde; for I miskent him. if it hadna bin krystis merse, ad kild him. mi muthr l be wae, but ye men pleis her, an il be gled to se ye in at the deth, for i wonte er blissyng. im no feirit, but yit its ane asom thynge; its no deth it feirs me, but the eftir-kum garis my hert girle. if kryste an his muthr dinna do sumthin for me ther, i maye be ill——im er lukles sonne, Villem mora——to Villem mora of kreuksten."

When this letter was read to the king and his courtiers, instead of laughing at it, as might have been expected, they admired it, and wondered at the shepherd's profound erudition; a proof that learning, in those days, was at a very low ebb in Scotland.

The messenger was despatched to his father; and the old man and his wife, on receiving the news, repaired instantly to Peebles in the utmost consternation. They were, however, denied access to their son, until such time as he appeared on the scaffold. A great crowd was by that time assembled; for besides the court, all the town people, and those of the country around, were gathered together to see poor William hanged. When his father and mother mounted the steps, he shook each of them by the hand, smiled, and seemed anxious to console them; but they both turned about and wept, and their utterance was for some time quite overpowered. They had been given to understand that the king would listen to no intercession; for that their son had uttered sentences of a most dangerous and flagrant nature, in which they were likely to be involved, as having instilled such sentiments into his young mind. But when they learned from his own

mouth, that he had committed the assault on the person of his majesty under a mistake, and knowing how justly their son had blamed his conduct and government, they could not help considering it extremely hard, to bring a valuable youth thus to a shameful and public execution for such an offence. The mother cried downright, and the old man with difficulty restrained himself. He did not fall at the king's feet, nor attempt speaking to him, as judging it altogether vain and unprofitable; but he turned on him a look that said more than any words could express: and then, as if hopeless of mercy or justice from that quarter, he turned them to heaven, uncovered his gray head, and sinking on his knees, invoked the justice and forgiveness of the Almighty in strong and energetic terms. This was the language of nature and of the heart; and when he prayed, there was no cheek in the assembly dry, save those of the king and courtiers. "What hard hearts these great folks have," said the country-people one to another.

The usual ceremonies being all got over, William's face was at length covered—the executioner was just proceeding to do his duty—thousands of burgesses and plebeians were standing around with bare heads and open mouths, holding in their breath in awful suspense—the women had turned their backs to the scaffold, and were holding down their faces, and weeping—the parents of the youth had taken a long farewell of him, when the king sprung forward to the scene of action. "Hold!" said he, "this fellow, traitor as he is, has behaved himself throughout with some degree of spirit, and therefore he shall not die like a common felon—No," continued he, unsheathing his sword, "he shall die by the hand of a king. Kneel down, William, I command you!" William, whose senses were all in confusion, and who felt the same kind of sensations as he sometimes wont to do in a dream, kneeled implicitly down on the boards, and held forward his head, making a long neck that his majesty might get a fair blow at it. The king, either inadvertently or in a frolic, laid the cold blade of the sword for a moment upon his neck. William imagined his head was off, and fell lifeless upon the scaffold. The king then crossed him with his sword—"Rise up, Sir William Moray," said he; "I here create you a knight, and give to you, and yours, the lands of Crookston and Newbey, to hold of me for ever." The old farmer and his wife uttered both an involuntary cry, between a sigh and a shout: it was something like that which a drowning person utters, and they were instantly at the king's feet, clasping his knees. The crowd around hurled their caps into the air, and shouted until the hills rang again, "Long live our gracious king!—long live our good king James!"

When the tumult of joy had somewhat subsided, it was observed that William was lying still upon his face. They unbound his hands, and desired him to rise; but he neither answered nor regarded; and, on lifting him up, they saw with astonishment that he was dead in good earnest. His parents, in the utmost despair, carried him into a house, and for a long time every art to restore suspended animation proved fruitless. When the king laid the cold sword upon his bare neck, it was observed that he gave a violent shiver. The poor youth imagined that his head was then struck off, and to think of living longer in such circumstances was out of the question, so he died with all manner of decorum; and it is believed he would never more have revived, if the most vigorous measures had not been resorted to. King James, who was well versed in everything relating to the human frame, was the best surgeon, and the most skilful physician then in the realm, succeeded at last in restoring him to life. But even then, so strongly was his fancy impressed with the reality of his dissolution, that he could not be convinced that he was not in a world of spirits, and that all who surrounded him were ghosts. When he came to understand his real situation, and was informed of the honours and lands conferred on him by the king, he wept out of gratitude, and sagely observed, that, *"after all, the truth told aye best."*

CHAPTER XI.

William, the shepherd, being now metamorphosed into Sir William Moray, was equipped in proper habiliments, and introduced at court by his new title. He often astonished the courtiers, and put them quite out of countenance, by his blunt and cutting remarks, and of course soon became a great favourite with James, who delighted in that species of entertainment, as all the Stuarts were known to do, but he more than any of them. No sooner had William arisen into favour, than he was on the very point, not only of losing it again, but of incurring the king's serious displeasure.

On the third or fourth evening after their arrival at Nidpath, when the feast and the dance were over, the king reminded William of the song which he had promised to sing to him on their way to Peebles. William hesitated, blushed, and tried to put it off; but, the more averse he seemed to comply, the more clamorous the company grew for his song.

This practice is too frequent even to this day, and it is one which neither betokens generosity nor good sense. It often puts an unoffending youth, or amiable young lady, to the blush, and lays them under the necessity of either making a fool of themselves, or of refusing those whom they wish to oblige, and to appear prudish, when in fact nothing is farther from their hearts. The custom can never be productive of any good; and, in the instance above alluded to, it was the cause of much shame and dis-

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AND PEEBLES

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satisfaction; for William, pressed as he was, and unable to hold longer out, began, and with a face glowing with shame, a palpitating heart, and a faltering tongue, sung the following old ballad.

The writer of this tale is particularly happy at having it in his power to present his readers with a genuine and original copy of this celebrated ancient song, save that he cannot answer precisely for having read or copied it exactly. He refers them, however, to the original manuscript in the possession of Mr. J. Brown, now living in Richmond Street, the perusal of which they will find no easy matter. It has been quoted by different living authors, or compilers rather, from tradition, and quoted falsely; but the meaning of it, like that of many an ancient allegory, seems never to have been at all understood. It may not be improper here to mentfon, that the only account that can be obtained of these ancient MSS. is, that they belonged to the house of March, and were found in the castle of Drumlanrig.

THE HERONE.

A VERY ANCIENT SONG.

Leishe the hunde on the tassilyt moore!
  Grein growis the birke in the coome se mello!
Strewe the tyme in the greinwude bouir;
  For the dewe fallis sweite in the mune-beim yello!
For owir gude kyngis to the greinwude gene, &c.
And bonie quene Jeanye lyis hirre lene, &c.
Weil mot scho siche, for scho wetis weil,
He sleipis his lane in the foreste sheile!
  Aleke! and alu! for ouir gude kynge!
He sleipis on the fogge, and drinkis the sprynge!
Ne lorde, ne erl, to be his gyde,
But ane bonnye pege to lye by his syde:
And, O! that pegis weste is slim;
And his ee wad garre the dey looke dim;
And, O! his breiste is rounde and fayir;
And the dymend lurkis in hys revin hayir
That curlis se sweitlye aboune his brye,
And rounde hys nek of eivorye!
Yet he mene sleipe on a bedde of lynge,
Aleke! and alu! for ouir gude kynge!
Weile mot Quene Jeanye siche and mene,
For scho kennis he sleipis his leiva lane!
  The kreukyt kraine cryis owir the flode,
The capperkayle clukkis in the wode;
The swanne youtis lythelye ouir the lowe;
The bleiter harpis abune the flowe;
They cushey flutis amangis the firris;
And aye the murecokke biks and birris;
And aye the ouirwurde of ther sange,
"What ailis ouir kynge, he lyis se lange."
  Gae hunte the gouke ane uther myle,
Its no the reid eed capperkayle;
Its ne the murekokke birris at morne,
Nor yitte the deire withe hirre breakine horne;
Its nowthir the hunte, nor the murelan game,
Hes brung ouir kynge se ferre fre heme;
The gloomynge gele, norre the danyng dewe;
He is gene to hunte the *Herone* blue.
  Ne burde withe hirre mucht evir compaire,
Hirre nekke se tapper, se tall, and fayir!
Hirre breiste se softe, and hirre ee se greye,
Hes stouin ouir gude kyngis herte awaye,
But in that nekke ther is ane linke,
  And in that breiste ther is ane brier,
And in that ee ther is ane blink,
  Will penne the deidis of wae and weir,
But the graffe shall gepe, and the korbe flee;
And the bourik ryse quhair ane kynge sulde bee.

The *Herone* flewe eist, the *Herone* flewe weste,
The *Herone* flewe to the fayir foryste!
And ther scho sawe ane gudelye bouir,
Was all kledde ouir with the lille flouir:
And in that bouir ther was ane bedde,
With silkine scheitis, and weile dune spredde;
And in thilke bed ther laye ane knichte,
Hes oundis did bleide beth day and nicghte:
And by the bedde-syde ther stude ane stene,
And thereon sate ane leil maydene,
Withe silvere nedil, and silkene threde,
Stemmynge the oundis quhan they did blede.
  The *Herone* scho flappyt, the *Herone* scho flewe,
And scho skyrit at bogge quheryn scho grewe.
By leke, or tarne, scho douchtna reste,
Nor bygge on the klofte hirre dowye este;
Scho culdnae see ane fyttyng schedde,
But the lille bouir and the silkene bedde
And aye scho pifyrit, and aye scho leerit,
And the bonny May scho jaumphit and jeerit,
And aye scho turnit hirre bosim fayir,
And the knichte he luvit to see hirre there;
For, O! hirre quhite and kumlye breiste,
Was softe as the dune of the sulanis neste!
  But the maydene that wachit him nichte and daye,
She shu'd and shu'd the *Herone* awaye;
Leil Virtue was that fayir maydis neme,
And sayir scho gratte for the kuichtis bleme!
But the *Herone* scho flappyt, and the *Herone* scho flew,
And scho dabbyt the fayir mayde blak and blewe;
And scho pykkit the fleche fre hirre bonny breiste-bene;
And scho pykkit out hirre cleir blewe ene;
Till the knichte he douchtna beire to see
The maydene that wonte his meide to bee!
  Swith *Herone!* swith *Herone!* hyde yer heide,
The Herringden haque will be yer deide!
The boue is bente withe ane silkine strynge,
And the airrowe fledgit with ane heronis wynge.
O! quhae will werde the wefoue day!
O! quhae will shu the *Herone* awaye!
  Now the blak kokke mootis in his fluthir deipe;
The rowntre rokis the reven to sleipe;
The sei-mawe couris on his glittye stene,
For its greine withe the dewe of the jaupyng maine;
The egill maye gaspe in his yermite riven,
Amiddys the mystis and the raynis of hevin;
The swanne maye sleike hirre breiste of milke,
But the *Herone* sleipis in hirre bedde of silke.
  The gude knichtis wytte is fledde or feye,
By pithe of wyrde and glamurye;
For aye he kissit hirr bille se fayir,
Tho' vennim of eskis and tedis was there.
He skyrit to trowe bethe dule and payne,
That his hertis blude shulde paye the kene;
But the threidis fre ilka ound scho drewe,
And aye the reide blude runne anewe;
The ether hes leyne in the lyonis laire,
And that blude shall flowe for evermaire.
Now, loose the hunde on the tassilit moore,
  Grein growis the birke in the coome se mello!
And bedde withe rewe the greinwude bouir,
  Quhan the dewe fallis softe in the mune-beime yello.

CHAPTER XII.

The youth sung this ballad to a wild melody, that was quite ravishing, though it might be said that he chanted rather than sung it; but he had proceeded only a short way with the second sentence, which relates to the page, when Madam Gray began to look this way and that way, and to talk flippantly, first to one person, then to another; but seeing that no one answered, or regarded her, and that all were

attentive to the song, she rose hastily and retired. As the song proceeded, the king made sundry signs for William to desist; but he either did not, or would not understand them, and went on. At length his majesty rose, and commanded, with a loud voice, that the song should be stopped, for that it was evidently offensive. "I am astonished at your majesty," said the queen, "it is the sweetest and most inoffensive song I ever listened to. It is doubtless a moral allegory, to which the bard has been led by a reference to some ancient tale. I beseech your majesty, that our young friend may, at my request, be permitted to go on with it." The queen pretended thus not to understand it, that she might have the pleasure of hearing it out, and of witnessing the triumph of truth and virtue, over a heart subject indeed to weaknesses and wanderings, but whose nature was kind, and whose principles leaned to the side of goodness. Indeed, she hoped that the sly allusions of the bard, and his mysterious predictions of some great impending evil, might finally recall her lord from his wanderings, and reunite his heart to her whose right it was. And, moreover, she did not wish that the courtiers should perceive the poet's aim, although that was too apparent to be easily mistaken.

James, who was a notable judge of the perceptions of others, knew, or at least shrewdly suspected, that the queen understood the song, even couched and warped as it was; but he could not, with a good grace, refuse her request; so he consented, and sat in sullen mood till the song was concluded, when he flung out of the saloon with precipitate steps.

It was several weeks before William was again admitted to the king's presence; but the queen gave him a diamond ring, and many rich presents; and having been informed by him, privately, who was the author of the song, she settled upon the old shepherd 100 merks a year, which she paid out of the rents of her own dowry-lands.

The king, who was always prone to justice upon due consideration, and taking a retrospect of all that had passed, became convinced that William wished him well; and that the obstinacy he manifested with regard to the song, in persisting in it, and refusing to leave any part of it out, originated in his good-will, and the hopes he entertained of reclaiming his sovereign to virtue.

The result of these reflections was, that William was one day sent for to his majesty's closet, and admitted to a private conversation with him. The king, without once hinting at any former displeasure or misunderstanding, addressed him to the following purpose:—"My worthy and ingenuous young friend, do not you remember, that on the first day of our acquaintance, while on our way to Peebles, you hinted to me, that great injuries were frequently done to the common people under my government, by some of their chieftains and feudal barons? This information has preyed upon my heart ever since; for there is nothing that so much concerns me as the happiness of my people, and I am determined to see them righted. In the meantime, it is necessary that I should have some evidences of the truth of your statement, and for that purpose I have formed a resolution of taking a journey in disguise over a part of the realm, that I may be an eye-witness to the existing grievances of which you complain so bitterly. It is not the first time I have made such excursions, unknown to any of my courtiers; and though it appears that they entertained suspicions that I was otherwise, and worse employed, the consciousness of my own good intentions, and the singular adventures I met with, fully compensated me for their mistaken notions. You little know, Sir William, how the actions of sovereigns are wrested by the malicious and discontented; I am fully persuaded, that the wily insinuations thrown out in the old bard's song of the Heron, are founded on reports which were then circulated." William would fain have asked him, if he had not a pretty page who travelled in his company; but he feared it would be presuming too much, and touching the king upon the sore heel; so he said nothing, but only looked him in the face, and the king went on.—"Now, as you seem concerned about the welfare of the commonalty, and are conversant with their manners and habits, I purpose to take you as my only attendant and travelling companion. We will visit the halls of the great and the cottages of the poor, and converse freely with all ranks of men, without being known. I have been puzzled in devising what character to assume; but amongst them all, I am partial to that of a travelling bard, or minstrel." William assured his majesty, there was no character so suitable, as it would secure them a welcome reception both with the rich and poor: "and I can touch the harp and sing," said he; "your majesty sings delightfully, and plays the violin; therefore no other disguise, unless we become fortune-tellers, will answer us so well; and the latter we can assume occasionally as we find circumstances to accord." He was delighted with the project; promised all manner of diligence and secrecy, and extolled his sovereign's ingenuity and concern about his people's welfare.

It would be far too tedious to relate circumstantially all the feasts, revels, and tournaments, which prevailed at Peebles and Nidpath, during the stay of the royal party, and likewise at the castle of Polmood, where the festival and the hunt closed for that season; suffice it, that they were numerous and splendid; and while they continued, the vanity of Elizabeth was fully gratified; for she was the admiration of all who beheld her, both high and low.

It may likewise be necessary to mention in this place, that Alexander, Duke of Rothesay, having joined the party shortly after their arrival at Nidpath, his attentions to Elizabeth were instantly renewed, and were indeed so marked, that they were

obvious to the eyes of all the court. Rothesay was a gallant and goodly young man, and full brother to the king; and it was too apparent that Elizabeth was highly pleased with his attentions and unbounded flattery, and that she never seemed so happy as when he was by her side.

In all their walks and revels about the banks of the Tweed, Polmood was rather like an odd person—like something borrowed, on which no account was set—rather than he who gave the entertainment, and on whose account they were all met. When every lady had her lord or lover by her side, Elizabeth, instead of walking arm in arm with Polmood, as was most fitting, was always to be seen dangling with Rothesay. Well could Rothesay flatter, and trifle, and talk a great deal about nothing—he could speak of jewels, rings, and laces, their colour, polish, and degrees of value. Polmood cared for none of those things, and knew as little about them. He did not know one gem from another, nor could he distinguish a gold chain from one that was only gilt! What company was he for Elizabeth, in a circle where every one was vying with another in jewels? To flattery he was an utter stranger, for never had one sentence savouring of that ingredient passed his lips; nor could he in any way testify his love or respect, save by his attention and good offices. Alas! what company was he for Elizabeth? Rothesay was a connoisseur in music—he understood the theory so far, that he was able to converse on the subject—knew many of the quaint, borrowed phrases, even to *andante, grazioso,* and *affettuosa!* He hung over Elizabeth while she played and sung, expressing his raptures of delight in the most impassioned terms—sighed, shook his head, and laid both his hands upon his breast at each thrilling melody and dying fall! Polmood loved a song that contained a tale—farther perceptions of music he had none. Alas! what company was he for Elizabeth? Man is always searching for happiness here below; but blindfolded by passion, he runs headlong after the gilded shadow, until he either falls into a pit, or sticks so fast in the mire that he is unable to return. Polmood had got a wife, and with her he thought he had got all the world—all that mortal could wish for or desire! So lovely, so accomplished, so amiable—and so young! The first week of wedlock—the next—the honeymoon past over—and Polmood did not remember of once having had his heart cheered by a smile from his beloved Elizabeth. In the hall, in the bower, and in the rural excursion, every knight had his consort or mistress hanging on his arm, but Polmood had nobody! He saw his jewel in the possession of another, and was obliged to take himself up with any solitary gentleman like himself, whom he could find, to talk with him about hunting and archery; but even on these subjects his conversation wanted its usual spirit and fervour, and all the court remarked *that Polmood was become an altered man.*

The season for rural sports drew to a close—the last great hunt was held that year in the forest of Meggat-dale—the tinckell was raised at two in the morning, all the way from Blackdody to Glengaber, and the Dollar-law—upwards of 400 men were gathered that day, to "drive the deer with hound and horn." The circle of gatherers still came closer and closer, until at last some hundreds of deers and roes were surrounded on the green hill behind the castle of Crawmelt, which is named the Hunter-hill to this day. Around the skirts of that, the archers were placed at equal distances, with seventy leash of hounds, and one hundred grey-hounds. At one blast of the horn the whole dogs were loosed, and the noise, the hurry, and the bustle were prodigious. Before mid-day sixty deer were brought in, twenty-four of which were fine old stags, and the rest yearlings and does.

The royal party then dispersed. The queen retired to Holyrood House, being constrained to remain in privacy for some time, the courtiers to their respective homes, and King James and William to put their scheme in execution. Elizabeth was left with her husband in his lonely and hereditary castle.

As so many curious traditions relating to the adventures of the king, disguised as a minstrel, are still extant in the several districts through which he travelled, I have been at some pains to collect these, and shall give them in another part of this work.

CHAPTER XIII.

The manner in which Polmood and Elizabeth spent the winter is not generally known. In the remote and lonely castle of Polmood they lived by themselves, without any of the same degree near them, with whom they could associate. In such a scene, it may well be conceived, that Elizabeth rather dragged on existence than enjoyed it. The times were indeed woefully altered with her. Instead of the constant routine of pleasure and festivity in which she had moved at court, there was she placed, in a wilderness, among rocks and mountains, snows and impetuous torrents; and instead of a crowd of gay flatterers, there was she left to vegetate beside a man who was three times her age, and to whose person she was perfectly indifferent. Their manners and habits of life were totally dissimilar, and even in the structure of their minds no congeniality could be traced. She never behaved toward him in a rude or uncivil manner, though uniformly in a way that marked the sentiments of her heart, and therefore it was apparent to all the domestics that their master enjoyed none of the comforts of the married state.

On parting with the queen at Nidpath, Elizabeth had promised to visit her at Holyrood House during

the winter; and the hopes of this visit to the court, where she intended to prolong her stay as long as possible, kept up her spirits during the first months of her exile. But this journey Polmood had previously resolved not to permit. He had got enough of courtiers for the present; and he well knew, that if he could not engage the affections of Elizabeth, when neither rout nor rival was nigh, he would never gain them by hurrying her again into the midst of licentiousness and dissipation. He perceived that, at the long run, he made rather an awkward figure among King James's courtiers; nor could he maintain his consequence among them in any scene save the mountain sports. He was deemed a most gallant knight among the inhabitants of the forest; but, in the polished circle of James's court, he was viewed as little better than a savage.

Elizabeth had long been making preparations for her intended journey, and about the close of December she proposed that they should set out; but Polmood put it off from day to day, on one pretence or other, until the Christmas holidays arrived, when he was urged by Elizabeth to accompany her to Edinburgh or suffer her to go by herself. Though that was the first time Elizabeth had ever deigned to entreat him for anything, he remained obstinate, and at last gave her a mild but positive refusal. It was a death-blow to the hopes of Elizabeth—her heart sunk under it; and before the evening she retired to her chamber, which she kept for upwards of a fortnight, seldom rising out of her bed. Polmood testified the greatest uneasiness about her health; but sensible that her principal ailment was chagrin and disappointment, he continued firm to his purpose. When he went to see her, she seldom spoke to him; but when she did so, it was with every appearance of equanimity.

During the remainder of the winter she continued in a state of moping melancholy, and this was the season when her heart first became susceptible of tender impressions. When all gaiety, hurry, and bustle were removed she began to experience those yearnings of the soul, which mutual endearments only can allay. The source of this feeling Elizabeth had not philosophy sufficient to discover; but it led her insensibly to bestow kindnesses, and to court them in return. She was one week attached to a bird with the most impatient fondness, the next to a tame young doe, and the next to a lamb or a little spaniel; but from all these her misguided affections again reverted, untenanted and unsatisfied. If there had not been something in her husband's manner repulsive to her very nature, she must at that time have been won. Two or three times did Elizabeth manifest a slight degree of attachment, if not of fondness for him; but whenever he began to return these by his homely endearments, her heart shrunk from a closer familiarity, with a feeling of disgust which seems to have been unconquerable.

About the turn of the year, there came an idle fellow into that part of the country, who said that his name was Connel, and that he was a native of Galloway. He was constantly lounging about the servants' hall in the castle of Polmood, or in the adjacent cottages. Polmood, having frequently conversed with this fellow, found that his observations were always pertinent and sensible, and on that account was induced to take him into the family as his gardener; for Polmood was fond of gardening, and he had observed that Elizabeth seemed to take delight in the various flowers as they sprang.

The appearance of this fellow was whimsical beyond conception; he wore a coarse russet garb, and his red carroty locks hung over his ears and face in a manner that was rather frightful. His beard had a yellowish tint, corresponding with the colour of his hair, both of which seemed unnatural, for his eye and his features were fine, and his form tall and athletic, but he walked with a loutish stoop, that rendered his deportment altogether ludicrous. Elizabeth had often observed him, but she never took any further notice of him than to turn away with a smile.

One day, while sitting in her apartment alone, pensive and melancholy, she cast her blue eyes around on the dark mountains of Herston. She saw the lambs racing on the gare, and the young deer peeping from the covert of the wood; but this view had no charms for her. The casement was open, and Connel the gardener was busy at work immediately before it. She sat down to her lute, and played one of her favourite and most mournful old airs, accompanying it with her voice. She had begun it merely to amuse herself, and scarcely thought of what she did, till she was surprised at seeing Connel give over working, and lean forward upon his spade, in the attitude of listening attentively. But how much more was she astonished on perceiving, that when she ceased, he wiped a tear from his eye—turned round, and strode with a hurried pace to the angle of the walk, and then turned and fell again to his work; all the while appearing as if he knew not what he was doing. This marked attention of the humble gardener encouraged Elizabeth to proceed—she sung and played several other airs with an animation of tone which had never before been exerted within the walls of Polmood, and which raised her own languid spirits to a degree from which they had long been estranged. Her curiosity was excited—she flung on a dress that was rather elegant, and before the fall of the evening, went out to walk in the garden, resolved to have some conversation with this awkward but interesting gardener.

When she first entered the walk at a distance, Connel stole some earnest looks at her; but when she approached nigher, he never once looked up, and continued to delve with great assiduity. She accosted him in an easy familiar way, commended

his skill in gardening, and his treatment of such and such plants—Connel delved away, and gathered the white roots, flinging them into a basket that stood beside him, but opened not his mouth. At length she asked him a question which he could not avoid answering. He answered it; but without turning his face about, or looking up. When he ceased speaking, Elizabeth found herself in a deep reverie—her mind had wandered, and she felt as if striving to recollect something which her remembrance could not grasp. At considerable intervals she brought him to converse again and again; and as often did she experience the same sensations: these sensations had something painful as well as pleasing in them; but they were to her altogether unaccountable.

From that time forward the garden seemed to have become Elizabeth's home; and Connel, the clownish but shrewd gardener, her only companion. She played and sung every day at her window to delight him, and ceased only that she might descend into the garden to hear him converse, and commend the works of his hands. She was indeed drawn toward him by an irresistible impulse, that sometimes startled her; but her heart told her that her motives were not questionable. Love she was sure it could not be; but whatever it was, she began to experience a faint ray of happiness. Polmood perceived it, and was delighted; while Connel the gardener, on account of his inestimable art in administering pleasure to a desponding beauty, shared his master's esteem.

Things passed on in this manner, or with little variety, until the end of summer. On the 14th of August, a guest arrived at the castle of Polmood unexpectedly, and not altogether welcome—welcome indeed to Elizabeth, but not so to her husband, who heard him announced with the most galling vexation. This was no other than Alexander, Duke of Rothesay, with his suite, who announced the king's intention of being there by the end of the next week. Elizabeth was frantic with joy; she scarcely knew either what she was doing or saying when Rothesay alighted in the court. Polmood received the duke as became his high dignity, and his own obligations to the royal family; but in his heart he wished him at the distance of a thousand miles. His discernment of human character was not exquisite, but he foresaw a part of what was likely to ensue, and the precognition foreboded nothing good to any one. He felt so much chagrined at the very first rencounter, that he found he could not restrain himself, and the consequence was that Rothesay and Elizabeth were soon left by themselves. Her complexion had become a little languid; but the sudden flow of spirits which she experienced lent a flush to her cheek, a fire to her eye, and a rapid ease and grace to her manner, which were altogether bewitching.

Rothesay was a professed libertine, and of course one of those who felt little pleasure in aught save self-gratification; but he had never in his life been so transported, as he was at beholding Elizabeth's improved charms, and seeming fondness of him; for so he interpreted the feelings of her heart, which gave birth to this charming vivacity—these, however, had their origin from a source quite different from that which he supposed.

As soon as they were left alone, in the first transports of his passion he kissed her hand again and again. She chided him—she was indeed angry with him—but what could she do? Situated as they were, she could not come to an open rupture with him on account of any little imprudencies; so all was soon forgot and forgiven. But a lady ought by all means to be on her guard against a lover's first innovations. She who ventures, in any way, to dally with a known libertine, ventures to play around the hole of the asp, and to lay her hand on the snout of the lion.

The reader must by this time be so well acquainted with the character of Elizabeth, as to perceive that in this fondness displayed for Rothesay, there was no criminality of intention—not a motion of her soul that cherished the idea of guilty love—not a thought of the heart that such a thing was intended on his part. Polmood viewed the matter in a very different light. He had long had some faint unformed apprehensions of Elizabeth having been the duke's mistress before her marriage, and thought it was owing to that circumstance that the king had got the marriage put suddenly over in the absence of Rothesay, and had given him so large a dowry with her. It is easy to conceive how galling such an idea must have been to his proud but honest heart. Their behaviour at Nidpath, immediately after the wedding, first engendered these injurious ideas, and this visit of Rothesay's went far to confirm them. That the king and his nobles should come into the forest for a few weeks, to enjoy the hunt, without any sinister motive, was natural enough; but why, or for what purpose, Rothesay should have come a fortnight earlier, he could not divine. Perhaps these suspicions were not without foundation, so far as they regarded the duke, though quite groundless with regard to Elizabeth; yet every part of her conduct and behaviour tended to justify the ungracious surmise. Polmood had felt, with silent regret, her marked coldness and disaffection; but when he saw those smiles, which he languished for in vain, bestowed so lavishly upon a gay, flippant courtier, his patience was exhausted, and from the hour of Rothesay's arrival the whole frame of his mind was altered. The seeds of jealousy had now taken fast root; his vigilance was on the alert to ascertain the dreadful truth, and every pang that shook him whispered to his soul the most deadly revenge. His conversation and manners were, at best, not very refined; but the mood and temper of mind in which he now was, added to his natural roughness a degree of asperity that was hardly endurable. Polmood's

company was of course little courted by Rothesay and Elizabeth; he discovered this, and set himself only to keep a strict watch over all their motions. They were always together; they toyed, they sung, conversed in the arbour, walked into the wood, and sat by the side of the river. In some of their excursions, Polmood could not follow them without being seen, and therefore desired Connel the gardener to keep a strict watch over their conduct. He needed not have given him this charge; for Connel was more anxiously on the watch than Polmood himself; he perceived the snare laid for his young mistress, and trembled to think of the consequences. When they sat in the arbour, he contrived to work directly in front of it; when they walked, or sat by the side of the river, he was angling there for fish for the table; and when they retired into the wood, he was there, cutting twigs to make baskets, or birches wherewith to dress his garden. Rothesay often cursed him; but Elizabeth seemed always very glad to see him, and took every occasion of conversing with him, as she passed. If Connel ever perceived any improprieties in their conduct, he concealed them; for his report to his master was always favourable, as far as they regarded Elizabeth; but he once or twice ventured to remark, that he did not consider Rothesay eminently calculated to improve the morals of any young lady. Polmood bit his lip and was silent—he was precisely of the same opinion, but could think of no expedient by which they might be separated. His jealousy had increased his ingenuity; for he had devised means by which he could watch all their motions in the hall, the parlour, and the arbour, without being seen. This was rather an undue advantage, for who would wish to have all their motions subjected to such a scrutiny?

The time of the king's arrival approached, and Polmood, with all his vigilence, had not hitherto discovered anything criminal in their intercourse. He had, however, witnessed some familiarities on the part of Rothesay in particular, which, if they did not prove, still led him shrewdly to suspect the worst. But now a new and most unexpected discovery was effected, which kindled his jealousy into the most furious and fatal flame.

CHAPTER XIV.

From the time that Rothesay arrived poor Connel seemed to labour under some grievous malady, and became thoughtful and absent. He took pleasure in nothing save herding his fair mistress and her spark; and it was evident to all the menials that some great anxiety preyed upon his mind. Elizabeth too had observed this change in her humble but ingenuous dependant, and had several times inquired the cause without being able to draw from him any definite answer.

One day Elizabeth had left for a while the delightful treat of flippancy, banter, and adulation for the more sober one of holding a little rational conversation with Connel, and the following dialogue passed between them:—"I have long had a desire to hear your history, Connel. You once told me that your parents were in good circumstances; why then did you leave them?" "It was love that occasioned it, madam." This answer made Elizabeth laugh; for the ludicrous idea of his having run away from the object of his affection, together with the appearance of the man, combined in presenting an image altogether irresistible. "So you really have been seriously in love, Connel?" "Yes, madam, and still am so seriously in love that I am firmly convinced no living man ever loved so well or with such unalterable devotion. Pray, were you ever in love, if it please you, madam?" "A pretty question that, considering the state in which you find me placed." Connel shook his head. "But if you who are a lover will describe to me what it is to be in love, I may then be able to answer your question with certainty." "Between two young people of similar dispositions it is the most delightful of all sensations: all the other generous feelings of the soul are not once to be compared with it. Please, dear madam, did you never see any man of your own age whom you could have loved?" Elizabeth appeared pensive—her mind naturally turned upon the young Baron Carmichael. In her wearisome days and nights she had often thought of him, and of what she might have enjoyed in his company; for though Elizabeth had little or no foresight, but acted for the most part on the impulse of the moment, she had nevertheless a clear and distinct memory, and was capable of deep regret. She made no answer to Connel's query, but at length accosted him as follows: "I should like to hear the history of your own love, Connel; that is the chief point at which I aim." "Alas! it is nearly a blank, my dear lady. I love the most sweet, the most lovely creature of her sex; but fate has so ordered it that she can never be mine." "If you love her so dearly, and she returns that love, one would think you might hold fate at defiance." "She did affect me, and I am convinced would soon have been won to have loved me with all her heart; but that heart was inexperienced—it was overruled by power and swayed by false argument; and before ever she got leisure to weigh circumstances aright she was bestowed upon another." "And do you still love her, even when she is the wife of another man!" "Yes, madam, and more dearly than I ever loved her before. I take no delight in anything with which she is not connected. I love to see her. to hear her speak; and O! could I but contribute to her happiness, there is nothing on earth that I would not submit to." "Now you tell me what is impossible: such pure disinterested love does not exist between

the sexes as that you pretend to." "Indeed but it does, madam." "I cannot believe it." "Yes, you will soon believe it, and I can easily convince you of that." On saying this he loosed a small tie that was behind his neck, and pulling his red beard and wig over his head, there stood Connel, the clownish gardener, transformed into the noble, the accomplished young Baron Carmichael.

Elizabeth was singular for her cool unmoved temper and presence of mind; but in this instance she was overcome with astonishment, and for about the space of two minutes never was statue cast in a mould so striking. Her fine form leaned forward upon the air in a declining posture, like an angel about to take leave of the dwellings of men—her hands upraised and her eyes fixed upon her lover, who had sunk on his knees at her feet; from him they were raised slowly and gradually up to heaven, while a smile of astonishment played upon her countenance that surpassed all description—"Carmichael!" exclaimed she, "Good heavens! is it possible!" He attempted to speak and explain his motives, but she interrupted him: "Make haste and resume your mask, for if you are discovered we are both undone." So saying she hurried away from him, agitated as she had never been before. She tried to ponder, but she was not used to it; she could reflect on what was past with a hurried restless survey, but no scheme or mode of procedure could she fix on for the future. It was upon the whole a sweet morsel, but it was also mixed with bitterness. The adventure had something pleasingly romantic in it; yet she feared—she trembled for some consequence, but did not know what it was that she feared.

In this mood she continued about two hours, shifting from place to place, rising, and as hastily sitting down again, till at last she sunk upon a couch quite exhausted, where she fell into a profound sleep. She had all this while of restlessness been endeavouring to form a resolution of banishing Carmichael instantly from her presence, but had not been able to effect it.

There is perhaps no general rule more unexceptionable than this, that when a woman awakens out of a sound and guiltless sleep her heart is prone to kindness and indulgence. In such a tender mood as this was Elizabeth's resolution formed with regard to her behaviour towards Carmichael. She had dreamed of him in her late sleep, and her fancy had painted him all that was noble, kind, and generous in man; every reflection in which she indulged terminated favourably for Carmichael, every query that she put to her own mind was resolved upon the most generous principles. The consequence of all this was, that long before evening she was again in the garden, and spent at least an hour in the company of the enamoured and delighted gardener.

From that hour was Elizabeth estranged from Rothesay, for the delineation of his character now formed a principal theme of conversation between her and Carmichael. It was on purpose to prevent her if possible from falling into Rothesay's snares that Carmichael had at that time discovered himself; for he saw that her condition and state of mind peculiarly subjected her to danger, if not to utter ruin. The duke being now deprived of his lovely companion all at once, was left by himself to reflect on the cause, and Polmood and he were frequently together, although they were not the most social companions in the world. Elizabeth had flowers to examine, she had berries to pull, she had arbours to weave, and in short, she had occasion to be always in the garden. Polmood perceived this change and was glad, while Rothesay was chagrined beyond measure.

What this sudden and complete change in Elizabeth's behaviour proceeded from, the duke was utterly at a loss to guess, nor knew he on whom to fix the imputation. Her husband it could not be, for she was less in Polmood's company than in his own. He could not be jealous of the comical red-headed gardener; but he shrewdly suspected that it was owing to some insinuation of his that he was thus baulked in his amour, when he conceived the victory as certain as if it had been already won.

Jealousy has many eyes, and is ever on the watch. Rothesay learned one day that Elizabeth and her gardener, who were seldom asunder, were to be employed in gathering wood-rasps for a delicate preserve which she was busied in preparing, and having observed a brake near the castle where these berries were peculiarly abundant, he was assured they would seek that spot; so he went previously and hid himself in the middle of the thicket, where he heard, without being observed or suspected, a full half hour's conversation between the lovers. He heard his own character very freely treated, and besides discovered the whole secret—at least, he discovered that Connel the gardener was no other than Elizabeth's former lover, the banished Baron Carmichael. Chagrined at his utter disappointment, and full of revenge at hearing his character and motives painted in their true colours, he hasted to apprize Polmood of the circumstance.

When he arrived at the castle, Polmood was gone out; but impatient of delay and eager for sudden vengeance, he followed him, that he might kindle in his breast a resistless flame, disregarding any other consequences than the hurt it was likely to bring upon his rival. It chanced that they took different directions, and did not meet until they encountered each other on the green before the castle.

Elizabeth was then sitting at her lattice, and perceiving the unusual eagerness with which Rothesay came up and accosted Polmood, she dreaded there was something in the wind. She observed them strictly, and all their gestures tended to confirm it. After they had exchanged a few sentences, the duke, as if for the sake of privacy, took his host by the hand and led him to an inner chamber.

The apartments of these old baronial castles were not ceiled up so close as chambers are now, and if one set himself to accomplish it, it was not difficult to overhear anything that passed in them.

Whether it was fears for her adventurous lover, natural curiosity, or an overruling Providence that prompted Elizabeth at that time to go and listen, it is needless here to discuss. Yet certainly she did go, and with trembling limbs and a palpitating heart heard the secret fully divulged to her husband with many aggravations, ere it had been many days revealed to herself. Easily foreseeing what would be the immediate consequence, she, hastening back to the garden, warned Carmichael instantly to make his escape, and mentioned a spot where he would find all the necessaries of life by night, provided he thought it safe to hide in the vicinity. Carmichael, expecting from this hint that he might sometimes meet herself at that spot, without waiting to make any reply took her advice, slipped into the wood, and continued his flight with all expedition till he was out of danger of being overtaken. The spot which the baron chose for a hiding-place is well known, and is still pointed out by the shepherds and farmers of *the Muir;* for so that district is called. It is a little den near the top of Herston Hill, from which he could see all that passed about the castle of Polmood, where no one could approach him without being seen at the distance of half a mile; and if danger appeared on either side, he could retire into the other side of the hill with all deliberation, and without the smallest risk of being discovered. Here we will leave him to linger out the day, to weary for the night, and when that arrived to haunt the lanes and boor-tree bush above Polmood, in hopes to meet his lovely misguided Elizabeth, who would just return to the scenes of violence and mystery at the castle of Polmood.

CHAPTER XV.

Rothesay had no sooner informed Polmood of the singular circumstance, that Connel the gardener was young Carmichael of Hyndford in disguise, than he formed resolutions of the most signal vengeance on the impostor, on Elizabeth, and on Rothesay also. The truth of the duke's statement he could not doubt, as a thousand things occurred to his mind in testimony of it; but he viewed this anxious and acrimonious act of divulgement merely as the effect of jealousy and rivalship; for with him no doubt remained but that Elizabeth was alike criminal with both. He had, both now and on a former occasion, witnessed her open dalliances with Rothesay; and when he considered how long he had been duped by her and another paramour, by his former inveterate rival in disguise, it must be acknowledged, it was not without some reason that he now viewed his wife in the worst light possible.

He pretended to treat Rothesay's information with high contempt, but the emotions of his heart could not be concealed. In a short time thereafter he sallied forth into the garden with a frantic mien, and sword in hand. What might have been the consequences cannot be determined, but it was certainly fortunate for the gardener that he was out of the way, as the enraged baron sought every part where he was wont to be employed, and every lane where he used to stray, to no purpose; but having no suspicions of his flight, he hoped to meet with him before the evening, and resolved to restrain his burning rage till then.

On that very evening King James and his nobles arrived at the castle of Polmood, with all their horses, hounds, hawks, and other hunting appurtenances. All was hurry, noise, bustle, and confusion. Polmood received his royal master with all respect and kindness, but James, whose discernment of character was unequalled in that age, soon perceived the ferment of his mind.

Elizabeth did all that lay in her power to entertain her guests, and to render them comfortable; and to a certain degree she succeeded. Polmood complained of a severe illness—left the banquet again and again—walked about sword in hand, watching for the unprincipled gardener, resolving to wreak the first effects of his fury on him; but he was nowhere to be found, nor could any of the menials give the smallest account of him. Elizabeth's gaiety and cheerfulness he viewed as the ebullitions of a mind callous to every sense of propriety. As with one who views a scene with a jaundiced eye, everything appears with the same blemished tint; so to his distempered fancy a crime was painted in every action of his unwary spouse, however blameless that action might be.

He returned to the hall, sat down, drank several cups of wine in a kind of desperation, and, like a well-bred courtier, laughed at his majesty's jests as well as he could; but he neither listened to them, nor regarded them for all that, because the fury of his heart grew more and more intolerable, and most of all on learning the arrangements which were made in the castle for the lodging of their guests. These were such as he deemed the most complete for preventing him from all command over his faithless spouse, and the most convenient in the world for an uninterrupted intercourse between her and Rothesay. Elizabeth never acted from any bad motive; her actions might be fraught with imprudence, for she acted always as nature and feeling directed, without considering farther. Thoughtless she certainly was, but a mind more chaste and unblemished did not exist. Her chamber was situated in the upper storey, and was the best in the castle, and at the present time she had given it up for the accommodation of two of the royal family. Polmood, who

did not know of this circumstance, was appointed to sleep among twelve or fourteen others in temporary beds in the middle flat, and Elizabeth took up her lodging with her waiting-maids on a flock bed on the ground floor.

Several of the nobles did not undress, of which number Polmood was one, who supposed Elizabeth to be in her own chamber, on the same flat with the king, Rothesay, and others of the royal line. Strong as evidences had hitherto been against her, he had never been able to discover her in any very blameable situation; yet he had not the least doubt but that she was that night sleeping in the arms of the duke. Everything he thought seemed to be so well devised for the accomplishment of this wicked purpose—whereas they were only so in the brain of the jealous husband, who was now too visibly in a state of derangement.

Polmood could not sleep, but wandered about like a troubled ghost. The more he pondered on recent discoveries the more he became convinced of his disgrace; and judging that it was highly improper to suffer them longer to go on in their wickedness under his own roof, he resolved to be assured of it, and then cut them both off at a blow. He arose from his couch, on which he had lately thrown himself—left the apartment, telling those who were awake that he was extremely ill, and was obliged to walk out—went straight to the chamber of Elizabeth—opened the door, and entered. The nobles, fatigued with their long journey, and mellowed with wine, either did not hear the slight noise he made, or did not regard it, being all wrapped in a profound sleep. He soon discovered that there were two in the bed; that the one next him was a man, whom he judged to be Rothesay, and he judged aright; and, in the first transport of rage, he would doubtless have run him through the body if any weapon had been in his hand. He stood some minutes listening to their breathing, and soon began to suspect that the other, who breathed uncommonly strong, was not Elizabeth. Determined however to ascertain the truth, he put over his hand and felt his bearded chin. It was the Lord Hamilton, the constant companion of Rothesay, and as great a rake as himself. On feeling Polmood's hand he awoke; and thinking it was Rothesay who had thrown his arm over him, he pushed it away, bidding him keep his hands to himself, and at the same time giving him a hearty shove or two with his elbow.

It unfortunately happened that the amorous duke had at that very moment been dreaming of Elizabeth; for the first word he pronounced on waking was her name. Some indeed allege that Rothesay was not asleep, and understood all that was going on, but that he was chagrined at his reception from Polmood, and much more at being frustrated in all his designs upon Elizabeth, and that he studied revenge upon both. Be that as it may, when Lord Hamilton threw back Polmood's hand, and began in jocular mood to return the salute upon his companion's ribs, Rothesay winced, pretending to awake, and said with a languid voice, "Elizabeth, what do you mean, my jewel? Be quiet, I tell you, Elizabeth." "Ha! what is he thinking of?" said Hamilton; "I suppose he imagines he is sleeping with Polmood's lady." It would be improper to relate all the conversation that passed between them; it is enough to say that the confession which Rothesay made was untrue, like that of every libertine. He said to Lord Hamilton that he had but judged too rightly, and lamented he should have unfortunately discovered the amour in his sleep. Oh! how fain Polmood would have wrested his soul from his body; but he commanded his rage, resolving to give him fair play for his life, and to kill him in open day. "Ah! how happy a man you are," said Hamilton; "but your effrontery outgoes all comment; who else would have attempted the chaste Elizabeth?" "Not altogether so chaste as you imagine," said Rothesay; "besides her husband and myself, she has kept another paramour in disguise ever since her marriage." "Has she!" returned Hamilton; "then I shall never trust to appearances in woman more."

Polmood groaned in spirit—but unable to contain himself longer, he, hastening down stairs, took a sword from the armoury, and sallied out in hopes of meeting the licentious gardener. The ferment of his mind was such that he did not know what he was about. However, when he got into the open air, he grew better, and roved about at will, uttering his complaints to the trees and the winds, without disturbing any one but himself. But, what he little dreamed of, Carmichael overheard some of his lamentations and threatenings that very night.

The morning came, and the party mounted, and rode forth in high spirits to the hunt. From knowing the miserable night which Polmood had passed, the generality of the company supposed that he would decline being of the party that day, but he made no such proposal; on the contrary, he was among the first that appeared, dressed in the uniform which all those who joined the royal party in the chase were obliged to wear: he had other schemes in contemplation than that of lingering and pining at home—schemes of vengeance and of blood. The king asked kindly for his health, and how he had passed the night—he thanked his majesty, and said he had been but so so. The king bade him not be cast down, for that the ardour of the chase would soon restore him to his wonted health and cheerfulness. Polmood shook his head, and said he feared it never would.

Early as it was when they departed, Elizabeth was up and stirring about, seeing that every one had what necessaries he required. Every one seemed more anxious than another to compliment her, and pay her all manner of attention; while she on her part appeared to be exceedingly cheerful and happy. It was not so with Polmood: he was so thoughtful,

that when any one spoke to him, he neither heard nor regarded, and his hunting-cap was drawn over his eyes; when his new liberated hounds fawned upon him he struck them, and when his hawk perched upon his arm he flung him again into the air.

The tinckell had been despatched the evening before to the heights around the forest of Frood. The place of rendezvous, to which the deer were to be driven, was a place called the Quarter-hill, somewhere in that neighbourhood, and thither the king and his lords repaired. But the tinckell was then but thin, the country not having been sufficiently apprized of the king's arrival; the ground was unmanageable, and the deer shy, and the men found it impossible to circumscribe them. The consequence was, that when the dogs were let loose, it was found that there were not above a dozen of deer on the Quarter-hill. The king himself shot one fine stag as he was endeavouring to make his escape; other two were run down by the dogs at a place called Carterhope; and these were all that were taken that day. The greater number of the deer made their way by a steep rocky hill called the Ericle, where they left both the riders and the dogs far behind. But it being the first day of the chase that year, they were all in high mettle, and the hunt continued with unabated vigour—many new deer were started, which drew off the hounds in every direction, and the chase at last terminated around the heights of a wild uncouth glen, called Gameshope. When the straggling parties came severally to these heights, they found that the deer had taken shelter among rocks and precipices, from which it was not in their power to drive them.

Before they got the hounds called in, it was wearing towards the evening. They were, as I said, greatly scattered—so also were the men, who had followed the sound of the hounds and the echoes, until there scarcely remained above two of them together; and, to add to their confusion, a mist settled down upon the heights, and it was so close that they could not see one another, even at the distance of a few yards. Long did they sound the bugles—long did they shout and whistle, endeavouring to assemble, but the confusion still grew the greater; and ultimately every one was obliged to find his way back to the castle of Polmood as best he could, where they continued to arrive in twos and threes until near midnight; others did not appear that night, and some never arrived again.

It was natural enough to suppose that some of the knights, being strangers on those mountains, would wander in the fog and lose their way; but the company were somewhat startled when it was reported to them a little before midnight that Polmood's steed had come home without his master. This had rather a suspicious appearance; for of all men it was the least likely that Polmood would lose his way, who knew every pass and ford in the forest as well as the walks in his own garden. Elizabeth appearing to be alarmed, some of the party went out to the stalls to ascertain the truth. What was their astonishment, when, on a close examination, they found that the steed was wounded, and besides, that his bridle, mane, and saddle were bathed in blood—from the latter it appeared that a slight effort seemed to have been made to clean it. When they bore this report into the hall the company were all in the greatest consternation, and Elizabeth grew pale as death. The king trembled—for his suspicions fixed instantly on his brother Rothesay; yet, after watching him for some time with the greatest attention, he could discover not even the most distant symptoms of guilt in his looks. The reports of individuals were greatly at variance with regard to the time and place where Polmood was last seen; so also were their proposals with regard to what was most proper to be done. At last it was agreed to call a muster of all who had left the castle of Polmood in the morning, and who were expected there that night.

On taking the muster it appeared that other four were wanting besides Polmood. These were—the Lord Hamilton, Lord James Douglas of Dalkeith, Sir Patrick Hepburn, and his friend the Laird of Lamington. Some of these, it was conjectured, might have lost their way; but that Polmood should have lost his there was no probability.

All remained in doubt and perplexity until the morning. When the morning came, a great number of people from all quarters arrived at the castle, in order to assist the king and his nobles in driving the deer: but he told them that he meant to give his horses and hounds some rest, until he saw what had occasioned the present unaccountable defection; and in the meantime, ordered that every house in the country adjacent, and every part of the forest, should be searched with all diligence, and every inquiry made concerning the missing knights; and, likewise, that the leashmen should exert themselves in recovering their scattered hounds, many of whom were still missing.

All this was promptly obeyed, and parties of men were sent off in every direction. The two lords, Douglas and Hamilton, were soon found. They had completely lost their way in the mist the evening before, and were conducted by a shepherd to the castle of Hackshaw, on the border of the forest, where they had received a curious entertainment from an old churlish and discourteous knight named Hugh Porteus; but the others they had not seen, nor did they know anything concerning them.

At length, after much searching to no purpose, one of the parties, in returning homeward, at the very narrowest and most impassable ford of Gameshope, found the bodies of two knights lying together; but the heads were severed from them, and carried away. Both their swords were drawn, and one was grasped so firmly in a cold bloody hand, that it could scarcely be forced from it; and, from the appearance

of the blood upon that sword, it was evident almost to a certainty, that some deadly wounds had been given with it.

All this was unaccountable; and as the uniform which the king's party wore was precisely the same on every one, even to the smallest item, they could not distinguish whose bodies they were which had been found; and after they were borne to Polmood, and subjected to the most minute examination, there were not three present who could agree in opinion concerning them. The one, from the slenderness of the form, was judged to be that of Sir Patrick Hepburn; but whether the other was the remains of Norman of Polmood or Donald of Lamington, none could possibly determine. At length, when they had almost despaired, Polmood's page swore to the identity of his master's sword, and likewise his sandals, or hunting brogues, which ended all debates on the subject. The bodies were buried at Drummelzier, as those of Polmood and Sir Patrick Hepburn, and great lamentation was made for them by all ranks. The Laird of Lamington was blamed for the murder, and a high reward was offered by the king for his apprehension, but all was in vain; he could never be either seen or heard of.

The more this mysterious business was afterwards discussed, the more unaccountable and incredible it appeared. Hepburn and Lamington were known to be relations, as well as loving friends, and no previous contention existed, or was likely to exist between them; and as to Polmood, Lamington had never before seen him, so that no grudge could be supposed to have actuated either of them in such a bloody business, as to seek the life of the other.

In Rothesay's heart, no doubt remained but that Carmichael was the perpetrator of this horrid deed: and he secretly rejoiced that it had so fallen out; for he felt assured that the sense of his guilt would cause him to abandon the country, or, if he remained in it, that his crime would eventually bring him to the block. In either case, all obstruction to his own designs upon Elizabeth was removed. The gaining of her love was now an acquisition of some moment, as she was likely to inherit the extensive and valuable estate of Polmood, as well as her own dowry-lands.

Now that her husband was out of the way, no one living knew of Carmichael having lurked there so long disguised, save Rothesay; therefore, that he might not affront Elizabeth, and that the object of his intended conquest might still retain all her respectability in the eyes of the world, he judged it proper to keep that circumstance from being made public. But, that the king's vengeance might be pointed aright, and that Carmichael might not escape justice, if he dared to remain in the country, he disclosed the whole to his majesty in confidence.

James, on hearing the particulars of this singular adventure, likewise conceived Carmichael to be the assassin; yet still there was something which required explanation. If Carmichael was the assassin, what had become of the Laird of Lamington? Why had he absented himself? or how was it that he could neither be found dead nor alive? There was still something inexplicable in this.

From the first moment that the rumour of this catastrophe reached the castle of Polmood, the suspicions of Elizabeth pointed to Carmichael, and to him alone. She knew he was still lurking in the neighbourhood, for the provisions and the wine which she had left in the appointed den, had been regularly taken away; and she had likewise found a note there, written with the juice of berries, begging an interview with her, a request which she had even resolved to comply with; but the thought that he was a murderer now preyed upon her mind. The more the affair was developed, the more firmly was she convinced that he had slain her husband, and she was shocked with horror at the idea.

She went to the den, which she knew he would visit if still in the country, and left a note below the stone to the following purport:—

"Wretch! thou hast slain my husband, and I know it. Let me never see thy face again—fly this place, and for what thou hast done, may'st thou be pursued by the curses of Heaven, as thou shalt be by those of the wronged ——!"

She scarcely expected that he would get this letter; for, like Rothesay, she imagined he would instantly flee the land; but on examining the spot next day she found that it was gone.

As soon as the funeral was over, the king withdrew with his suite from the castle, that Elizabeth might be suffered to spend the days appointed for mourning in quietness. But just as they were about to depart, Rothesay besought of his royal brother to suffer him to stay and keep Elizabeth company for some time, representing that Elizabeth had many important family concerns to look after, for which she was but ill-fitted, and would be much the better of one to assist her. The king did not thoroughly comprehend the nature of Rothesay's designs upon Elizabeth; but he judged that her beauty, qualifications, and fortune, now entitled her to the hand of the best nobleman in the realm. He was likewise himself an amorous and gallant knight, and knew well enough, whatever women might pretend, that their real happiness was so much connected with the other sex, that without them they need not be said to exist. On the ground of these considerations, he agreed at once to his brother's request, on condition that Elizabeth joined in it; but not otherwise.

Rothesay sought out Elizabeth without delay, and represented to her how lonely and frightsome it would be for her to be left by herself, in a place where such foul murders had lately been perpetrated, and where, as was reported, the ghost of the deceased had already been seen: that though she ought to stay a while at the castle of Polmood, to put her late husband's affairs in such a posture

as to enable her to leave them and live with her natural protectress, the queen, still no decorum forbade the retaining of a friend and protector, who had experience in those matters: that he begged of her to accept of his services for that purpose, and he would wait upon her with all due respect during the time she remained at her castle, and afterwards conduct her to court, where she might be introduced, either as Dame Elizabeth Hunter, or as Elizabeth, Duchess of Rothesay, as her own choice might decide. Elizabeth did not at first much relish the proposal, but yet was unwilling to be left alone; and Carmichael having forfeited her esteem for ever, by the foulest of murders, she gave a ready but cold consent to Rothesay's request, there being no other in the land whom, on consideration, she could choose in preference.

CHAPTER XVI.

On the day that the king and his suit departed, there came an old palmer to the castle of Polmood, a monk of the order of Saint John of Jerusalem, who craved an asylum in the castle for a few days, with strange abruptness. It was well known, that the reign of James IV. was not more singular for its gaiety than its devotion, and that the court took the lead in the one as well as the other. Pilgrimages to the shrines of different saints were frequent, and all those in holy orders were reverenced and held in high estimation; therefore the request of the old monk was readily complied with, uncouth as his manner seemed; and a little dark chamber, with only one aperture, in the turret of the castle, was assigned to him for a lodging. He was a man of melancholy and gloom, and he shunned, as much as possible, all intercourse with the inhabitants of the castle and places adjacent. He ate little—kept closely shut up in his chamber by day—but in the twilight was often seen walking about the woods; and then, his manner, even at a distance, bespoke a distempered mind. His step was at one time hurried and irregular; at another, slow and feeble; and again, all of a sudden, he would pause and stand as still as death. He was looked upon as a fanatic in religion; but, as he offered harm to none, he was pitied and loved, rather than feared. He was often heard conversing with himself, or with some unseen being beside him; but if any one met or approached him, he started like a guilty person, and slunk away into the wood, or among the deep banks of the river.

It is now time to mention, that Carmichael did not fly the country, as Elizabeth expected; but, as no more victuals or wine were deposited in the appointed den, he found that to remain longer there in concealment was impracticable, and therefore that some new expedient was absolutely necessary. He was, by the king's express command, and under the forfeiture of his life, banished twenty miles from court, wherever the court might be, and so long were the miles in those days, that Carmichael durst not approach his own hereditary domains when the court was at Edinburgh; but as the court was now at Crawmelt, and within five miles of him, the danger of being discovered at that time was redoubled; besides which, the prejudice of the country was likely to run strongly against him, on account of the late murders. But notwithstanding all this, so rooted were his affections upon Eizabeth, that, maugre all danger, he determined to remain near her.

Some other disguise being now necessary, he threw away his red wig and beard, and without any farther mask, equipped himself as an humble shepherd, with a gray plaid about his shoulders, and a broad blue bonnet on his head. He went and offered his services to one of his own tenants, who held the farm of Stenhope, in the immediate vicinity of Polmood.

His conditions were so moderate, that his services were accepted, and he set about his new occupation, in hopes of meeting with his beloved Elizabeth—of being again reconciled to her, and perhaps of wrapping her in his gray plaid, in the green woods of Polmood—but woe the while! she had again subjected herself to the guidance and the snares of the unprincipled Rothesay.

He watched the woods and walks of Polmood with more assiduity than his flock; but so closely was Elizabeth haunted in these walks by Rothesay, that he could never once encounter or discover her alone; he nevertheless continued to watch her with increased constancy, for he loved her above everything on earth.

Had Rothesay been any other person than the king's own brother, he would have challenged him instantly; but, as it was, had he done so, complete ruin to him and his house would have ensued. However, rather than be completely baffled, he seems to have half determined on doing it. It is perhaps unwarrantable to assert, that he really formed such a resolution, but it is certain he kept always his broad sword hid in a hollow tree, at the entrance into the wood of Polmood, and whenever he strayed that way, he took it along with him below his plaid.

A dreadful sensation was by this time excited about the castle of Polmood. A rumour had circulated, even before the burial of the two murdered chieftains, that the ghost of the late laird had been seen in the environs of the castle; which report was laughed at, and, except by the peasantry, totally disregarded. But, before a week had elapsed, the apparition had been again and again seen, and that by persons whose veracity could not be disputed. The terror became general in the family, particularly over the weaker individuals. It reigned with such despotic sway, that even the stoutest hearts were somewhat appalled. The menials deserted

from their service in pairs—confusion prevailed every night—comments and surmises occupied the day, and to such a height did the perturbation grow, that Elizabeth, and her counsellor Rothesay, were obliged to come to the resolution of a sudden departure. An early day was fixed on for disposing of the costly furniture, or sending it away, and the castle of Polmood was to be locked up, and left void, for an habitation to the owlets and the spirits of the wilderness.

The report at first originated with the old housekeeper, who averred that she had heard her late master's voice; that he spoke to her distinctly in the dead of the night, and told her of some wonderful circumstance, which she could not remember, from having been so overpowered by fear; but that it was something about her lady. She delivered this relation with apparent seriousness; but there was so much incongruity and contradiction in it, that all who were not notoriously superstitious disbelieved it.

Shortly after this, a young serving man and a maiden, who were lovers, had gone out after the labours of the day into the covert of the wood, to whisper their love-tale. They were sitting in a little semicircular den, more than half surrounded by flowery broom, which had an opening in front to an avenue in the wood; and the maid was leaning upon her lover's bosom, while he was resting against the bank, with his arms around her waist. Often before had they conversed on their little plans of future life, which were circumscribed within a narrow sphere. They were that night recapitulating them; and as much of their dependence had been on the bounty and protection of their late master, they could not dwell long on the subject, without mentioning him, which they did with the deepest regret, and with some significant exclamations. From one thing to another, so serious and regretful was their frame of mind, that it led to the following dialogue, a singular one enough to have taken place between two young lovers, and at that hour of the evening, as the daylight was just hanging with a dying languishment over the verge of the western hill.

"It is a sad thing that I cannot give over dreaming, William," said the fair rustic. "Do you think there is any other person so much troubled with such dreams as I am?" "Your dreams must be always good and sweet, like yourself, Anna." "They are always sweet and delightful when I dream about you, William; but I have had some fearsome dreams of late; heavy, heavy dreams! Ah! such dreams as I have had! I fear that they bode no good to us. What is it to dream of the dead, William?" "It generally betokens good to the dreamer, or to those who are dreamed of, Anna." "Ah, William, I fear not! I have heard my mother say, that there was one general rule in dreaming, which might always be depended on. It was this, that dreams never bode good which do not leave pleasing impressions on the mind;—mine *must* be bad, very bad indeed! How comes it, William, that whenever we dream of the dead, they are always living?" "God knows, Anna! it is a curious reality in the nature of dreaming. We often dream of the living as being dead; but whenever we dream of those that are dead, they are always alive and well." "Ay, it is indeed so, William; and we never then remember that they are departed this life—never once recollect that the grave separates us and them." "All these things have a language of their own, Anna, to those who understand them; but they are above our comprehension, and therefore we ought not to think of them, nor talk of them; for thinking of them leads us into error, and talking of them makes us sad; and to obviate both these, I will reave a kiss from your sweet lips, my Anna, and compel you to change the subject." "O no, William, do not; I love to talk of these things, for I am much concerned about them; and whatever concerns me I love to talk of to you." "And, pray, what may those dreams have been which have given my Anna so much concern?"

"I have been dreaming, and dreaming of our late master, William! Ah, such dreams I have had! I fear there has been foul play going on." "Hush, hush, my Anna! we must not say what we think about that; but, for my part, I know not what to think." "Listen to me, William, but don't be angry, or laugh at me; I believe that Alice the housekeeper's tale, about the ghost that spoke to her, is every word of it true." "Do not believe any such thing, my dear Anna; believe me, it is nothing more than the workings of a distempered imagination. Because the late events are wrapt in mystery, the minds of people are oppressed by vain conjectures, and surmises of dark infamous deeds, and in sleep the fancy turns to these images, and is frightened by fantasies of its own creation. I would not have you, nor any woman, to believe in the existence of ghosts." "Ah, William, I could reason with you on that point for ever, for I must, and will always believe in it. That belief gives one a pleasing idea of an overruling Providence, of a just God, who will not suffer the guilty and the murderer to escape, nor those of his creatures, who are innocent, to be destroyed. But I know, William, that you will not disbelieve my word, therefore I will tell it to you, though I would not to any other. I said I dreamed of our late master—but, William, I believe as truly as I believe that I am in your arms, that I heard him speaking and lamenting last night." "But that was only in your sleep—it was only through your sleep, my dear Anna, that you heard him." "No, William; as far as I can judge, I was as fully awake as I am at this moment." "My dear Anna, you must think no more of dreams and apparitions; there are really no such things in nature as apparitions. I could tell you a tale that would—"

Here Anna laid her hand upon her lover's mouth to stop him, for she heard something that alarmed her. "Hush!" said she, in a low whisper; "what

is that? I hear something coming, what can it possibly be that is here at this time of night?" They held in their breath and listened, and distinctly heard a slight rustling among the branches, which they at length distinguished to be the sound of something approaching them with soft and gentle steps. It came close to the side of the bush where they sat, and then stood motionless. They were sitting as still as death; but they could see nothing for the broom, while their hearts were beating, so that their repressed breathing was almost cut short. After a considerable pause, it uttered a long deep groan;—terror thrilled their whole frames;—every hair on their heads crept as with life, and their spirits melted within them. Another pause ensued—after which they heard it utter these words, in a tone of agony, and just loud enough to be distinctly heard:—"Yes, yes! it was she—it was she!—O wicked, wicked Elizabeth!" So saying, it came forward to the opening in the broom, where it stood before their sight. It had one hand upon its breast, and its eyes were fixed on the ground. In that position it remained for about half a minute, and then, in the same voice as before, said, "The torments of hell are slight to this!" On uttering these words, it shook its head, and vanished from their sight. It might have passed into the air—it might have sunk into the earth—it might have stood still where it was, for anything they knew, as their senses were benumbed, and a darkness, deeper than that of the midnight dungeon, seemed to have fallen upon them.

For a considerable time did they sit panting in each other's arms, without daring to utter a word. William first broke silence: "Heaven preserve us!" said he; "what is the meaning of this?" "Did you see the figure that passed, William?" "Yes, Anna." "And did you not know the voice and the stride?" said she. "Yes, yes! it is needless, it is sinful to deny it! I knew them too well—my mind is mazed and confounded! This is wonderful!" "Is it not, William? I'm sure we saw him nailed in the coffin and laid in his grave." "We did, Anna! we did!" "And we saw him lying a lifeless, headless trunk; and the streams of blood were crusted black upon his arms, and upon his breast! did we not, William?" "It is true, Anna! it is all true!" "Yet here he is again, walking in his own real form and manner, and speaking in his own voice." The horror which these reflections occasioned, together with what she had just seen, were too much for the mind of the poor girl to brook: she crept closer and closer to her lover's bosom with a frantic grasp, uttered one or two convulsive moans, and fainted away in his arms.

Agitated as the young man was, his fears for her got the better of his trepidation, or at least gave it a different bias; he sprung up and ran towards the river, which was nigh, to bring her some water. When he came near it, he found he had nothing to carry water in; but, as the only substitute within his reach for such a purpose, he pulled off his bonnet, and rushed to the side of a pool in order to fill it. But, when he stooped for that purpose, his agitation was such, that he slipped his foot, and fell headlong into the pool. This accident was not unfortunate, for the sudden immersion brought him to his senses; he soon regained his feet, filled his bonnet with water, and ran towards his beloved Anna. The bonnet would hold no water—so it was all gone in two seconds—however, he ran on, carrying it as if still full to the brim. When he came to her, and found that he could not give her a drink, as the next best resource, he clapped the wet bonnet upon her face, and pressed it with both his hands. If she had been capable of breathing, he would certainly have suffocated her in a short time; but the streams of water, that ran down her neck and bosom from the saturated bonnet soon proved effective in restoring animation.

As soon as she was again able to speak distinctly, they fell both upon their knees, committed themselves to the care and protection of Heaven, and then walked home together, the maiden supported by her affectionate lover.

That very night was the dreadful intelligence circulated among the vassals and menials about the castle, and before noon, next day, it had gained ground exceedingly and was indeed become a terrible story. It was in every one's mouth, that the ghost of the late laird had appeared to the two lovers in his own natural form; that he had conversed familiarly with them, and told them that he was condemned to hell, and suffering the most dreadful torments; and that Elizabeth, his own lady, had murdered him.

That their laird should have been condemned to hell astonished the natives very much indeed; for they had always looked upon him as a very good man, and true to his king and country. However, some acknowledged that the spirit had better means of information than they, and could not possibly be wrong; while others began to make the sage remark, that "people were ill to know." But that Elizabeth should have been the murderer of her lord appeared far more unaccountable, as it was well known that she was at home during the whole of that day on which he was slain, and had spent it in the utmost gaiety and bustle, making preparations for the accommodation of her guests in the evening. That she could have suborned the Laird of Lamington to murder him was as improbable; for, saving a slight salute, she had never once exchanged words with him; and it was utterly impossible that she could have held any converse with him, without the rest of the company having known it. It would have been blasphemy to have said the ghost was lying; yet, though none durst openly avow it, some went the unwarrantable length of thinking, in their own hearts, that it was misinformed, or had some way taken up the story wrong.

The story reached the ears of Elizabeth. She was far from being naturally superstitious, and had, moreover, associated but little with the country people of Scotland, consequently, was not sufficiently initiated into the truth and mystery of apparitions; nay, she was not even a proselyte to the doctrine, which was a shameful error in her. But, instead of being displeased, as some would have been, at being blamed for the murder of her husband, she only laughed at it, and stated, that she wished the ghost would appear to her, and tell her such a story; that she would walk in the wood every night, in hopes of meeting it, that she might confront, and give it the lie in its teeth. In this manner did the graceless Elizabeth sport and jeer about the well-attested and sublime truths, so long and so fondly cherished by our forefathers, even after she had heard the two young lovers relate their tale of wonder with the greatest simplicity, and after she had seen the young woman lying ill of a fever, into which her agitation had thrown her.—But mark the consequence:—

On that very night, or the one following, as Elizabeth was lying awake in her chamber, between twelve and one o'clock of the morning, she heard the sound of footsteps coming hastily up the stair. Her heart beat with a strange sensation; but the door of her apartment being locked in the inside, and the key taken out, she knew that it was impossible for anything to enter there.

However, it came close to her door, where it stopped, and she saw some glimmerings of light, which entered by the key-hole. The door was strong, and the bolt was fast; but, at the very first touch of that mysterious visitant, the massy lock opened with a loud jerk, and the door flew back to the wall with such violence, that the clash made all the vaults of the castle to resound again—when, horrid to relate! who should enter but the identical form and figure of her late husband! and in such a guise!—Merciful Heaven! was there ever a female heart which could have stood the shock! He was half-naked, with his head and legs quite bare—his colour was pale as death—his hair bristled upon his crown—and his unearthly eyes rolled like those of one in a frenzy; he had a lighted torch in the one hand and a naked sword in the other, and in this guise he approached the bed where lay, all alone, the beauteous and helpless Elizabeth.

I have often had occasion to mention the cool unmoved temper of Elizabeth's mind; still it was the mind of a woman, and any one will readily suppose that this was too much for the heart of any woman to bear. It was not. Some may term it insensibility, and certainly it bore a resemblance to it occasionally; but it is an old established maxim among the inhabitants of the mountains, that "he who is unconscious of any crime, is incapable of terror;" and such maxims must always be held sacred by the collector of legends. May we not then, in charity, suppose that it was this which steeled the heart of Elizabeth against all sudden surprises and qualms of terror. Some may think that her conduct was not quite blameless: grant that it was not, still her heart was so—her errors were errors of nature, not of principle; and on the great basis of self-approval must all actions be weighed; for how can criminality be attached to an action, when by that action no evil was intended?—certainly by no rule in which justice is predominant. Elizabeth was conscious of no guilt, and feared no evil.

When the dreadful spectre approached her bed, she was lying in such an attitude (when her extraordinary personal beauty is considered) as might have made the heart of the most savage fiend relent. Her face was turned towards the door; the bedclothes were flung a little back, so that her fair neck and bosom were partly seen; while one of her arms was lying carelessly outstretched above the coverlet, and the other turned back below her cheek.

Almost any other woman, placed in the same circumstances, would have swooned, or raised such an outcry as would have alarmed all within the castle. Elizabeth did neither—she kept her eyes fixed on the horrid figure, and did not so much as move, or alter her position, one inch. The apparition likewise kept its looks bent upon her, came onward, and stared over her in the bed; but in those looks there was no softness, no love, nor the slightest shade of pity, but a hellish gleam of disappointment, or something resembling it. He approached, turned round, strode to the other corner of the room, and she heard it pronounce, with great emphasis, the word "Again!" After which it walked hastily out at the door, which it closed, and left locked as before.

Elizabeth neither arose herself, nor did she call up any of her household, until it was day, though she lay in a state of the greatest uneasiness. She was neither terrified nor chilled with dread, but she was utterly astonished, and what she had seen was to her quite unaccountable.

Next day she told it to her waiting-maid, who was a great favourite with her, and who implicitly believed it; and she afterwards related the whole to Rothesay, who used all his rhetoric to persuade her that it was a dream; but she assured him, with the greatest calmness, that it was not, and requested that both he and the maid would watch with her in the same chamber the night following. Rothesay consented, but pleaded hard that the company of the maid-servant might be dispensed with; and though his suit was listened to with complacency, it was not granted.

It is necessary, before proceeding farther, to state some particulars of Rothesay's behaviour to Elizabeth during the time that had elapsed of her widowhood; for the motives which led to such behaviour cannot now be ascertained. He talked now often to her of marriage, as soon as *decency would permit*, and had even gone so far as to press her to consent;

but this was only when she appeared to take offence at his liberties, and when he could not find aught else to say. He was nevertheless all the while using his most strenuous endeavours to seduce her morals and gain possession of her person; and, as the time of their retirement at Polmood was now speedily drawing to a conclusion, he determined to avail himself of every opportunity, in order to accomplish his selfish purpose. He well knew, that if he could not prevail upon her to yield to his wishes while they remained in that solitude, he could never be able to accomplish it at court, where she would be surrounded by such a number of admirers. These considerations brought him to the resolution of leaving no art or stratagem unattempted.

The truth is, that Elizabeth seems to have admitted of familiarities from Rothesay, which she ought not to have allowed; but such being the court fashions in those days, she attributed these freedoms to his great admiration of her person and accomplishments, and not only forgave, but seemed pleased with them. He was accustomed to toy with her, and kiss her hand right frequently; and, indeed, she may be said to have granted him every indulgence that he could with propriety ask. But either from exalted notions of the dignity of the sex, or out of regard for her exquisite beauty, she seems to have hitherto maintained the singular resolution of never subjecting her person to the will of any man living. She had always repulsed Rothesay sharply when he presumed to use any undue freedoms with her, but with so much apparent gaiety, that the amorous duke knew not what to make of her sentiments. His frequent proposals of marriage she did not much regard; for perhaps she was aware, that it was only a piece of courtly gallantry, when he could not find aught better to say. He haunted her evening and morning—led her into the thickest parts of the wood, by day and harassed her every night at parting, so that she was always obliged to lock her chamber door, and refuse every kind of converse after a certain hour. And one evening, having gained admission before it was late, he absolutely refused to go away; on which she arose with much archness as if to seek something—walked off and left him, locking him up fast until the morning. Such was their behaviour to one another, and such their pursuits, when they began to be alarmed with the appearance of the ghost.

It having been agreed, as formerly stated, that Rothesay, Elizabeth, and the waiting-maid, should all three watch together in Elizabeth's apartment, on the night following that on which the mysterious guest had first visited her, the scheme was accordingly put in execution. Elizabeth said she believed it would appear again; but Rothesay mocked at the idea, and assured her that it would not; for he was convinced Elizabeth had only had a frightful dream. He said, if it had the effrontery to come and face them all three, that, in the first place, he would endeavour to deter it from entering, until it had first declared its errand; and if it did enter without being announced, he should soon make it glad to withdraw. With such a redoubted champion at their head, the women began to muster not a little courage.

Accordingly, they went up all three to the apartment between the hours of ten and eleven at night, and placed themselves in a row at the farthest corner of it, with their faces turned toward the door. Elizabeth was employed in sewing a piece of rich tapestry, which had for a long time engaged her at leisure hours. She was dressed in her mourning apparel, and the duke sat on the one side of her, and her woman on the other.

Some time passed away in unmeaning chat, which still grew more and more dull as midnight approached. Clocks were then very rare in Scotland, but the hours by night were rung upon the great bell in the porch; at least this was the custom at the castle of Polmood. The warder had an hour-glass, which he was bound to watch with great punctuality and tell each hour upon the bell.

The twelfth hour was rung, and still nothing appeared; nor was anything unusual heard. About half an hour afterwards, they thought they heard a door open at some distance, and with great caution—it was somewhere within the castle, but in what part they could not certainly distinguish—the noise soon ceased, and they heard no more of it. The fire had fallen away, and pale ashes fairly presided over the few live coals that remained, while the cricket was harping behind them without intermission—the lamps burned dim, for no one remembered to trim them—all was become sullen and eerie, and the conversation was confined to the eyes alone. The bell rung one! There is something solemn in the tone of that little hour at any time—it is no sooner heard than it is gone—the ear listens to hear further, but the dying sounds alone reach it. That night it was peculiarly solemn, if not awful; for the bell was deep toned, and the night dark and still. As the last vibrations of the tone were dying away, Elizabeth happened to cast her eyes upon Rothesay, and she thought there was something so ghastly in his looks, that she could not forbear smiling. She was proceeding to accost him, when, just as the first sounds passed her lips, she stopped short, and raised herself up on the seat, as in the act of listening; for, at that moment, she heard the footsteps of one who seemed approaching the back of the door with great softness and caution. "There it is now," said she to Rothesay, in a low whisper. Rothesay's heart seemed to have started into his throat—he was literally choked with terror—he had, however, so much mind remaining, as to recollect something of his proposed plan of operations, and rising, he stammered towards the door, in order to prevent it from entering; but ere he reached the middle of the floor, the door flew open, and the same dreadful being

entered, in the very guise in which it had come the preceding night.

It was enough for Rothesay—much more than he could bear. He uttered a stifled cry, like that of a person drowning, and fell lifeless at full length upon the floor. The waiting-maid took refuge behind her lady, and screamed so incessantly that she never suffered one shriek to lose hold of another. Elizabeth sat motionless like a statue, with her eyes fixed upon the apparition. It paused, and gazed at them all with an unsteady and misbelieving look—then advanced forward—stepped over the forlorn duke, and looked at the bed. The bed was neatly spread down, without a fold or wrinkle. It took another look at Elizabeth, but that was a look of rage and despair; and turning to Rothesay, it put itself in the attitude of striking—laid the edge of its sword upon his neck, in order to take a surer aim, then rearing the weapon on high it raised itself to the stroke, as if intent on severing his head from his body at a blow; but just when the stroke was quivering to its descent, the vengeful sprite seemed to relent, its arm relaxed, and it turned the sword to the left shoulder, mused for a few seconds, and gave the prostrate duke such a toss with its foot as heaved him almost to the other side of the room, and without uttering a word hastily retired, locking the door behind it.

The loud and reiterated cries of the waiting-woman at length brought all within the castle to the door of the haunted chamber. Elizabeth took down the key and admitted them with the greatest deliberation, but so wrapped was she in astonishment that she did not once open her lips. She retired again to her seat, and leaned her cheek upon her hand, paying no regard to the horror of the group nor to the bustle they made.

The first thing they did was to lift the forlorn duke, who had already begun to manifest signs of returning animation. When they raised him up, they found that his face and breast were all bathed in blood, and conjectured that some murderous work had been going on. They were for some time confirmed in this suggestion by the asseverations of the duke, who assured them that he was a dead man, and run through the body in several places. On examining his body all over, however, they could discover no wound whatever, and they all agreed in the conclusion that he had only been bleeding plentifully at the nose. Rothesay had however got enough of watching for ghosts—more than he approved of, and frankly declared off, taking at the same time a solemn oath that he would never lodge another night within the castle of Polmood. Elizabeth rallied him, and said that he would surely never abandon her in such a dilemma, but continue to sleep in the castle as heretofore; that she was perfectly willing to sleep in her own chamber still for all that was come and gone, and why might not he as well keep to his, in which he had never been disturbed? But he said that the spirit seemed to have a particular malevolence against him, and he would on no consideration risk another encounter with it. Alas! the next encounter that he had with it was not far distant, and terminated in a more fatal manner.

From that time forth Rothesay mounted his horse every night and rode to the castle of John Tweedie of Drummelzier, returning always to Polmood in the morning; but he never told that chief the real cause why he changed his lodgings. On the contrary, he said that he did not judge it altogether consistent with decorum to stay in the castle with the young and beautiful Elizabeth every night, now that she had no husband to protect her—that the tongue of scandal might blast her future fortunes, and therefore he was resolved that no infamy should attach to her on his account. Drummelzier was much astonished at this instance of self-denial; but as Rothesay continued to persist in the plan, he took no notice of it.

CHAPTER XVII.

Elizabeth remained in the same state as before, without any seeming alarm. During the time of the spectre's late appearance she had carefully noted everything that passed, which no one else had done, and the more she considered of it the more fully was she convinced that the apparition was a mortal man, made up of flesh, blood, and bones like other people. Certain that this disguise was assumed to answer some purpose, her suspicion fell on Carmichael as the author of the plot, from knowing how expertly he could assume characters, and how he had lately duped herself, the laird, and all the country as Connel the gardener, even when they were conversing with him daily face to face. Her husband it could not be; then who else if it was not Carmichael? Polmood and he were nearly of the same form and stature, but how he was enabled to counterfeit Polmood's looks she could not comprehend; still she thought it was some artifice, and that Carmichael must be at the bottom of it.

She had likewise noticed that the spectre opened the door with a key, which it left in the lock during the time it remained in the room, and then on retiring locked the door and took the key with it. She had thought much of that circumstance since it first appeared, and determined to pay particular attention to it; but as usual she kept her thoughts to herself. She knew that when the laird lived they had each a key to that chamber, and some other places of importance in the castle, and what was become of these keys now she could not discover. However she resolved to make trial of the spirit's ingenuity by a simple expedient, with which she had often baulked the laird's designs of entering

when alive, and she weened that he could not have gained much additional skill in mechanics nor muscular strength since he was consigned to the grave. This expedient was no other than suffering her own key to remain in the lock and turning it half round, so that no key could possibly enter from without, which she put in practice, and waited the issue without the least emotion; but from the time that Rothesay left the castle by night the apparition never troubled her more.

In this manner did the time pass away for several days. Rothesay and Elizabeth met every morning, spent the day together, and separated again at night. The shepherd continued to range the woods of Polmood, asking at every one whom he by accident met for a strayed sheep that he had lost, but alas! that fair, that beauteous lamb could he never see, unless under the care of another shepherd; the old crazy palmer persevered in the same course as before; and the unprofitable menials spent the day in sleep and idleness, and the night in fear and trembling, sometimes half a dozen of them in one bed and sometimes only two, according as the mode of transposition suited, but all of them in a state of sufferance and bondage. The time was at hand when that family was likely to be broken up for ever.

It happened one day that Rothesay had led Elizabeth into the thickest part of the wood, where there was a natural bower in the midst of a thicket of copsewood; in that bower they were always wont to rest themselves, and had one day lately been somewhat surprised by a noise like that of a stifled cough, but they could not discover from whom or whence it proceeded; yet they did not suppose any to be in that wood but themselves, although it seemed to be somewhere near them.

Into this bower Rothesay wanted to lead Elizabeth as usual, but she objected to it, and said she was determined never more to go into that bower in his company. Rothesay said that since she had given him the hint, he would not presume upon her good nature any more; but added that he would not be denied that piece of confidence in his honour, especially as she knew that her commands were always sufficient to guide his conduct—a mandate he never dared to disobey, though his passion for her were even more violent than it had hitherto been. She said that might be all true, yet it was as good to give no occasion of putting that power to the test. However, by dint of raillery and promises of the most sacred regard to her *increasing delicacy*, he prevailed upon her to accompany him into the bower, where they sat them down upon the sward.

Rothesay began as usual to toy and trifle with her, while she in return rallied him in a witty and lightsome manner; but his amorous trifling soon wore to rudeness, and that rudeness began by degrees to manifest itself in a very unqualified manner. She bore with him and kept her temper as long as she could, making several efforts to leave him, which he always overcame. She uttered no reproach, but on seeing his purpose too fairly avouched, by a sudden exertion she disengaged herself from his embraces at once, flew away lightly into the wood, and left him standing in vexation and despair.

They had been watched all the time of this encounter by one who ought not to have seen them, and what was worse, who saw indistinctly through the brushwood, and judged of the matter quite otherwise than as it fell out, drawing conclusions the most abstract from propriety of conduct and the true character of the fair but thoughtless Elizabeth.

She was not gone above the space of one minute when Rothesay heard the noise of one rushing into the bower, and lifting up his eyes he beheld the old maniac, or palmer of the order of St. John, approaching him with rapid strides. "Get thee gone, old fanatic," said Rothesay; "what seekest *thou* here?" The words were scarcely pronounced ere Rothesay felt himself seized by a grasp which seemed to have the force of ten men united. It was the old palmer alone, who appeared to Rothesay at that time to be some infernal giant or devil incarnate, so far beyond all human comparison was the might of his arm. He dragged from his den the weak effeminate duke, who at first attempted to struggle with him; but his struggles were those of the kid in the paws of the lion. He next essayed to expostulate, and afterwards to cry out; but the monster prevented both by placing his foot upon the duke's neck, and crushing his face so close to the earth that he was unable to utter a sound. He then in the course of a few seconds bound his hands behind his back, run a cord about his neck, and tucked him up on a bough that bent above them. The maniac never all the while spoke a word, but sometimes gnashed his teeth over his victim in token of the most savage satisfaction.

As soon as he had fastened up the unfortunate duke, he ran into the wood to seek Elizabeth, who had gone to the eastward. He soon found her returning by another path to the castle; and laying hold of her in the same savage manner, he dragged her to the fatal spot. She had taken great offence at the late conduct of the duke, and had determined to suffer him no more to come into her presence; but when she saw him hanging in that degraded state she was benumbed with horror. "Thou monster!" said she, "who art thou who hast dared to perpetrate such an act as this?" "I will soon show thee who I am, poor, abandoned, unhappy wretch," said he; on which he threw off his cowl, beard, and gown, and her own husband stood before her. It was no spirit—no old fanatic palmer—it was the real identical Norman Hunter of Polmood—but in such a guise! "Now, what hast thou to say for thyself?" said he. "That I never yet in my life wronged thee," returned she, firmly. "Never wronged me! worthless, unconscionable minion! were not these charms, which were my right, denied

to me, and prostituted to others? For thee have I suffered the torments of the damned, and have delighted in their deeds. Thy scorn and perfidy have driven me to distraction, and now shalt thou reap the fruits of it. Long and patiently have I watched to discover thee prostituting thyself to one or other of thy paramours, that I might glut myself with vengeance; and now I have effected it: you shall hang together till the crows and the eagles devour you piecemeal."

Elizabeth was silent; for she saw that his frantic rage was not to be stayed—it seemed to redouble every moment. He threw her down, bound her hands and feet, and, with paralyzed and shaking hands, knitted the cord about her beauteous neck, and proceeded to hang her up beside her lifeless paramour.

It is impossible for the heart of man to conceive any scene more truly horrible than this. Polmood seems to have been completely raving mad; for he was all the while crying over her in the most rending agony—he was literally trembling and howling with despair, yet did he not for a moment stay his fatal purpose.

Elizabeth, when she made her escape from the violence of Rothesay in the bower, did not turn homeward, but held her course away to the east, until she came to a small mountain stream that bounded the wood. Carmichael was not at that time in the wood, but on the hill above it, when, to his joy and astonishment, he perceived her alone, washing her face in the brook, and adjusting some part of her dress. There were but two paths in the wood by which it was possible to pass through it from east to west, and one of these paths Carmichael knew she behoved to take in her way homeward.

Now it happened that the fatal bower was situated exactly at the point where these two paths approached nearest to each other. Toward this point did Carmichael haste with all the speed he could make, that he might intercept Elizabeth, whatever path she took, and bring her to an explanation. Judge what his sensations were when, bolting from a thicket, the unparalleled scene of horror, death, and madness was disclosed to his view. Rothesay was hanging quite dead, and already was the cord flung over the bough by which the beauteous Elizabeth was to be drawn up beside him. The inexorable ruffian had even laid hold of it, and begun to apply his sinewy strength, when Carmichael rushed forward with a loud cry of despair, and cut both the ropes by which they were suspended. Ere he had got this effected, Polmood grappled with him—cursed him in wrath, and gave him a tremendous blow with his fist. Carmichael returned the salute so lustily that his antagonist's mouth and nose gushed blood. Carmichael knew Polmood at first sight, for he was then unmasked; but Polmood did not recognize him through his disguise of a shepherd. He however grasped him closer, intent on revenge for his bold interference and emphatic retort. Carmichael well knew with whom he had to do, and how unable any man was to resist the arm of Polmood in a close struggle; therefore, by a sudden exertion, he wrenched himself from his hold—sprung a few paces back, and drew out his sword from beneath his gray plaid. During this last struggle Carmichael's bonnet had been knocked off, and, at the next glance, Polmood knew him. All his supposed injuries burst upon his remembrance at once, and this second discovery confirmed the whole of his former suspicions. When he saw it was Carmichael he uttered a loud howl for joy. "Ah! is it then so," said he, "the man of all the world whom I wished most to meet? Now shall all my wrongs be revenged at once. Heaven and hell, I thank you both for this!" and with that he gnashed his teeth, and uttered another maniac howl.

He lifted the sword which had belonged to Rothesay, and flew to the combat. He was deemed the best archer, the strongest man, and the best swordsman of his day. Carmichael was younger and more agile, but he wanted experience, consequently the chances were against him. The onset was inconceivably fierce—the opposition most desperate—and never perhaps was victory better contested; each depended on his own single arm for conquest, and on that alone. Carmichael lost ground, and by degrees gave way faster and faster, while his antagonist pressed him to the last: yet this seemed to have been done intentionally; for when they reached a little lawn where they had fair scope for sword-play, the former remained firm as a rock, and they fought for some minutes, almost foot to foot, with the most determined bravery. Carmichael won the first hit of any consequence. Polmood's fury and the distracted state of his mind seem to have given his opponent the advantage over him, for he first wounded him in the shoulder of the sword-arm, and in the very first or second turn thereafter ran him through the body.

Polmood fell, cursing Carmichael, Elizabeth, his wayward fortune, and all mankind; but, when he found his last moments approaching, he grew calm, sighed, and asked if Elizabeth was still alive. Carmichael did not know: "Haste," said he; "go and see; and if she is, I would speak with her—if she is not, I suppose we shall soon meet in circumstances miserable enough." Carmichael hastened to the spot where he had cut the two bodies from the tree; there he found the beauteous Elizabeth, living indeed, but in the most woeful and lamentable plight that ever lady was in. She was nothing hurt, for she had never been pulled from the ground. But there was she, lying stretched beside a strangled corpse, with her hands and feet bound, and a rope tied about her neck.

Carmichael wrapped her in his shepherd's plaid, for her own clothes were torn, and then loosed her in the gentlest manner he could, making use of the

most soothing terms all the while. But when he raised her, wrapped her in his plaid, and desired her to go and speak to her dying husband, he found that her senses were wandering, and that she was incapable of talking coherently to any one. He led her to the place where Polmood lay bleeding to death; but this new scene of calamity affected her not, nor did it even appear to draw her attention: her looks were fixed on vacancy, and she spoke neither good nor bad. Carmichael strove all that he could to convince the dying man of the injustice and ungenerosity of his suspicions with regard to Elizabeth, whose virtue he assured him was unspotted; and further said, that it was the consciousness of that alone which had led her to indulge in youthful levities, which both her own heart and the example of the court had taught her to view as perfectly innocent.

Polmood seemed to admit of this, but not to believe it; he however grasped her hand—bade her farewell, and said that he forgave her. "If you are innocent," said he, "what a wretch am I! but there is One who knows the secrets of all hearts, and to his mercy and justice I leave you. For my own part I leave this world without any hope; but things must be as they will—I have now no time for reparation. If you are innocent, Elizabeth, may you be happier than I could ever make you—happier than I wished to make you you never can be. But if you are not innocent, may all the curses of guilt fall on you—may you be miserable in this life, as you have made me; and miserable in the next, as I shall be." She was still incapable of reply. She sometimes appeared as forcing herself to listen, but her ideas would not be collected—she uttered some broken sentences, but they were totally unintelligible.

Carmichael then with some difficulty gained possession of a few leading circumstances relating to the two bodies that were found at the straits of Gameshope, one of which was taken for that of Polmood himself. The thread of the tale was not very palpable, for the dying chief could only then express himself in short unfinished sentences; but, as far as could be gathered, the circumstances seem to have been as follows.

Polmood had heard on the night before the hunt, as has been related, a confession of Rothesay's guilt from his own mouth. Nay, he had even heard him exult in his conquest, and speak of his host in the most contemptuous terms. This excited his rage to such a degree that he resolved to be revenged on the aggressor that day—he had vowed revenge, and imprecated the most potent curses on himself if Rothesay was ever suffered again to return under his roof. He watched him all the day of the hunt, but could never find an opportunity to challenge him, except in the midst of a crowd, where his revenge would have been frustrated. As it drew towards the evening he came to the ford of Gameshope, where he halted, judging that Rothesay and Hamilton must necessarily return by that pass, from the course he saw them take. He had waited but a short time, when he saw two riders approach, whom he conceived for certain to be Rothesay and Hamilton, whereas they were in truth Sir Patrick Hepburn and Donald of Lamington. Sir Patrick not only resembled Rothesay much in his personal appearance, but his horse was of the same colour, which Polmood did not know, or did not advert to. It was wearing late—the mist was dark and thick—the habiliments were in every respect similar. All these combined misled the blindly passionate and distracted Polmood so completely, that he had actually cleft the skull of the one, and given the other his death-wounds in self-defence, ere ever he was aware of his error.

Desperate cases suggest desperate remedies. As the only means of averting instant punishment, and accomplishing dire revenge on the real incendiaries, which swayed him much more than the love of life, he put his own sword in Lamington's hand, which he closed firm upon it, and his own sandals upon his feet: he then cut off the heads from the bodies, and hid them, being certain that no one could distinguish the trunks, and, as he deemed, so it fell out. The place where that fatal affray happened is called Donald's Cleuch to this day.

Polmood had now no way left of approaching his own castle but in disguise. Intent on executing his great purpose of revenge, he so effectually concealed himself under the cowl, beard, and weeds of a pilgrim monk, that he was enabled to stay in his own castle, get possession of his own keys, and watch all their motions without being suspected. The inexplicable mysteries of the ghost, and the murder of the two knights, being thus satisfactorily explained, the soul of the brave misguided Norman Hunter of Polmood forsook its earthly tenement, and left his giant mould a corpse in the wood that had so lately been his own.

Carmichael conducted Elizabeth home, committed her to the care of her women, and caused the two bodies to be brought and locked up in a chamber of the castle. He then went straight and threw himself at the king's feet, declaring the whole matter, and all the woeful devastation Polmood's jealousy had occasioned among his friends and followers. The king was exceedingly grieved for the loss of his brother, and more especially at the disgraceful manner in which he had been cut off; but as none knew the circumstances, save Carmichael and Elizabeth, they schemed to keep it secret, and they effected this in a great measure, by spreading a report that his death had happened in another quarter, to which he had been despatched in haste.

The king was soon convinced that no blame whatever could be attached to Carmichael, as he had slain his antagonist in his own defence, and in defence of a lady's life; and, after questioning him strictly, with respect to the disguises which he had

assumed, he was convinced that his motives throughout had been disinterested, generous, and honourable. In matters that related to gallantry and love, James was an easy judge, and was graciously pleased to take Sir John Carmichael again into his royal favour.

Elizabeth continued many days in a state of mind in which there seemed a considerable degree of derangement. She sometimes maintained, for whole days together, a dumb callous insensibility; at other times she spoke a good deal, but her speech was inconsistent. From that state, she sunk into a settled melancholy, and often wept bitterly when left alone. It appears that she then began to think much by herself—to reflect on her bypast life; and the more she pondered on it, the more fully was she convinced that she had done wrong. There was no particular action with which she could charge herself that was heinous; but, when these actions had occasioned so much bloodshed and woe, it was evident they had been far amiss. Her conclusion finally was, that the general tenor of her life had been manifestly wrong, and that though the line did not appear crooked or deformed, it had been stretched in a wrong direction.

These workings of the mind were sure preludes to feelings more tender than any she had hitherto experienced—more congenial to her nature, and more soothing to the female heart. Carmichael visited her every day for a whole year, without ever once mentioning love. Before this period had expired, it was needless to mention it; gratitude, the root from which female love springs, if that love is directed as it ought to be, so softened the heart of Elizabeth, and by degrees became so firmly knit to him, that she could not be happy when out of his company. They were at last married, and enjoyed, amid a blooming offspring, as much of happiness as this imperfect scene of existence can well be expected to confer.

Some may perhaps say that this tale is ill-conceived, unnatural, and that the moral of it is not palpable; but let it be duly considered, that he who sits down to write a novel or romance—to produce something that is merely the creation of his own fancy, may be obliged to conform to certain rules and regulations; while he who transmits the traditions of his country to others, does wrong, if he do not transmit them as they are. He may be at liberty to tell them in his own way, but he ought by all means to conform to the incidents as handed down to him; because the greater part of these stories have their foundation in truth. That which is true cannot be unnatural, as the incidents may always be traced from their first principles—the passions and various prejudices of men; and from every important occurrence in human life a moral may with certainty be drawn. And I would ask, if there is any moral with which it is of more importance to impress mankind than this?—That he who ventures upon the married state, without due regard to congeniality of dispositions, feelings, and pursuits, ventures upon a shoreless sea, with neither star nor rudder to direct his course. Never then was precept more strikingly illustrated by example, than in the incidents of the foregoing tale.

STORMS.

CHAPTER I.

STORMS constitute the various eras of the pastoral life. They are the red lines in the shepherd's manual—the remembrancers of years and ages that are past—the tablets of memory by which the ages of his children, the times of his ancestors, and the rise and downfall of families, are invariably ascertained. Even the progress of improvement in Scottish farming can be traced traditionally from these, and the rent of a farm or estate given with precision, before and after such and such a storm, though the narrator be uncertain in what century the said notable storm happened. "Mar's year," and "that year the hielanders raide," are but secondary mementoes to *the year nine*, and *the year forty*—these stand in bloody capitals in the annals of the pastoral life, as well as many more that shall hereafter be mentioned.

The most dismal of all those on record is *the thirteen drifty days*. This extraordinary storm, as near as I have been able to trace, must have occurred in the year 1620. The traditionary stories and pictures of desolation that remain of it, are the most dire imaginable; and the mentioning of the thirteen drifty days to an old shepherd, in a stormy night, never fails to impress his mind with a sort of religious awe, and often sets him on his knees before that Being who alone can avert such another calamity.

It is said, that for thirteen days and nights the snow-drift never once abated. The ground was covered with frozen snow when it commenced, and during all that time the sheep never broke their fast. The cold was intense to a degree never before remembered; and about the fifth and sixth days of the storm, the young sheep began to fall into a sleepy and torpid state, and all that were so affected in the evening died during the night. The intensity of the frost wind often cut them off when in that state quite instantaneously. About the ninth and tenth days, the shepherds began to build up huge semicircular walls of their dead, in order to afford some shelter for the remainder of the living; but this availed but little, for about the same time they were frequently seen tearing at one another's wool with their teeth.

When the storm abated, on the fourteenth day from its commencement, there was on many a high-lying farm not a living sheep to be seen. Large misshapen walls of dead, surrounding a small prostrate flock, likewise all dead, and frozen stiff in their lairs, were all that remained to cheer the forlorn shepherd and his master; and though on low-lying farms, where the snow was not so hard before, numbers of sheep weathered the storm, yet their constitutions received such a shock, that the greater part of them perished afterwards; and the final consequence was, that about nine-tenths of all the sheep in the south of Scotland were destroyed.

In the extensive pastoral district of Eskdale-moor, which maintains upwards of 20,000 sheep, it is said none were left alive, but forty young wedders on one farm, and five old ewes on another. The farm of Phaup remained without a stock and without a tenant for twenty years subsequent to the storm; at length, one very honest and liberal-minded man ventured to take a lease of it, at the annual rent of *a gray coat and a pair of hose*. It is now rented at £500. An extensive glen in Tweedsmuir, belonging to Sir James Montgomery, became a common at that time, to which any man drove his flocks that pleased, and it continued so for nearly a century. On one of Sir Patrick Scott of Thirlestane's farms, that keeps upwards of 900 sheep, they all died save one black ewe, from which the farmer had high hopes of preserving a breed; but some unlucky dogs, that were all laid idle for want of sheep to run at, fell upon this poor solitary remnant of a good stock, and chased her into the lake, where she was drowned. When word of this was brought to John Scott the farmer, commonly called Gouffin' Jock, he is reported to have expressed himself as follows: "Ochon, ochon! an' is that the gate o't?—a black beginning maks aye a black end." Then taking down an old rusty sword, he added, "Come thou away, my auld frien', thou an' I maun e'en stock Bourhope-law ance mair. Bossy, my dow, how gaes the auld sang!

> "'There's walth o' kye i' bonny Braidlees;
> There's walth o' ewes i' Tine;
> There's walth o' gear i' Gowanburn—
> An' they shall a' be thine.'"

It is a pity that tradition has not preserved anything farther of the history of Gouffin' Jock than this one saying.

The next memorable event of this nature is *the blast o' March*, which happened on the 24th day of that month, in the year 16—, on a Monday morning; and though it lasted only for one forenoon, it was calculated to have destroyed upwards of a thousand scores of sheep, as well as a number of shep-

herds. There is one anecdote of this storm that is worthy of being preserved, as it shows with how much attention shepherds, as well as sailors, should observe the appearances of the sky. The Sunday evening before was so warm, that the lasses went home from church barefoot, and the young men threw off their plaids and coats, and carried them over their shoulders. A large group of these younkers, going home from the church of Yarrow, equipped in this manner, chanced to pass by an old shepherd on the farm of Newhouse, named Walter Blake, who had all his sheep gathered into the side of a wood. They asked Wattie, who was a very religious man, what could have induced him to gather his sheep on the Sabbath-day? He answered, that he had seen an ill-hued weather-gaw that morning, and was afraid it was going to be a drift. They were so much amused at Wattie's apprehensions, that they clapped their hands, and laughed at him, and one pert girl cried, "Ay, fie, tak' care, Wattie; I widna say but it may be thrapple deep or the morn." Another asked, "If he wasna rather feared for the sun burning the een out o' their heads?" and a third, "if he didna keep a correspondence wi' the thieves, an' kend they were to ride that night?" Wattie was obliged to bear all this, for the evening was fine beyond anything generally seen at that season, and only said to them at parting, "Weel, weel, callans, time will try a'; let him laugh that wins; but slacks will be sleek, a hogg for the howking; we'll a' get horns to tout on the morn." The saying grew proverbial; but Wattie was the only man who saved the whole of his flock in that country.

The years 1709, 1740, and 1772, were all likewise notable years for severity, and for the losses sustained among the flocks of sheep. In the latter, the snow lay from the middle of December until the middle of April, and all the time hard frozen. Partial thaws always kept the farmer's hopes of relief alive, and thus prevented him from removing his sheep to a lower situation, till at length they grew so weak that they could not be removed. There has not been such a general loss in the days of any man living as in that year. It is by these years that all subsequent hard winters have been measured, and of late by that of 1795; and when the balance turns out in favour of the calculator, there is always a degree of thankfulness expressed, as well as a composed submission to the awards of Divine Providence. The daily feeling naturally impressed on the shepherd's mind, that all his comforts are so entirely in the hand of Him who rules the elements, contributes not a little to that firm spirit of devotion for which the Scottish shepherd is so distinguished. I know of no scene so impressive, as that of a family sequestered in a lone glen during the time of a winter storm; and where is the glen in the kingdom that wants such a habitation? There they are left to the protection of Heaven, and they know and feel it. Throughout all the wild vicissitudes of nature they have no hope of assistance from man, but are conversant with the Almighty alone. Before retiring to rest, the shepherd uniformly goes out to examine the state of the weather, and makes his report to the little dependent group within; nothing is to be seen but the conflict of the elements, nor heard but the raving of the storm: then they all kneel around him, while he recommends them to the protection of Heaven; and though their little hymn of praise can scarcely be heard even by themselves, as it mixes with the roar of the tempest, they never fail to rise from their devotions with their spirits cheered and their confidence renewed, and go to sleep with an exaltation of mind of which kings and conquerors have no share. Often have I been a partaker in such scenes; and never, even in my youngest years, without having my heart deeply impressed by the circumstances. There is a sublimity in the very idea. There we lived, as it were, inmates of the cloud and the storm; but we stood in a relationship to the Ruler of these, that neither time nor eternity could ever cancel. Woe to him that would weaken the bonds with which true Christianity connects us with Heaven and with each other!

But of all the storms that ever Scotland witnessed, or I hope ever will again behold, there is none of them that can once be compared with the memorable 24th of January, 1794, which fell with such peculiar violence on that division of the south of Scotland that lies between Crawford-muir and the border. In these bounds seventeen shepherds perished, and upwards of thirty were carried home insensible, who afterwards recovered; but the number of sheep that were lost far outwent any possibility of calculation. One farmer alone, Mr. Thomas Beattie, lost seventy-two scores for his own share; and many others, in the same quarter, from thirty to forty scores each. Whole flocks were overwhelmed with snow, and no one ever knew where they were till the snow was dissolved, when they were all found dead. I myself witnessed one particular instance of this on the farm of Thickside; there were twelve scores of excellent ewes, all one age, that were missing there all the time that the snow lay, which was only a week, and no traces of them could be found; when the snow went away, they were discovered all lying dead, with their heads one way, as if a flock of sheep had dropped dead going from the washing. Many hundreds were driven into waters, burns, and lakes, by the violence of the storm, where they were buried or frozen up, and these the flood carried away, so that they were never seen or found by the owners at all. The following anecdote somewhat illustrates the confusion and devastation that it bred in the country. The greater part of the rivers on which the storm was most deadly, run into the Solway Frith, on which there is a place called *the Beds of Esk*, where the tide throws out, and leaves whatsoever is carried into it by the rivers. When the flood after the storm sub-

sided, there were found on that place, and the shores adjacent, 1840 sheep, nine black cattle, three horses, two men, one woman, forty-five dogs, and one hundred and eighty hares, besides a number of meaner animals.

To relate all the particular scenes of distress that occurred during this tremendous hurricane is impossible—a volume would not contain them. I shall, therefore, in order to give a true picture of the storm, merely relate what I saw, and shall in nothing exaggerate. But before doing this, I must mention a circumstance, curious in its nature, and connected with others that afterwards occurred.

Some time previous to that, a few young shepherds (of whom I was one, and the youngest, though not the least ambitious of the number), had formed themselves into a sort of literary society, which met periodically, at one or other of the houses of its members, where each read an essay on a subject previously given out; and after that, every essay was minutely investigated and criticized. We met in the evening, and continued our important discussions all night. Friday, the 23d of January, was the day appointed for one of these meetings, and it was to be held at Entertrony, a wild and remote shieling, at the very source of the Ettrick, and afterwards occupied by my own brother. I had the honour of having been named as preses—so, leaving the charge of my flock with my master, off I set from Blackhouse, on Thursday, a very ill day, with a flaming bombastical essay in my pocket, and my tongue trained to many wise and profound remarks, to attend this extraordinary meeting, though the place lay at the distance of twenty miles, over the wildest hills in the kingdom, and the time the depth of winter. I remained that night with my parents at Ettrick House, and next day again set out on my journey. I had not, however, proceeded far, before I perceived, or thought I perceived, symptoms of an approaching storm, and that of no ordinary nature. I remember the day well: the wind, which was rough on the preceding day, had subsided into a dead calm; there was a slight fall of snow, which descended in small thin flakes, that seemed to hover and reel in the air, as if uncertain whether to go upward or downward; the hills were covered down to the middle in deep folds of rime or frost-fog; in the cloughs the fog was dark, dense, and seemed as if it were heaped and crushed together, but on the brows of the hills it had a pale and fleecy appearance, and, altogether, I never beheld a day of such gloomy aspect. A thought now began to intrude itself on me, though I strove all that I could to get quit of it, that it would be a wise course in me to return home to my sheep. Inclination urged me on, and I tried to bring reason to her aid, by saying to myself, "I have no reason in the world to be afraid of my sheep; my master took the charge of them cheerfully; there is not a better shepherd in the kingdom, and I cannot doubt his concern in having them right." All would not do: I stood still and contemplated the day, and the more closely I examined it, the more was I impressed that some mischief was a-brewing; so, with a heavy heart, I turned on my heel, and made the best of my way back the road I came: my elaborate essay, and all my wise observations, had come to nothing.

On my way home I called at a place named the Hope-house, to see a maternal uncle whom I loved; he was angry when he saw me, and said it was not like a prudent lad to be running up and down the country in such weather, and at such a season; and urged me to make haste home, for it would be a drift before the morn. He accompanied me to the top of the height called the Black Gatehead, and on parting, he shook his head, and said, "Ah! it is a dangerous looking day! In troth I'm amaist fear'd to look at it." I said I would not mind it, if any one knew from what quarter the storm would arise; but we might, in all likelihood, gather our sheep to the place where they would be most exposed to danger. He bade me keep a good look out all the way home, and wherever I observed the first opening through the rime, to be assured the wind would rise directly from that point. I did as he desired me, but the clouds continued close set all around, till the fall of evening; and as the snow had been accumulating all day, so as to render walking very unfurthersome, it was that time before I reached home. The first thing I did was to go to my master and inquire where he had left my sheep; he told me, but though I had always the most perfect confidence in his experience, I was not pleased with what he had done. He had left a part of them far too high out on the hills, and the rest were not where I wanted them, and I told him so: he said he had done all for the best, but if there appeared to be any danger, if I would call him up in the morning, he would assist me. We had two beautiful servant girls, and with them I sat chattering till past eleven o'clock, and then I went down to the old tower. What could have taken me to that ruinous habitation of the Black Douglasses at that untimeous hour I cannot recollect, but it certainly must have been from a supposition that one of the girls would follow me, or else that I would see a hare—both very unlikely events to have taken place on such a night. However, certain it is, that there I was at midnight, and it was while standing on the top of the staircase turret, that I first beheld a bright bore through the clouds, towards the north, which reminded me of my uncle's apophthegm. But at the same time a smart thaw had commenced, and the breeze seemed to be rising from the south, so that I laughed in my heart at his sage rule, and accounted it quite absurd. Short was the time till awful experience told me how true it was.

I then went to my bed in the byre loft, where I slept with a neighbour shepherd, named Borthwick; but though fatigued with walking through the snow,

I could not close an eye, so that I heard the first burst of the storm, which commenced between one and two, with a fury that no one can conceive who does not remember it. Besides, the place where I lived being exposed to two or three gathered winds, as they are called by shepherds, the storm raged there with redoubled violence. It began all at once, with such a tremendous roar, that I imagined it was a peal of thunder, until I felt the house trembling to its foundation. In a few minutes I went and thrust my naked arm through a hole in the roof, in order, if possible, to ascertain what was going on without, for not a ray of light could I see. I could not then, nor can I yet, express my astonishment. So completely was the air overloaded with falling and driving snow, that but for the force of the wind, I felt as if I had thrust my arm into a wreath of snow. I deemed it a judgment sent from Heaven upon us, and lay down again in my bed, trembling with agitation. I lay still for about an hour, in hopes that it might prove only a temporary hurricane; but, hearing no abatement of its fury, I awakened Borthwick, and bade him get up, for such a night or morning had come on, as never blew from the heavens. He was not long in obeying, for as soon as he heard the turmoil, he started from his bed, and in one minute, throwing on his clothes, he hasted down the ladder, and opened the door, where he stood for a good while, uttering exclamations of astonishment. The door where he stood was not above fourteen yards from the door of the dwelling-house, but a wreath was already amassed between them, as high as the walls of the house—and in trying to get round or through this, Borthwick lost himself, and could neither find the house nor his way back to the byre, and about six minutes after, I heard him calling my name, in a shrill desperate tone of voice, at which I could not refrain from laughing immoderately, notwithstanding the dismal prospect that lay before us; for I heard, from his cries, where he was. He had tried to make his way over the top of a large dunghill, but going to the wrong side, had fallen over, and wrestled long among snow, quite over the head. I did not think proper to move to his assistance, but lay still, and shortly after heard him shouting at the kitchen door for instant admittance: still I kept my bed for about three quarters of an hour longer; and then, on reaching the house with much difficulty, found our master, the ploughman, Borthwick, and the two servant maids, sitting round the kitchen fire, with looks of dismay, I may almost say despair. We all agreed at once, that the sooner we were able to reach the sheep, the better chance we had to save a remnant; and as there were eight hundred excellent ewes, all in one lot, but a long way distant, and the most valuable lot of any on the farm, we resolved to make a bold effort to reach them. Our master made family worship, a duty he never neglected; but that morning, the manner in which we manifested our trust and confidence in Heaven, was particularly affecting. We took our breakfast—stuffed our pockets with bread and cheese—sewed our plaids around us—tied down our hats with napkins coming below our chins—and each taking a strong staff in his hand, we set out on the attempt.

No sooner was the door closed behind us than we lost sight of each other—seeing there was none; it was impossible for a man to see his hand held up before him, and it was still two hours till day. We had no means of keeping together but by following one another's voices, nor of working our way save by groping with our staves before us. It soon appeared to me a hopeless concern, for ere ever we got clear of the houses and haystacks we had to roll ourselves over two or three wreaths which it was impossible to wade through; and all the while the wind and drift were so violent that every three or four minutes we were obliged to hold our faces down between our knees to recover our breath.

We soon got into an eddying wind that was altogether insufferable, and at the same time we were struggling among snow so deep that our progress in the way we purposed going was indeed very equivocal, for we had by this time lost all idea of east, west, north, or south. Still we were as busy as men determined on a business could be, and persevered on we knew not whither, sometimes rolling over the snow and sometimes weltering in it to the chin. The following instance of our successful exertions marks our progress to a tittle. There was an inclosure around the house to the westward, which we denominated *the park*, as is customary in Scotland. When we went away we calculated that it was two hours until day; the park did not extend above three hundred yards, and we were still engaged in that *park* when daylight appeared.

When we got free of the park we also got free of the eddy of the wind—it was now straight in our faces. We went in a line before each other, and changed places every three or four minutes, and at length, after great fatigue, we reached a long ridge of a hill where the snow was thinner, having been blown off it by the force of the wind, and by this time we had hopes of reaching within a short space of the ewes, which were still a mile and a half distant. Our master had taken the lead; I was next him, and soon began to suspect from the depth of the snow that he was leading us quite wrong; but as we always trusted implicitly to him who was foremost for the time, I said nothing for a good while, until satisfied that we were going in a direction very nearly right opposite to that we intended. I then tried to expostulate with him, but he did not seem to understand what I said, and on getting a glimpse of his countenance I perceived that it was quite altered. Not to alarm the others nor even himself, I said I was becoming terribly fatigued, and proposed that we should lean on the snow and take each a mouthful of whisky (for I had brought a small bottle

in my pocket for fear of the worst) and a bite of bread and cheese. This was unanimously agreed to, and I noted that he drank the spirits rather eagerly, a thing not usual with him, and when he tried to eat it was long before he could swallow anything. I was convinced that he would fail altogether; but as it would have been easier to have got him to the shepherd's house before us than home again, I made no proposal for him to return. On the contrary I said if they would trust themselves entirely to me I would engage to lead them to the ewes without going a foot out of the way; the other two agreed to it, and acknowledged that they knew not where they were, but he never opened his mouth, nor did he speak a word for two hours thereafter. It had only been a temporary exhaustion, however; for after that he recovered, and wrought till night as well as any of us, though he never could recollect a single circumstance that occurred during that part of our way, nor a word that was said, nor of having got any refreshment whatever.

At half an hour after ten we reached the flock, and just in time to save them; but before that both Borthwick and the ploughman had lost their hats, notwithstanding all their precautions; and to impede us still further I went inadvertently over a precipice, and going down head foremost between the scaur and the snow found it impossible to extricate myself, for the more I struggled I went the deeper. For all our troubles I heard Borthwick above convulsed with laughter; he thought he had got the affair of the dunghill paid back. Through holding by one another and letting down a plaid to me they hauled me up, but I was terribly incommoded by snow that had got inside my clothes.

The ewes were standing in a close body; one half of them were covered over with snow to the depth of ten feet, the rest were jammed against a brae. We knew not what to do for spades to dig them out; but to our agreeable astonishment, when those before were removed, they had been so close pent together as to be all touching one another, and they walked out from below the snow after their neighbours in a body. If the snow-wreath had not broke and crumbled down upon a few that were hindmost, we should have got them all out without putting a hand to them. This was effecting a good deal more than I or any of the party expected a few hours before: there were one hundred ewes in another place near by, but of these we could only get out a very few, and lost all hopes of saving the rest.

It was now wearing towards mid-day, and there were occasionally short intervals in which we could see about us for perhaps a score of yards; but we got only one momentary glance of the hills around us all that day. I grew quite impatient to be at my own charge, and leaving the rest I went away to them by myself, that is, I went to the division that was left far out on the hills, while our master and the ploughman volunteered to rescue those that were down on the lower ground. I found mine in miserable circumstances; but making all possible exertion I got out about one half of them, which I left in a place of safety and made towards home, for it was beginning to grow dark, and the storm was again raging without any mitigation in all its darkness and deformity. I was not the least afraid of losing my way, for I knew all the declivities of the hill so well that I could have come home with my eyes bound up, and indeed long ere I got home they were of no use to me. I was terrified for the water (Douglas Burn), for in the morning it was flooded and gorged up with snow in a dreadful manner, and I judged that it would be quite impassable. At length I came to a place where I thought the water should be, and fell a boring and groping for it with my long staff:—No; I could find no water, and began to dread that for all my accuracy I had gone wrong. I was greatly astonished; and standing still to consider, I looked up towards heaven, I shall not say for what cause, and to my utter amazement thought I beheld trees over my head flourishing abroad over the whole sky. I never had seen such an optical delusion before; it was so like enchantment that I knew not what to think, but dreaded that some extraordinary thing was coming over me, and that I was deprived of my right senses. I remember I thought the storm was a great judgment sent on us for our sins, and that this strange phantasy was connected with it, an illusion effected by evil spirits. I stood a good while in this painful trance; at length, on making a bold exertion to escape from the fairy vision I came all at once in contact with the old tower. Never in my life did I experience such a relief; I was not only all at once freed from the fairies, but from the dangers of the gorged river. I had come over it on some mountain of snow, I knew not how nor where, nor do I know to this day. So that, after all, they were trees that I saw, and trees of no great magnitude; but their appearance to my eyes it is impossible to describe. I thought they flourished abroad, not for miles, but for hundreds of miles, to the utmost verges of the visible heavens. Such a day and such a night may the eye of a shepherd never again behold.

CHAPTER II.

"That night a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand."

On reaching home I found our women folk sitting in woeful plight. It is well known how wonderfully acute they generally are either at raising up imaginary evils or magnifying those that exist; and ours had made out a theory so fraught with misery and distress that the poor things were quite overwhelmed with grief. "There were none of us ever

to see the house again *in life*. There was no possibility of the thing happening, all circumstances considered. There was not a sheep in the country to be saved, nor a single shepherd left alive—nothing but *women!* and there they were left, three poor helpless creatures, and the men lying dead out among the snow and none to bring them home. Lord help them! what was to become of them?" They perfectly agreed in all this; there was no dissenting voice; and their prospects still continuing to darken with the fall of night, they had no other resource left them long before my arrival but to lift up their voices and weep. The group consisted of a young lady, our master's niece, and two servant girls, all of the same age, and beautiful as three spring days, every one of which are mild and sweet but differ only a little in brightness. No sooner had I entered than every tongue and every hand was put in motion, the former to pour forth queries faster than six tongues of men could answer them with any degree of precision, and the latter to rid me of the encumbrances of snow and ice with which I was loaded. One slit up the sewing of my frozen plaid, another brushed the icicles from my locks, and a third unloosed my clotted snow-boots. We all arrived within a few minutes of each other, and all shared the same kind offices, and heard the same kind inquiries and long string of perplexities narrated; even our dogs shared their caresses and ready assistance in ridding them of the frozen snow, and the dear consistent creatures were six times happier than if no storm or danger had existed. Let no one suppose that, even amid toils and perils, the shepherd's life is destitute of enjoyment.

Borthwick had found his way home without losing his aim in the least. I had deviated but little, save that I lost the river, and remained a short time in the country of the fairies: but the other two had a hard struggle for life. They went off, as I said formerly, in search of seventeen scores of my flock that had been left in a place not far from the house; but being unable to find one of them, in searching for these, they lost themselves while it was yet early in the afternoon. They supposed that they had gone by the house very near to it, for they had toiled till dark among deep snow in the burn below; and if John Burnet, a neighbouring shepherd, had not heard them calling, and found and conducted them home, it would have stood hard with them indeed, for none of us would have looked for them in that direction. They were both very much exhausted, and the goodman could not speak above his breath that night.

Next morning the sky was clear, but a cold intemperate wind still blew from the north. The face of the country was entirely altered. The form of every hill was changed, and new mountains leaned over every valley. All traces of burns, rivers, and lakes were obliterated, for the frost had been commensurate with the storm, and such as had never been witnessed in Scotland. Some registers which I have seen place this storm on the 24th of December, a month too early, but that day was one of the finest winter days I ever saw.

There having been 340 of my flock that had never been found at all during the preceding day, as soon as the morning dawned we set all out to look after them. It was a hideous-looking scene—no one could cast his eyes around him and entertain any conception of sheep being saved. It was one picture of desolation. There is a deep glen that lies between Blackhouse and Dryhope, called the Hawkshaw Cleuch, which is full of trees. There was not the top of one of them to be seen. This may convey some idea how the country looked; and no one can suspect that I would state circumstances otherwise than they were, when there are so many persons living that could confute me.

When we came to the ground where these sheep should have been, there was not one of them above the snow. Here and there, at a great distance from each other, we could perceive the head or horns of stragglers appearing, and these were easily got out; but when we had collected these few, we could find no more. They had been all lying abroad in a scattered state when the storm came on, and were covered over just as they had been lying. It was on a kind of slanting ground that lay half beneath the wind, and the snow was uniformly from six to eight feet deep. Under this the hoggs were lying scattered over at least 100 acres of heathery ground. It was a very ill-looking concern. We went about boring with our long poles, and often did not find one hogg in a quarter of an hour. But at length a white shaggy colley, named Sparkie, that belonged to the cow-herd boy, seemed to have comprehended something of our perplexity, for we observed him plying and scraping in the snow with great violence, and always looking over his shoulder to us. On going to the spot, we found that he had marked straight above a sheep. From that he flew to another, and so on to another, as fast as we could dig them out, and ten times faster, for he sometimes had twenty or thirty holes marked beforehand.

We got out 300 of that division before night, and about half as many on the other parts of the farm, in addition to those we had rescued the day before; and the greater part of these would have been lost had it not been for the voluntary exertions of Sparkie. Before the snow went away (which lay only eight days) we had got every sheep on the farm out, either dead or alive, except four; and that these were not found was not Sparkie's blame, for though they were buried below a mountain of snow at least fifty feet deep, he had again and again marked on the top of it above them. The sheep were all living when we found them, but those that were buried in the snow to a certain depth, being, I suppose, in a warm, half suffocated state, though on being taken out they bounded away like roes, yet the sudden

change of atmosphere instantly paralyzed them, and they fell down deprived of all power in their limbs. We had great numbers of these to carry home and feed with the hand, but others that were very deep buried, died outright in a few minutes. We did not however lose above sixty in all, but I am certain Sparkie saved us at least 200.

We were for several days utterly ignorant how affairs stood with the country around us, all communication between farms being cut off, at least all communication with such a wild place as that in which I lived; but John Burnet, a neighbouring shepherd on another farm, was remarkably good at picking up the rumours that were afloat in the country, which he delighted to circulate without abatement. Many people tell their stories by halves, and in a manner so cold and indifferent, that the purport can scarcely be discerned, and if it is, cannot be believed; but that was not the case with John: he gave them with *interest*, and we were very much indebted to him for the intelligence which we daily received that week; for no sooner was the first brunt of the tempest got over, than John made a point of going off at a tangent every day, to learn and bring us word what was going on. The accounts were most dismal; the country was a charnel-house. The first day he brought us tidings of the loss of thousands of sheep, and likewise of the death of Robert Armstrong, a neighbour shepherd, one whom we all well knew, he having but lately left the Blackhouse to herd on another farm. He died not above 300 paces from a farm-house, while at the same time it was known to them all that he was there. His companion left him at a dike-side, and went in to procure assistance; yet, nigh as it was, they could not reach him, though they attempted it again and again; and at length they were obliged to return, and suffer him to perish at the side of the dike. There were three of my own intimate acquaintances who perished that night. There was another shepherd named Watt, the circumstances of whose death were peculiarly affecting. He had been to see his sweetheart on the night before, with whom he had finally agreed and settled everything about their marriage; but it so happened, in the inscrutable awards of Providence, that at the very time when the banns of his marriage were proclaimed in the church of Moffat, his companions were carrying him home a corpse from the hill.

It may not be amiss here to remark, that it was a received opinion all over the country, that sundry lives were lost, and a great many more endangered, by the administering of ardent spirits to the sufferers, while in a state of exhaustion. It was a practice against which I entered my vehement protest, nevertheless the voice of the multitude should never be disregarded. A little bread and sweet milk, or even a little bread and cold water, it was said, proved a much safer restorative in the fields. There is no denying, that there were some who took a glass of spirits that night who never spoke another word, even though they were continuing to walk and converse when their friends found them.

On the other hand, there was one woman who left her children, and followed her husband's dog, who brought her to his master lying in a state of insensibility. He had fallen down bareheaded among the snow, and was all covered over, save one corner of his plaid. She had nothing better to take with her, when she set out, than a bottle of sweet milk and a little oatmeal cake, and yet with the help of these, she so far recruited his spirits as to get him safe home, though not without long and active perseverance. She took two little vials with her, and in these she heated the milk in her bosom. That man would not be disposed to laugh at the silliness of the fair sex for some time.

It is perfectly unaccountable how easily people died that night. The frost must certainly have been prodigious; so intense as to have seized momentarily on the vitals of those who overheated themselves by wading and toiling too impatiently among the snow, a thing very apt to be done. I have conversed with five or six that were carried home in a state of insensibility that night, who never would again have moved from the spot where they lay, and were only brought to life by rubbing and warm applications; and they uniformly declared that they felt no kind of pain or debility, further than an irresistible desire to sleep. Many fell down, while walking and speaking, in a sleep so sound as to resemble torpidity; and there is little doubt that those who perished slept away in the same manner. I knew a man well, whose name was Andrew Murray, that perished in the snow on Minchmoor; and he had taken it so deliberately, that he had buttoned his coat and folded his plaid, which he had laid beneath his head for a bolster.

But it is now time to return to my notable literary society. In spite of the hideous appearances that presented themselves, the fellows actually met, all save myself, in that solitary shieling before mentioned. It is easy to conceive how they were confounded and taken by surprise, when the storm burst forth on them in the middle of the night, while they were in the heat of sublime disputation. There can be little doubt that there was part of loss sustained in their respective flocks, by reason of that meeting; but this was nothing, compared with the obloquy to which they were subjected on another account, and one which will scarcely be believed, even though the most part of the members be yet alive to bear testimony to it.

The storm was altogether an unusual convulsion of nature. Nothing like it had ever been seen or heard of among us before; and it was enough of itself to arouse every spark of superstition that lingered among these mountains. It did so. It was universally viewed as a judgment sent by God for the punishment of some heinous offence, but what

THE BLEEPING REGOTED.

Storms

[illegible]

that offence was, could not for a while be ascertained; but when it came out, that so many men had been assembled in a lone unfrequented place, and busily engaged in some mysterious work at the very instant that the blast came on, no doubts were entertained that all had not been proper there, and that some horrible rite, or correspondence with the powers of darkness, had been going on. It so happened, too, that this shieling of Entertrony was situated in the very vortex of the storm; the devastations made by it extended all around that to a certain extent, and no farther on any one quarter than another. This was easily and soon remarked; and, upon the whole, the first view of the matter had rather an equivocal appearance to those around who had suffered so severely by it.

But still as the rumour grew, the certainty of the event gained ground—new corroborative circumstances were every day divulged, till the whole district was in an uproar, and several of the members began to meditate a speedy retreat from the country: some of them, I know, would have fled, if it had not been for the advice of the late worthy and judicious Mr. Bryden of Crosslee. The first intimation that I had of it was from my friend John Burnet, who gave it me with his accustomed energy and full assurance. He came over one evening, and I saw by his face he had some great news. I think I remember, as I well may, every word that passed between us on the subject.

"Weel, chap," said he to me, "we hae fund out what has been the cause of a' this mischief now."

"What do you mean, John?"

"What do I mean?—It seems that a great squad o' birkies that ye are conneckit wi', had met that night at the herd's house o' Everhaup, an' had raised the deil among them."

Every countenance in the kitchen changed; the women gazed at John, and then at me, and their lips grew white. These kinds of feelings are infectious, let people say what they will; fear begets fear as naturally as light springs from reflection. I reasoned stoutly at first against the veracity of the report, observing that it was utter absurdity, and a shame and disgrace for the country to cherish such a ridiculous lie.

"Lie!" said John, "it's nae lie; they had him up amang them like a great rough dog at the very time that the tempest began, and were glad to draw cuts, and gie him ane o' their number to get quit o' him again." How every hair of my head, and inch of my frame crept at hearing this sentence! for I had a dearly beloved brother who was of the number, several full cousins and intimate acquaintances; indeed I looked upon the whole fraternity as my brethren, and considered myself involved in all their transactions. I could say no more in defence of the society's proceedings; for, to tell the truth, though I am ashamed to acknowledge it, I suspected that the allegation might be too true.

"Has the deil actually ta'en awa ane o' them bodily?" said Jean. "He has that," returned John, "an' it's thought the skaith wadna hae been grit, had he ta'en twa or three mae o' them. Base villains! that the hale country should hae to suffer for their pranks! But, however, the law's to tak its course on them; an' they'll find, ere a' the play be played, that he has need of a lang spoon that sups wi' the deil."

The next day John brought us word that it was *only* the servant maid that the *ill thief* had ta'en away; and the next again, that it was actually Bryden of Glenkerry; but finally he was obliged to inform us "That a' was exactly true as it was first tauld, but only that Jamie Bryden, after being awanting for some days, had casten up again."

There has been nothing since that time that has caused such a ferment in the country—nought else could be talked of; and grievous was the blame attached to those who had the temerity to raise up the devil to waste the land. Legal proceedings, it is said, were meditated and attempted; but lucky it was for the shepherds that they agreed to no reference, for such were the feelings of the country, and the opprobrium in which the act was held, that it is likely it would have fared very ill with them—at all events it would have required an arbiter of some decision and uprightness to have dared to oppose them. Two men were sent to come to the house as by chance, and endeavour to learn from the shepherd, and particularly from the servant-maid, what grounds there were for inflicting legal punishments; but before that happened I had the good luck to hear her examined myself, and that in a way by which all suspicions were put to rest, and simplicity and truth left to war with superstition alone. I deemed it very curious at the time, and shall give it verbatim as nearly as I can recollect.

Being all impatience to learn particulars, as soon as the waters abated, so as to become fordable, I hasted over to Ettrick, and the day being fine, I found numbers of people astir on the same errand with myself—the valley was moving with people, gathered in from the glens around, to hear and relate the dangers and difficulties that were just overpassed. Among others the identical girl who served with the shepherd in whose house the scene of the meeting took place, had come down to Ettrick school-house to see her parents. Her name was Mary Beattie, a beautiful sprightly lass, about twenty years of age; and if the devil had taken her in preference to any one of the shepherds, his good taste could scarcely have been disputed. The first person I met was my friend, the late Mr. James Anderson, who was as anxious to hear what had passed at the meeting as I was, so we two contrived a scheme whereby we thought we would hear everything from the girl's own mouth.

We sent word to the school-house for Mary to call at my father's house on her return up the water, as

there was a parcel to go to Phawhope. She came accordingly, and when we saw her approaching we went into a little sleeping apartment where we could hear everything that passed, leaving directions with my mother how to manage the affair. My mother herself was in perfect horrors about the business, and believed it all; as for my father, he did not say much either the one way or the other, but bit his lip, and remarked that "fo'k would find it was an ill thing to hae to do wi' *the enemy*."

My mother would have managed extremely well had her own early prejudices in favour of the doctrine of all kinds of apparitions not got the better of her. She was very kind to the girl, and talked with her about the storm, and the events that had occurred, till she brought the subject of the meeting forward herself, on which the following dialogue commenced:—

"But dear Mary, my woman, what were the chiels a' met about that night?"

"O, they were just gaun through their papers an' arguing."

"Arguing! what were they arguing about?"

"I have often thought about it sin' syne, but really I canna tell precisely what they were arguing about."

"Were you wi' them a' the time?"

"Yes, a' the time, but the wee while I was milkin' the cow."

"An' did they never bid you gang out?"

"O no; they never heedit whether I gaed out or in."

"It's queer that ye canna mind ought ava—can ye no tell me ae word that ye heard them say?"

"I heard them sayin' something about the fitness o' things."

"Ay, that was a braw subject for them! But, Mary, did you no hear them sayin' nae ill words?"

"No."

"Did you no hear them speaking naething about the deil?"

"Very little."

"What were they saying about *him?*"

"I thought I ainee heard Jamie Fletcher saying there was nae deil ava."

"Ah! the unwordy rascal! How durst he for the life o' him! I wonder he didna think shame."

"I fear aye he's something regardless, Jamie."

"I hope nane that belongs to me will ever join him in his wickedness! But tell me, Mary, my woman, did ye no see nor hear naething uncanny about the house yoursel that night?"

"There was something like a plover cried twice i' the peat-neuk, in at the side o' Will's bed."

"A plover! His presence be about us! There was never a plover at this time o' the year. And in the house too! Ah, Mary, I'm feared and concerned about that night's wark! What thought ye it was that cried?"

"I didna ken what it was, it cried just like a plover."

"Did the callans look as they were fear'd when they heard it?"

"They lookit gayan' queer."

"What did they say?"

"Ane cried, 'What is that?' an' another said, 'What can it mean?' 'Hout,' quo' Jamie Fletcher, 'it's just some bit stray bird that has lost itsel.' 'I dinna ken,' quo' your Will, 'I dinna like it unco weel.'"

"Think ye did nane o' the rest see anything?"

"I believe there was something seen."

"What was't?" (in a half whisper with manifest alarm.)

"When Will gaed out to try if he could gang to the sheep, he met wi' a great big rough dog, that had very near worn him into a linn in the water."

My mother was now deeply affected, and after two or three smothered exclamations, she fell a whispering; the other followed her example, and shortly after they rose and went out, leaving my friend and me very little wiser than we were, for we had heard both these incidents before with little variation. I accompanied Mary to Phawhope, and met with my brother, who soon convinced me of the falsehood and absurdity of the whole report; but I was grieved to find him so much cast down and distressed about it. None of them durst well show their faces at either kirk or market for a whole year and more. The weather continuing fine, we two went together and perambulated Eskdale Moor, visiting the principal scenes of carnage among the flocks, where we saw multitudes of men skinning and burying whole droves of sheep, taking with them only the skins and tallow.

I shall now conclude this long account of the storm and its consequences by an extract from a poet for whose works I always feel disposed to have a great partiality; and whoever reads the above will not doubt on what incident the description is founded, nor yet deem it greatly overcharged.

. . . . . .

"Who was it reared these whelming waves?
Who scalp'd the brows of old Cairn Gorm,
And scoop'd these ever-yawning caves?
'Twas I, the Spirit of the Storm!

He waved his sceptre north away,
The arctic ring was rift asunder;
And through the heaven the startling bray
Burst louder than the loudest thunder.

The feathery clouds, condensed and furled,
In columns swept the quaking glen;
Destruction down the dale was hurled,
O'er bleating flocks and wondering men.

The Grampians groan'd beneath the storm;
New mountains o'er the Correi lean'd;
Ben Nevis shook his shaggy form,
And wonder'd what his Sovereign mean'd.

Even far on Yarrow's fairy dale,
The shepherd paused in dumb dismay;
And cries of spirits in the gale
Lured many a pitying hind away.

The Lowthers felt the tyrant's wrath;
  Proud Hartfell quaked beneath his brand;
And Cheviot heard the cries of death,
  Guarding his loved Northumberland.

But O, as fell that fateful night,
  What horrors Avin wilds deform,
And choke the ghastly lingering light!
  There whirled the vortex of the storm.

Ere morn the wind grew deadly still,
  And dawning in the air up-drew
From many a shelve and shining hill,
  Her folding robe of fairy blue,

Then what a smooth and wondrous scene
  Hung o'er Loch Avin's lovely breast!

Not top of tallest pine was seen,
  On which the dazzled eye could rest;

But mitred cliff, and crested fell,
  In lucid curls her brows adorn;
Aloft the radiant crescents swell,
  All pure as robes by angels worn.

Sound sleeps our seer, far from the day
  Beneath yon sleek and writhed cone;
His spirit steals, unmiss'd, away,
  And dreams across the desert lone.

Sound sleeps our seer!—the tempests rave,
  And cold sheets o'er his bosom fling;
The moldwarp digs his mossy grave;
  His requiem Avin eagles sing."

. . . . .

A SHEPHERD'S WEDDING.

CHAPTER I.

Last autumn, while I was staying a few weeks with my friend Mr. Grumple, minister of the extensive and celebrated parish of *Woolenhorn*, an incident occurred which hath afforded me a great deal of amusement; and as I think it may divert some readers, I shall without further preface begin the relation.

We had just finished a wearisome debate on the rights of teind, and the claims which every clergyman of the Established Church of Scotland has for a grass glebe; the china cups were already arranged, and the savoury tea-pot stood basking on the ledge of the grate, when the servant-maid entered, and told Mr. Grumple that there was one at the door who wanted him.

We immediately heard a debate in the passage—the parson pressing his guest to *come ben*, which the other stoutly resisted, declaring aloud that "it was a' nonsense thegither, for he was eneuch to fley a' the grand folk out o' the room, an' set the kivering o' the floor a-swoomin." The parlour door was however thrown open, and, to my astonishment, the first guests who presented themselves were two strong honest-looking collies, or shepherd's dogs, that came bouncing and capering into the room, with a great deal of seeming satisfaction. Their master was shortly after ushered in. He was a tall athletic figure, with a black beard, and dark raven hair hanging over his brow; wore clouted shoes, shod with iron, and faced up with copper; and there was altogether something in his appearance the most homely and uncouth of any exterior I had ever seen.

"This," said the minister, "is Peter Plash, a parishioner of mine, who has brought me in an excellent salmon, and wants a good office at my hand, he says, in return." "The bit fish is naething, man," said Peter, sleeking down the hair on his brow; "I wish he had been better for your sake—but gin ye had seen the sport that we had wi' him at Pool-Midnight, ye wad hae leughen till ye had burstit." Here the shepherd, observing his two dogs seated comfortably on the hearth-rug, and deeming it an instance of high presumption and very bad manners, broke out with—"Ay, Whitefoot, lad! an' ye're for being a gentleman too! My certy, man, but ye're no blate!—I'm ill eneugh, to be sure, to come into a grand room this way, but yet I wadna sêt up my impudent nose an' my muckle rough brisket afore the lowe, an' tak a' the fire to mysel—Get aff wi' ye, sir! An' you too, Trimmy, ye limmer! what's your business here?" So saying, he attempted with the fringe of his plaid to drive them out; but they only ran about the room, eyeing their master with astonishment and concern. They had never, it seemed, been wont to be separated from him either by night or by day, and they could not understand why they should be driven from the parlour, or how they had not as good a right to be there as he. Of course, neither threats nor blows could make them leave him; and it being a scene of life quite new to me, and of which I was resolved to profit as much as possible, at my intercession matters were made up, and the two canine associates were suffered to remain where they were. They were soon seated, one on each side of their master, clinging fondly to his feet, and licking the wet from his dripping trowsers.

Having observed that when the shepherd entered he had begun to speak with great zest about the

sport they had in killing the salmon, I again brought on the subject, and made him describe the diversion to me. "O man!" said he, and then indulged in a hearty laugh—(*man* was always the term he used in addressing either of us—*sir* seemed to be no word in his vocabulary)—"O man, I wish ye had been there! I'll lay a plack ye wad hae said ye never saw sic sport sin' ever ye war born. We gat twal fish a' thegither the day, an' sair broostles we had wi' some o' them; but a' was naething to the killin' o' that ane at Pool-Midnight. Geordie Otterson, Matthew Ford, an' me, war a' owre the lugs after him. But ye's hear:—When I cam on to the craigs at the weil o' Pool-Midnight, the sun was shinin' bright, the wind was lowne, an' wi' the pirl[1] being awa, the pool was as clear as crystal. I soon saw by the bells coming up that there was a fish in the auld hauld; an' I keeks an' I glimes about, till, faith! I sees his blue murt fin. My teeth war a' waterin to be in him, but I kend the shank o' my waster[2] wasna half length. Sae I cries to Geordie, 'Geordie,' says I, 'eh, man! here's a great chap just lyin steeping like an aik clog.' Off comes Geordie, shaughle shaughlin wi' a' his pith; for the creature's that greedy o' fish, he wad venture his very saul for them. I kend brawly what wad be the upshot. 'Now,' says I, 'Geordie, man yoursel for this ae time. Eh, man! he is a terrible ane for size—see, yonder he's lying.' The sun was shining sae clear that the deepness o' the pool was a great cheat. Geordie bit his lip for perfect eagerness, an' his een war stelled in his head—he thought he had him safe i' the pat; but whenever he put the grains o' the leister into the water I could speak nae mair, I kend sae weel what was comin, for I kend the depth to an inch. Weel, he airches an' he vizies for a good while, an' at length made a push down at him wi' his whole might. Tut! the leister didna gang to the grund by an ell—an' Geordie gaed into the deepest part o' Pool-Midnight wi' his head foremost! My sennins turned as supple as a dockan, an' I fell just down i' the bit wi' lauchin—ye might hae bund me wi' a strae. He wad hae drowned for aught that I could do; for when I saw his heels flingin up aboon the water as he had been dancin a hornpipe, I lost a' power thegither; but Matthew Ford harled him into the shallow wi' his leister.

"Weel, after that we cloddit the pool wi' great stanes, an' aff went the fish down the gullots, shinin' like a rainbow. Then he ran, an' he ran! an' it was wha to be first in him. Geordie gat the first chance, an' I thought it was a' owre; but just when he thought he was sure o' him, down cam Matthew full drive, smashed his grains out through Geordie's, and gart him miss. It was my chance next, an' I took him neatly through the gills, though he gaed as fast as a skell-drake.

"But the sport grew aye better.—Geordie was sae mad at Matthew for taigling him, an' garring him tine the fish (for he's a greedy dirt), that they had gane to grips in a moment; an' when I lookit back, they war just fightin like twa terriers in the mids o' the water. The witters o' the twa leisters were frankit in ane anither, an' they couldna get them sindry, else there had been a vast o' bludeshed; but they were knevillin, an' tryin to drown ane anither a' that they could; an' if they hadna been clean forfoughten they wad hae done't; for they were aye gaun out o' sight an' comin howdin up again. Yet after a', when I gaed back to redd them, they were sae inveterate that they wadna part till I was forced to haud them baith down through the water an' drown them baith."

"But I hope you have not indeed drowned the men," said I. "Ou na, only keepit them down till I took the power fairly frae them—till the bullers gaed owre coming up; then I carried them to different sides o' the water, an' laid them down agroof wi' their heads at the inwith; an' after gluthering and spurring a wee while, they cam to again. We dinna count muckle of a bit drowning match, us fishers. I wish I could get Geordie as weel doukit ilka day; it wad tak the smeddum frae him—for O, he is a greedy thing! But I fear it will be a while or I see sic glorious sport again."

Mr. Grumple remarked, that he thought, by his account, it could not be very good sport to all parties; and that, though he always encouraged these vigorous and healthful exercises among his parishioners, yet he regretted that they could so seldom be concluded in perfect good humour.

"They're nae the waur o' a wee bit splore," said Peter; "they wad turn unco milk-an-water things, an' dee awa a' thegither wantin a brookie. Ye might as weel think to keep an ale-vat working wantin' barm."

"But, Peter, I hope you have not been breaking the laws of the country by your sport to-day!"

"Na, troth hae we no, man—close-time disna come in till the day after the morn; but atween you an' me, close-time's nae ill time for us. It merely ties up the grit folk's hands, an' throws a' the sport into ours thegither. Na, na, we's never complain o' close-time; if it warna for it there wad few fish fa' to poor folk's share."

This was a light in which I had never viewed the laws of the fishing association before; but as this honest hind spoke from experience, I have no doubt that the statement is founded on truth, and that the sole effect of close-time, in all the branches of the principal river, is merely to tie up the hands of every respectable man, and throw the fishing into the hands of poachers. He told me, that in all the rivers of the extensive parish of *Woolenhorn*, the fish generally ran up during one flood and went away the next; and as the gentlemen and farmers of those parts had no interest in the preservation of the breeding salmon themselves, nor cared a farthing about the fishing associations in the great river,

[1] Ripple. [2] Fish-spear.

whom they viewed as monopolizers of that to which they had no right, the fish were wholly abandoned to the poachers, who generally contrived, by burning lights at the shallows, and spearing the fish by night, and netting the pools, to annihilate every shoal that came up. This is, however, a subject that would require an essay by itself.

Our conversation turned on various matters connected with the country; and I soon found, that though this hind had something in his manner and address the most uncultivated I had ever seen, yet his conceptions of such affairs as came within the sphere of his knowledge were pertinent and just. He sung old songs, told us strange stories of witches and apparitions, and related many anecdotes of the pastoral life, which I think extremely curious, and wholly unknown to the literary part of the community. But at every observation that he made, he took care to sleek down his black hair over his brow, as if it were of the utmost consequence to his making a respectable appearance, that it should be equally spread, and as close pressed down as possible. When desired to join us in drinking tea, he said "it was a' nonsense thegither, for he hadna the least occasion;" and when pressed to take bread, he persisted in the declaration that "it was a' great nonsense." He loved to talk of sheep, of dogs, and of *the lasses*, as he called them; and conversed with his dogs in the same manner as he did with any of the other guests; nor did the former ever seem to misunderstand him, unless in his unprecedented and illiberal attempt to expel them from the company.—"Whitefoot! haud aff the woman's coat-tails, ye blockhead! Deil hae me, gin ye hae the mense of a miller's horse, man." Whitefoot instantly obeyed.—"Trimmy! come back aff the fire, dame! Ye're nae wat, ye raise a reek like a cottar wife's lum—come back, ye limmer!" Trimmy went behind his chair.

It came out at last that his business with Mr. Grumple that day was to request of him to go over to *Stridekirton* on the Friday following, and unite him, Peter Plash, in holy wedlock with his sweetheart and only joe, Jean Windlestrae; and he said, if I "would accompany the minister, and take share of a haggis wi' them, I wad see some good lasses, and some good sport too, which was far better." You may be sure I accepted of the invitation with great cordiality, nor had I any cause to repent it.

CHAPTER II.

The wedding-day at length arrived; and as the bridegroom had charged us to be there at an early hour, we set out on horseback, immediately after breakfast, for the remote hamlet of Stridekirton. We found no regular path, but our way lay through a country which it is impossible to view without soothing emotions. The streams are numerous, clear as crystal, and wind along the glens in many fantastic and irregular curves. The mountains are green to the tops, very high, and form many beautiful, soft, and shaded outlines. They are, besides, literally speckled with snowy flocks, which, as we passed, were feeding or resting with such appearance of undisturbed repose, that the heart naturally found itself an involuntary sharer in the pastoral tranquillity that pervaded all around.

My good friend, Mr. Grumple, could give me no information regarding the names of the romantic glens and mountains that came within our view; he, however, knew who were the proprietors of the land, who the tenants, what rent and stipend each of them paid, and whose teinds were unexhausted; this seemed to be the sum and substance of his knowledge concerning the life, character, and manners of his rural parishioners, save that he could sometimes adduce circumstantial evidence that such and such farmers had made money of their land, and that others had made very little or none.

This district, over which he presides in an ecclesiastical capacity, forms an extensive portion of the Arcadia of Britain. It was likewise, in some late ages, noted for its zeal in the duties of religion, as well as for a thirst after the acquirement of knowledge concerning its doctrines; but under the tuition of such a pastor as my relative appears to be, it is no wonder that practical religion should be losing ground from year to year, and scepticism, the natural consequence of laxity in religious duties, gaining ground in proportion.

It may be deemed, perhaps, rather indecorous to indulge in such reflections respecting any individual who has the honour to be ranked as a member of a body so generally respected as our Scottish Clergy, and who, at the same time, maintains a fair *worldly* character; but in a general discussion, in anything that relates to the common weal of mankind, all such inferior considerations must be laid aside. And the more I consider the simplicity of the people of whom I am now writing—the scenes among which they have been bred—and their lonely and sequestered habits of life, where the workings and phenomena of nature alone appear to attract the eye or engage the attention—the more I am convinced that the temperament of their minds would naturally dispose them to devotional feelings. If they were but taught to read their Bibles, and only saw uniformly in the ministers of religion that sanctity of character by which the profession ought ever to be distinguished, these people would naturally be such as every well-wisher to the human race would desire a scattered peasantry to be. But when the most decided variance between example and precept is forced on their observation, what should we, or what can we, expect? Men must see, hear, feel, and judge accordingly. And certainly in no other instance is a patron so responsible to his sovereign,

his country, and his God, as in the choice he makes of spiritual pastors.

These were some of the reflections that occupied my mind as I traversed this beautiful pastoral country with its morose teacher, and from these I was at length happily aroused by the appearance of the cottage, or shepherd's steading, to which we were bound. It was situated in a little valley in the bottom of a wild glen, or *hope*, as it is there called. It stood all alone; but besides the dwelling-house, there was a little byre that held the two cows and their young—a good stack of hay, another of peats—a sheep-house, and two homely gardens; and the place had altogether something of a snug, comfortable appearance. Though this is only an individual picture, I am told it may be viewed as a general one of almost every shepherd's dwelling in the south of Scotland; and it is only such pictures that, in the course of these tales, I mean to present to the public.

A number of the young shepherds and country lasses had already arrived, impatient for the approaching wedding; others were coming down the green hills in mixed parties all around, leading one another, and skipping with the agility of lambs. They were all walking barefooted and barelegged, male and female; the men were dressed much in the ordinary way, only that the texture of their clothes was somewhat coarse, and the women had black beavers, white gowns, and "green coats kilted to the knee." When they came near the house they went into little sequestered hollows, the men and women apart, "pat on their hose an' shoon, and made themsels a' trig an' witching," and then came and joined the group with a joy that could not be restrained by walking—they ran to mix with their youthful associates.

Still as they arrived, we saw on our approach, that they drew up in two rows on the green, and soon found that it was a contest at leaping. The shepherds were stripped to the shirt and drawers, and exerting themselves in turn with all their might, while their sweethearts and sisters were looking on with no small share of interest.

We received a kind and hospitable welcome from honest Peter and his father, who was a sagacious-looking old carle, with a broad bonnet and gray locks; but the contest on the green still continuing, I went and joined the circle, delighted to see a pastime so appropriate to the shepherd's life. I was utterly astonished at the agility which the fellows displayed.

They took a short race of about twelve or fourteen paces, which they denominated the *ram-race*, and then rose from the footing-place with such a bound as if they had been going to mount and fly into the air. The crooked guise in which they flew showed great art—the knees were doubled upward—the body bent forward—and the head thrown somewhat back; so that they alighted on their heels with the greatest ease and safety, their joints being loosened in such a manner that not one of them was straight. If they fell backward on the ground, the leap was not accounted fair. Several of the antagonists took the ram-race with a staff in their hands which they left at the footing-place as they rose. This I thought unfair, but none of their opponents objected to the custom. I measured the distance, and found that two of them had actually leaped twenty-two feet, on a level plain, at one bound. This may appear extraordinary to those who never witnessed such an exercise, but it is a fact of which I can adduce sufficient proof.

Being delighted as well as astonished at seeing these feats of agility, I took Peter aside and asked him if I might offer prizes for some other exercises. "Hout na," said Peter, "ye'll affront them; let them just alane; they hae eneuch o' incitement e'now, an' rather owre muckle atween you an' me, forebye the brag o' the thing; as lang as the lasses stand and look at them they'll ply atween death an' life." What Peter said was true. Instead of getting weary of their sports their ardour seemed to increase, and always as soon as the superiority of any individual in one particular exercise was manifest, another was instantly resorted to; so that ere lang there was one party engaged in wrestling, one in throwing the stone, and another at hop-step-and-leap, all at one and the same time.

This last seems to be rather the favourite amusement. It consists of three succeeding bounds, all with the same race; and as the exertion is greater and of longer continuance, they can judge with more precision the exact capability of the several competitors. I measured the ground, and found the greatest distance effected in this way to be forty-six feet. I am informed that whenever two or three young shepherds are gathered together at fold or bucht, moor or market, at all times and seasons, Sundays excepted, one or more of these athletic exercises is uniformly resorted to; and certainly in a class where hardiness and agility are so requisite they can never be too much encouraged.

But now all these favourite sports were terminated at once by a loud cry of "Hurrah! the broose! the broose!" Not knowing what *the broose* meant, I looked all around with great precipitation, but for some time could see nothing but hills. At length, however, by marking the direction in which the rest looked, I perceived at a considerable distance down the glen five horsemen coming at full speed on a determined race, although on such a road as I believe a race was never before contested. It was that by which we had lately come, and the only one that led to the house from all the four quarters of the world. For some time it crossed "the crooks of the burn," as they called them—that is, it kept straight up the bottom of the glen, and crossed the burn at every turning. Of course every time that the group crossed this stream they were for a moment involved in a cloud of spray that almost hid them from view, and

the frequent recurrence of this rendered the effect highly comic.

Still, however, they kept apparently close together, till at length the path left the bottom of the narrow valley, and came round the sloping base of a hill that was all interspersed with drains and small irregularities of surface; this producing no abatement of exertion or speed, horses and men were soon floundering, plunging, and tumbling about in all directions. If this was amusing to view, it was still more so to hear the observations of the delighted group that stood round me and beheld it. "Ha, ha, ha! yonder's ane aff! Gude faith! yon's Jock o' the Meer-cleuch; he has gotten an ill-faur'd flaip. Holloa! yonder gaes anither down through a lair to the een-holes! Weel done, Aedie o' Aberlosk! Hie till him, Tousy, outher now or never! Lay on, ye deevil, an' hing by the mane! Hurrah!"

The women were by this time screaming, and the men literally jumping and clapping their hands for joy at the deray that was going on: and there was one little elderly-looking man whom I could not help noting; he had fallen down on the ground in a convulsion of laughter, and was spurring and laying on with both hands and feet. One whom they denominated Davie Scott o' the Ramsey-cleuch burn, amid the bay of dogs and the shouts of men and women, got first to the bridegroom's door, and of course was acknowledged to have won the *broose;* but the attention was soon wholly turned from him to those behind. The man whose horse had sunk in the bog, perceiving that all chance of extricating it again on the instant was out of the question, lost not a moment, but sprung to his feet, threw off his coat, hat, and shoes all at one brush, and ran towards the goal with all his might. Jock o' the Meer-cleuch, who was still a good way farther back, and crippled besides with his fall, perceiving this mounted again, whipped on furiously, and would soon have overhied his pedestrian adversary; but the shepherds are bad horsemen, and moreover Jock's horse, which belonged to Gideon of Kirkhope, was unacquainted with the sheep-drains and terrified at them; consequently by making a sudden jerk backwards when he should have leaped across one of them, and when Jock supposed that he was just going to do so, he threw his rider a second time. The shouts of laughter were again renewed, and every one was calling out, "Now for the mell! now for the mell! Deil tak the hindmost now!" These sounds reached Jock's ears; he lost no time in making a last effort, flew at his horse again, remounted him, and, by urging him to a desperate effort, actually got ahead of his adversary just when within ten yards of the door, and thus escaped the disgrace of *winning the mell.*

I was afterwards told that in former ages it was the custom on the Border when the victor in the race was presented with the prize of honour, the one who came in last was at the same time presented with a mallet or large wooden hammer, called a *mell* in the dialect of the country, and that then the rest of the competitors stood in need to be near at hand and instantly to force the *mell* from him, else he was at liberty to knock as many of them down with it as he could. The mell has now for many years been only a nominal prize, but there is often more sport about the gaining of it than the principal one. There was another occurrence which added greatly to the animation of this, which I had not time before fully to relate. About the time when the two unfortunate wights were unhorsed in the bog, those who still kept on were met and attacked open mouth by at least twenty frolicsome collies, that seemed fully as intent on sport as their masters. These bit the hind-legs of the horses, snapped at their noses, and raised such an outrage of barking, that the poor animals, forespent as they were, were constrained to lay themselves out almost beyond their power. Nor did the fray cease when the race was won. Encouraged by the noise and clamour which then arose about the gaining of the mell, the stanch collies continued the attack, and hunted the racers round and round the houses with great speed, while the horses were all the time wheeling and flinging most furiously, and their riders in desperation vociferating and cursing their assailants.

All the guests now crowded together, and much humour and blunt wit passed about the gaining of the broose. Each of the competitors had his difficulties and cross accidents to relate, and each affirmed that if it had not been such and such hindrances he would have gained the broose to a certainty. Davie Scott o' the Ramsey-cleuch burn, however, assured them that "he was aye hauding in his yaud wi' the left hand, and gin he had liket to gie her out her head she wad hae gallopit amaist a third faster." "That may be," said Aedie o' Aberlosk, "but I hae come better on than I expectit wi' my Cameronian naig. I never saw him streek himsel sae afore; I dare say he thought that Davie was auld Clavers mountit on Hornie. Poor fallow!" continued he, patting him, "he has a good deal o' anti-prelatic dourness in him, but I see he has some spirit for a' that. I bought him for a pownie, but he's turned out a beast."

I next overheard one proposing to the man who left his horse and exerted himself so manfully on foot, to go and pull his horse out of the quagmire. "Na, na," said he, "let him stick yonder a while, to learn him mair sense than to gang intill an open well-ee and gar ane get a mell. I saw the gate as I was gaun, but I couldna swee him aff; sae I just thought o' Jenny Blythe and plunged in. I kend weel something was to happen, for I met her first this morning, the ill-hued carlin; but I had need to haud my tongue! Gudeman, let us see a drap whisky." He was presented with a glass. "Come, here's Jenny Blythe," said Andrew, and drank it off. "I wad be nae the waur o' a wee drap too,"

said Aberlosk, taking a glass of whisky in his hand and looking steadfastly through it. "I think I see Jock the elder here," said he; "ay, it's just him—come, here's *the five kirks o' Eskdale.*" He drank it off. "Gudeman, that's naething but a *Tam-Park* of a glass; if ye'll fill it again, I'll gie a toast ye never heard afore. This is *Bailey's Dictionary*," said Aedie, and drank it off again. "But when a' your daffin's owre, Aedie," said John, "what hae you made o' your young friend?" "Ou! she's safe eneuch," returned he, "the best-man and John the elder are wi' her."

On looking round the corner of the house we now perceived that the bride and her two attendants were close at hand. They came at a *quick canter.* She managed her horse well, kept her saddle with great ease, and seemed an elegant sprightly girl of twenty-four or thereabouts. Every cap was instantly waved in the air, and the bride was saluted with three hearty cheers. Old John, well aware of what it behoved him to do, threw off his broad bonnet, and took the bride respectfully from her horse, kissed and welcomed her home. "Ye're welcome hame till us, Jeany, my bonny woman," said he; "may God bless ye, and mak ye just as good an' as happy as I wish ye." It was a beautiful and affecting sight to see him leading her toward the home that was now to be her own. He held her hand in both his, the wind waved his long gray locks, his features were lengthened considerably the wrong way, and I could perceive a tear glistening on his furrowed cheek.

All seemed to know exactly the parts they had to act; but everything came on me like magic, and quite by surprise. The bride now stopped short on the threshold, while the old man broke a triangular cake of short-bread over her head, the pieces of which he threw about among the young people. These scrambled for them with great violence and eagerness; and indeed they seemed always to be most in their element when anything that required strength or activity was presented. For my part, I could not comprehend what the sudden convulsion meant (for in a moment the crowd was moving like a whirlpool, and tumbling over one another in half dozens), till a little girl, escaping from the vortex, informed me that "they war battling wha first to get a haud o' the bride's bunn." I was still in the dark, till at length I saw the successful candidates presenting their favourites with small pieces of this mystical cake. One beautiful maid with light locks, blue eyes, and cheeks like the vernal rose, came nimbly up to me, called me familiarly by my name, looked at me with perfect seriousness, and without even a smile on her innocent face, asked me *if I was married.* I could scarcely contain my gravity while I took her by the hand and answered in the negative. "An' hae ye no gotten a piece o' the bride's cake?" "Indeed, my dear, I am sorry I have not." "O, that's a great shame that ye hae nae gotten a wee bit! I canna bide to see a stranger guided that gate. Here, sir; I'll gae ye the tae half o' mine; it will ser' us baith; and I wad rather want mysel than see civil a gentleman that's a stranger should want."

So saying she took a small piece of cake from her lap and parted it with me, at the same time rolling each of the pieces carefully up in a leaf of an old halfpenny ballad; but the whole of her demeanour showed the utmost seriousness, and of how much import she judged this trivial crumb to be. "Now," continued she, "ye maun lay this aneath your head, sir, when ye gang to your bed, and ye'll dream about the woman ye are to get for your wife. Ye'll just think ye see her plainly and bodily afore your een; an' ye'll be sae weel acquainted wi' her that ye'll ken her again when ye see her, if it war among a thousand. It's a queer thing, but its perfectly true; see ye maun *mind no to forget.*"

I promised the most punctual observance of all that she enjoined, and added that I was sure I would dream of the lovely giver; that indeed I would be sorry were I to dream of any other, as I deemed it impossible to dream of so much innocence and beauty. "*Now mind no to forget,*" rejoined she, and skipped lightly away to join her youthful associates.

As soon as the bride was led into the house, old Nelly, the bridegroom's mother, went aside to see the beast on which her daughter-in-law had been brought home; and perceiving that it was a mare, she fell a-crying and ringing her hands. I inquired, with some alarm, what was the matter, "O dear sir," returned she, "it's for the poor bairnies that'll yet hae to dree this unlucky mischance—Laike-a-day, poor waefu' brats! they'll no lie in a dry bed for a dozen o' years to come!"

"Hout! haud your tongue, Nelly," said the best man, "the thing's but a freat a' thegither. But really we coudna help it: the factor's naig wantit a fore-fit shoe, an' was beckin like a water-craw. If I had ridden five miles to the smiddy wi' him it is ten to ane but Jock Anderson wad hae been drunk, an' then we wadna hae gotten the bride hame afore twall o'clock at night; sae I thought it was better to let them tak their chance than spoil sae muckle good sport, an' I e'en set her on Watie Bryden's pownie. The factor has behaved very ill about it. the muckle stootin gowk! If I had durst I wad hae gien him a deevil of a thrashin; but he says, 'Faith its—that—yes, indeed—that—he will send them—yes, faith—it's even a—*a new tikabed* every year.'"

CHAPTER III.

As soon as the marriage ceremony was over, all the company shook hands with the young couple, and wished them every kind of joy and felicity. The rusticity of their benisons amused me, and there were several of them that I have never to this day

been able to comprehend. As, for instance, one wished them "thumpin luck and fat weans;" another "a bien rannlebauks, and tight thack and rape o'er their heads;" a third gave them "a routh aumrie and a close nieve;" and the lasses wished them "as mony hineymoons as the family had fingers an' taes." I took notes of these at the time, and many more, and set them down precisely as they were spoken; all of them have doubtless meanings attached to them, but these are perhaps the least mystical.

I expected now that we should go quietly to our dinner; but instead of that they again rushed rapidly away towards the green, crying out, "Now for the broose! now for the broose!" "The people are unquestionably mad," said I to one that stood beside me; "are they really going to run their horses again among such ravines and bogs as these? they must be dissuaded from it." The man informed me that the race was now to be on foot; that there were always two races—the first on horseback for the bride's napkin, and the second on foot for the bridegroom's spurs. I asked him how it came that they had thus altered the order of things in the appropriation of the prizes, for that the spurs would be the fittest for the riders, as the napkin would for the runners. He admitted this, but could adduce no reason why it was otherwise, save that "it was the gude auld gate, and it would be a pity to alter it." He likewise informed me that it was customary for some to run on the bride's part, and some on the bridegroom's; and that it was looked on as a great honour to the country, or connections of either party, to bear the broose away from the other. Accordingly, on our way to the race-ground, the bridegroom was recruiting hard for runners on his part, and by the time we reached the starting-place, had gained the consent of five. One now asked the *best-man* why he was not recruiting in behalf of the bride. "Never mind," said he; "do ye strip an' mak ready—I'll find them on the bride's part that will do a' the turn." It was instantly rumoured around that he had brought one all the way from Liddesdale to carry the prize away on the bride's part, and that he was the best runner on all the Border side. The runners, that were all so brisk of late, were now struck dumb; and I marked them going one by one, eyeing the stranger with a jealous curiosity, and measuring him with their eyes from head to foot. No, not one of them would venture to take the field against him!—"they war only jokin'—they never intendit to rin—they war just jaunderin wi' the bridegroom for fun." "Come, fling aff your claes, Hobby, an' let them see that ye're ready for them," said the best-man. The stranger obeyed—he was a tall, slender, and handsome youth, with brown hair, prominent features, and a ruddy complexion. "Come, lads," said the best-man, "Hobby canna stand wantin his claes; if nane of ye are ready to start with him in twa minutes he shall rin the course himsel, and then I think the folk o' this country are shamed for ever." "No sae fast," said a little funny-looking fellow, who instantly began to strip off his stockings and shoes; "no sae fast, lad; he may win, but he sanna win untried." A committee was instantly formed apart, where it was soon agreed that all the good runners there should, with one accord, start against this stranger; for that "if naebody ran but Tam the tailor, they wad be a' shamed thegither, for Tam would never come within a stane-clod o' him." "Hout, ay—that's something like yoursels, callants," said old John; "try him—he's but a saft feckless-like chiel; I think ye needna be sae feared for him." "It is a' ye ken," said another; "do nae ye see that he's lingit like a grew, and he'll rin like ane; they say he rins faster than a horse can gallop." "I'll try him on my Cameronian whenever he likes," said Aberlosk; "him that beats a Cameronian has but another to beat."

In half a minute after this, seven athletic youths were standing in a row stripped, and panting for the race; and I could note, by the paleness of their faces, how anxious they were about the result—all save Aedie o' Aberlosk, on whom the whisky had made some impression, and who seemed only intent on making fun. At the distance of 500 yards there was a man placed whom they denominated *the stoop*, and who had his hat raised on the end of his staff, lest another might be mistaken for him. Around this *stoop* they were to run, and return to the starting-place, making in all a heat of only 1000 yards, which I was told is the customary length of a race all over that country. They took all hold of one another's hands—the best-man adjusted the line in which they stood, and then gave the word as follows, with considerable pauses between: *Once—Twice—Thrice*—and off they flew like lightning, in the most beautiful style I ever beheld. The ground was rough and unequal, but there was no restraint or management practised; every one set out on full speed from the very first. The Borderer took the lead, and had soon distanced them a considerable space—all save Aberlosk, who kept close at his side, straining and twisting his face in a most tremendous manner: at length he got rather before him, but it was an overstretch—Aedie fell flat on his face, nor did he offer to rise, but lay still on the spot, puffing and swearing against the champion of Liddesdale.

Hobby cleared the *stoop* first by about twenty yards—the rest turned in such a group that I could not discern in what order, but they were all obliged to turn it to the right, or what they called "sunways-about," on pain of losing the race. The generality of the "weddingers" were now quite silent, and looked very blank when they saw this stranger still keeping so far ahead. Aberlosk tried to make them all fall one by one, by creeping in before them as they passed; and at length laid hold of the hindmost by the foot, and brought him down.

By this time two of the Borderer's acquaintances

had run down the green to meet him and encourage him on. "Weel done, Hobby!" they were shouting: "Weel done, Hobby!—Liddesdale for ever!—Let them lick at that!—Let the benty-necks crack now!—Weel done, Hobby!"—I really felt as much interested about the issue at this time as it was possible for any of the adverse parties to be. The enthusiasm seemed contagious; for though I knew not one side from the other, yet was I running among the rest, and shouting as they did. A sort of half-animated murmur now began to spread, and gained ground every moment. A little gruff Cossack-looking peasant came running near with a peculiar wildness in his looks, and accosted one of the men that were cheering Hobby. "Dinna be just sae loud an' ye like, Willie Beattie; dinna mak nae mair din than just what's needfu'. Will o' Bellendine! haud till him, sir, or it's day wi' us! Hie, Will, if ever ye ran i' your life! By Jehu, sir, ye're winning every third step! He has him *dead!* he has him *dead!*" The murmur, which had increased like the rushing of many waters, now terminated in a frantic shout. Hobby had strained too hard at first, in order to turn the stoop before Aberlosk, who never intended turning it at all—the other youth was indeed fast gaining on him, and I saw his lips growing pale, and his knees plaiting as if unable to bear his weight—his breath was quite exhausted, and though within twenty yards of the stoop, Will began to shoulder by him. So anxious was Hobby now to keep his ground that his body pressed onward faster than his feet could keep up with it, and his face in consequence came deliberately against the earth—he could not be said to fall, for he just ran on till he could get no farther for something that stopped him. Will o' Bellendine won the broose amid clamours of applause, which he seemed fully to appreciate—the rest were over Hobby in a moment; and if it had not been for the wayward freaks of Aberlosk, this redoubted champion would fairly have won the mell.

The lad that Aedie overthrew, in the midst of his career, was very angry with him on account of the outrage, but Aedie cared for no man's anger. "The man's mad," said he; "wad ye attempt to strive wi' the champion of Liddesdale?—Hout, hout! haud your tongue; ye're muckle better as ye are. I sall take the half o' the mell wi' ye."

On our return to the house I was anxious to learn something of Aedie, who seemed to be a very singular character. Upon applying to a farmer of his acquaintance, I was told a number of curious and extravagant stories of him, one or two of which I shall insert here, as I profess to be giving anecdotes of the country life.

He once quarrelled with another farmer on the highway, who, getting into a furious rage, rode at Aedie to knock him down. Aedie, who was on foot, fled with all his might to the top of a large dunghill for shelter, where, getting hold of a graip (a three-pronged fork used in agriculture), he attacked his adversary with such an overflow of dung that his horse took fright, and in spite of all he could do, ran clear off with him, and left Aedie master of the field. The farmer in high wrath sent him a challenge to fight with pistols, in a place called Selkith Hope, early in the morning. This is an extremely wild, steep, and narrow glen. Aedie attended, but kept high up on the hill; and when his enemy reached the narrowest part of the Hope, began the attack by rolling great stones at him down from the mountain. Nothing could be more appalling than this—the farmer and his horse were both alike terrified, and, as Aedie expressed it, "he set them baith back the gate they cam, as their heads had been a-lowe."

Another time, in that same Hope of Selkith, he met a stranger, whom he mistook for another man called Jamie Sword; and because the man denied that he was Jamie Sword, Aedie fastened a quarrel on him, insisting on him either being Jamie Sword, or giving some proofs to the contrary. It was very impudent in him, he said, to give any man the lie, when he could produce no evidence of his being wrong. The man gave him his word that he was not Jamie Sword. "O, but that's naething," said Aedie, "I give you my word that you are, and I think my word's as good as yours ony day." Finally, he told the man that if he would not acknowledge that he was wrong, and confess that he was Jamie Sword, he would fight him. He did so, and got himself severely thrashed.

The following is a copy of a letter written by Aedie to a great personage, dated Aberlosk, May 27th, 1806.[1]

"To George the Third, London.

"DEAR SIR,—I went thirty miles on foot yesterday to pay your taxes, and after all the bodies would not take them, saying that I was too late, and that they must now be recovered, with expenses, by regular course of law. I thought if your majesty was like me money would never come wrong to you, although it were a few days too late; so I inclose you £27 in notes, and half-a-guinea, which is the amount of what they charge me for last year, and fourpence halfpenny over. You must send me a receipt when the coach comes back, else they will not believe that I have paid you.

"Direct to the care of Andrew Wilson, butcher in Hawick.

"I am, dear sir, your most humble servant.
A—— B——. To the king.

"P.S.—This way of taxing the farmers will never do; you will see the upshot."

It has been reported over all that country that this

[1] Should the reader imagine that this curious epistle is a mere coinage of my own, I can assure him, from undoubted authority, that both Aedie and his letter are faithful transcripts from real and *existing originals*.

letter reached its destination, and that a receipt was returned in due course of post; but the truth is (and for the joke's sake it is a great pity it should have been so), that the singularity of the address caused some friends to open the letter, and return it with the money to the owner; but not before they had taken a copy of it, from which the above is exactly transcribed.

COUNTRY DREAMS AND APPARITIONS.

THE WIFE OF LOCHMABEN.

Not many years ago there lived in the ancient royal burgh of Lochmaben an amiable and good Christian woman, the wife of a blacksmith named James Neil, whose death gave rise to a singularly romantic story, and finally to a criminal trial at the circuit court of Dumfries. The story was related to me by a strolling gipsy of the town of Lochmaben pretty nearly as follows:—

The smith's wife had been for several years in a state of great bodily suffering and debility, which she bore with all resignation and even cheerfulness, although during the period of her illness she had been utterly neglected by her husband, who was of a loose profligate character, and in everything the reverse of his wife. Her hours were however greatly cheered by the company of a neighbouring widow of the same devout and religious cast of mind with herself. These two spent most of their time together, taking great delight in each other's society. The widow attended to all her friend's little wants, and often watched by her bed a good part of the night, reading to her out of the Bible and other religious books, and giving every instance of disinterested kindness and attention.

The gallant blacksmith was all this while consoling himself in the company of another jolly buxom queen of the tinker breed, who lived in an apartment under the same roof with him and his spouse. He seldom visited the latter; but, on pretence of not disturbing her, both boarded and lodged with his swarthy Egyptian. Nevertheless, whenever the two devout friends said their evening prayers the blacksmith was not forgotten, but every blessing besought to rest on his head.

One morning when the widow came in about the usual hour to visit her friend, she found to her utter astonishment that she was gone, though she had been very ill the preceding night. The bed-clothes were cold, the fire on the hearth was gone, and a part of her daily wearing apparel was lying at the bedside as usual.

She instantly ran and informed the smith. But he hated this widow, and answered her churlishly, without deigning to look up to her or so much as delaying his work for a moment to listen to her narrative. There he stood, with his sleeves rolled up to his shoulders, pelting away at his hot iron, and bidding his informant "gang to the devil for an auld phrasing hypocritical jade, and if she didna find her praying snivelling crony there, to seek her where she saw her last. If she didna ken where she was, how was he to ken?"

The widow alarmed the neighbours, and a general search was instantly set on foot; but before that time the body of the lost woman had been discovered floating in the middle of the loch adjoining the town. Few people paid any attention to the unfortunate circumstance. They knew or believed that the woman lived unhappily and in bad terms with her husband, and had no doubt that she had drowned herself in a fit of despair; and, impressed with all the horror that country people naturally have of suicide, they refused her the rites of Christian burial. The body was in consequence early next morning tied between two deals, and carried out to the height several miles to the westward of the town, where it was consigned to a dishonourable grave, being deep buried precisely in the march or boundary between the lands of two different proprietors.

Time passed away, and the gossips of Lochmaben were very free both with the character of the deceased and her surviving husband, not forgetting his jolly Egyptian. The more profligate part of the inhabitants said "they never saw ony good come o' sae muckle canting an' praying an' singing o' psalms; an' that for a' the wife's high pretensions to religious zeal, an' faith, an' hope, an' a' the lave o't, she had gien hersel up to the deil at ae smack." But the more serious part of the community only shook their heads and said, "Alas! it was hard kenning fouk frae outward appearances, for nane wha kend that wife wad hae expectit sic an end as this."

But the state of the widow's mind after this horrible catastrophe is not to be described. Her con-

fidence in the mercy of Heaven was shaken, and she began to doubt of its justice. Her faith was stunned, and she felt her heart bewildered in its researches after truth. For several days she was so hardened that she durst not fall on her knees before the footstool of divine grace. But after casting all about and finding no other hold or anchor, she again one evening, in full bitterness of heart, kneeled before her Maker, and poured out her spirit in prayer, begging that if the tenets she held were tenets of error, and disapproved of by the fountain of life, she might be forgiven and directed in the true path to heaven.

When she had finished she sat down on her lowly form, leaned her face upon both her hands, and wept bitterly as she thought on the dismal exit of her beloved friend, with whom she had last prayed. As she sat thus she heard the footsteps of one approaching her, and looking up she beheld her friend whom she supposed to have been dead and buried, standing on the floor, and looking to her with a face of so much mildness and benignity that the widow, instead of being terrified, was rejoiced to see her. The following dialogue then passed between them, as nearly as I could gather it from the confused narrative of a strolling gipsy, who however knew all the parties:—

"God of mercy preserve us, Mary, is that you? Where have you been? We thought it had been you that was found drowned in the loch."

"And who did you think drowned me?"

"We thought you had drowned yourself."

"Oh, fy! how could *you* do me so much injustice? Would that have been aught in conformity to the life we two have led together, and the sweet heavenly conversation we maintained?"

"What could we say? or what could we think? The best are sometimes left to themselves. But where have you been, Mary?"

"I have been on a journey at a strange place. But you do not know it, my dear friend. You know only the first stage at which I rested in my way, and a cold, damp lodging it is. It was at a place called the Crane Moor."

"Heaven defend us! That was the name of the place where they buried the body that was found in the loch. Tell me implicitly, Mary, were you not dead?"

"How can you ask such a question? Do you not see me alive, and well, and cheerful, and happy?"

"I know and believe that the soul can never die; but strange realities come over my mind. Tell me, was it not your body that was found floating in the loch, and buried in shame and disgrace on the top of the Crane Moor?"

"You have so far judged right; but I am raised from the dead as you see, and restored to life, and it is all for your sake, for the faith of the just must not perish. How could *you* believe that I would throw away my precious soul by taking away my own life? My husband felled me with a bottle on the back part of the head, breaking my skull. He then put my body into a sack, carried it out in the dark, and threw it into the loch. It was a deed of atrocity and guilt, but he will live to repent it, and it has proved a deed of mercy to me. I am well and happy; and all that we believed of a Saviour and a future state of existence is true."

On receiving this extraordinary information, and precisely at this part of the dialogue, the widow fainted, and on recovering from her swoon she found that her friend was gone; but, conscious of having been in her perfect senses, and remembering everything that had passed between them, she was convinced that she had seen and conversed with her deceased friend's ghost, or some good benevolent spirit in her likeness.

Accordingly, the next morning, she went to a magistrate, and informed him of the circumstances; but he only laughed her to scorn, and entreated her for her own sake never again to mention the matter, else people would account her mad. She offered to make oath before witnesses to the truth of every particular; but this only increased the chagrin of the man in office, and the worthy widow was dismissed with many bitter reproaches. She next went to the minister, and informed him of what she had seen and heard. He answered her kindly and with caution, but ultimately strove only to reason her from her belief, assuring her that it was the effect of a distempered imagination, and occasioned by reflecting too deeply on the unfortunate end of her beloved friend; and his reasoning being too powerful for her to answer, she was obliged to give up the point.

She failed not, however, to publish the matter among her neighbours, relating the circumstances in that firm serious manner in which a person always stands to the truth, thereby making an impression on the minds of every one who heard her. The story was of a nature to take among such a society as that of which the main bulk of the population of Lochmaben and its vicinity consists. It flew like wildfire. The people blamed their magistrates and ministers; and on the third day after the appearance of the deceased they rose in a body, and with two ministers, two magistrates, and two surgeons at their head they marched away to the Crane Moor, and lifted the corpse for inspection.

To the astonishment of all present, it appeared on the very first examination that the deceased had been felled by a stroke on the back part of the head, which had broken her skull and occasioned instant death. Little cognizance had been taken of the affair at her death; but at any rate, her long hair was folded so carefully over the wound, and bound with a snood so close to her head, that without a minute investigation the fracture could not have been discovered. Further still in confirmation of the words of the apparition, on the surgeon's opening

the head, it appeared plainly from the semicircular form of the fracture that it had actually been inflicted by one side of the bottom of a bottle; and there being hundreds of respectable witnesses to all these things, the body was forthwith carried to the churchyard and interred there; the smith was seized and conveyed to jail; and the inhabitants of Annandale were left to wonder in the utmost astonishment.

The smith was tried at the ensuing circuit court of Dumfries, where the widow was examined as a principal witness. She told her story before the judges with firmness, and swore to every circumstance communicated to her by the ghost; and even when cross-examined by the prisoner's counsel, she was not found to prevaricate in the least. The jury appeared to be staggered, and could not refuse their assent to the truth of this relation. The prisoner's counsel, however, obviated this proof, on account of its being related at second hand, and not by an eye-witness of the transaction. He therefore refused to admit it against his client, unless the ghost appeared personally, and made a verbal accusation; and, being a gentleman of sarcastic wit, he was but too successful in turning this part of the evidence into ridicule, thereby quite, or in a great measure, undoing the effect that it had made on the minds of the jury.

A material witness being still wanting, the smith was remanded back to prison until the autumn circuit, at which time his trial was concluded. The witness above mentioned having then been found, he stated to the court, that as he chanced to pass the prisoner's door, between one and two in the morning of that day on which the deceased was found in the loch, he heard a noise as of one forcing his way out, and, wondering who it could be that was in the house at that hour, he had the curiosity to conceal himself in an adjoining door, until he saw who came out. That the night being very dark, he was obliged to cower down almost close to the earth, in order that he might have the object between him and the sky, and, while sitting in that posture, he saw a man come out of the smith's house, with something in a sack upon his back. That he followed the figure for some time, and intended to have followed farther, but he was seized with an indescribable terror, and went away home; and that, on the morning, when he heard of the dead body being found in the loch, he entertained not a doubt of the smith having murdered his wife, and then conveyed her in a sack to the loch. On being asked, if he could aver upon oath, that it was the prisoner whom he saw come out of the house bearing the burden, he said he could not, because the burden which he carried caused the person to stoop, and prevented him from seeing his figure distinctly, but, that it was him, he had no doubt remaining on his mind. On being asked why he had not divulged this sooner and more publicly, he said, that he was afraid the business in which he was engaged that night might have been inquired into, which it was of great consequence to him at that time to keep secret, and therefore he was not only obliged to conceal what he had seen, but to escape for a season out of the way, for fear of being examined.

The crime of the prisoner appeared now to be obvious—at least the presumption was strong against him. Nevertheless, the judge, in summing up the evidence, considered the proof as defective; expatiated at considerable length on the extraordinary story related by the widow, which it could not be denied had been the occasion of bringing the whole to light, and had been most wonderfully exemplified by corresponding facts, and said he considered himself bound to account for it in a natural way, for the satisfaction of his own mind and the minds of the jury, and could account for it in no other, than by supposing that the witness had discovered the fracture before the body of her friend had been consigned to the grave, and that on considering leisurely and seriously the various circumstances connected with the fatal catastrophe, she had become convinced of the prisoner's guilt, and had either fancied, or, more probably, dreamed the story, on which she had dwelt so long, that she believed it as a fact.

After all, the jury, by a small majority, returned a verdict of *not proven*, and, after a severe reprehension and suitable exhortations, the smith was dismissed from the bar. I forgot to mention in its proper place, that one of the principal things in his favour was, that of his abandoned inamorata having made oath that he was in her apartment all that night and had never left it.

He was now acquitted in the eye of the law, but not in the eyes of his countrymen, for all those who knew the circumstances believed him guilty of the murder of his wife. On the very night of his acquittal, he repaired at a late hour to the abode of his beloved Egyptian, but he was suspected, and his motions watched with all due care. Accordingly, next morning, at break of day, a large mob, who had quietly assembled, broke into the house, and dragged both the parties from the same den, and, after making them ride the stang through all the principal streets of the town, threw them into the loch, and gave them a complete ducking, suffering them barely to escape with life. At the same time, on their dismissal, they were informed, that if they continued in the same course of life, the experiment would be very frequently repeated. Shortly after that, the two offending delinquents made a moonlight flitting, and escaped into Cumberland. My informant had not heard more of them, but she assured me they would make a bad end.

WELLDEAN HALL.

"Do you believe this story of the Ghost, Gilbert?"

"Do I believe this story of the ghost? such a question as that is now! How many will you answer me in exchange for my ingenious answer to that most exquisite question? You see that tree there. Do you believe that it grew out of the earth? Or do you believe that it is there at all? Secondly, and more particularly, you see me? Good. You see my son at the plough yonder: what do you believe yon boy to be? Do you believe he is a twig of hazel?"

"How can I believe that, old shatterbrains?"

"I'll prove it. What does a hazel twig spring from at first?"

"A nut, or filbert, you may choose to call it."

"Good. Now, which letter of the alphabet begins my name?"

"The seventh."

"Good. Your own sentence. Look at the horn-book. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. You have it home. My son sprung from a filbert. Satisfied? Ha, ha, ha! Another. Do you believe old Nick to be a simpleton? A ninny? A higgler for nits and nest-eggs? An even down nose-o'-wax, not possessed of half the sense, foresight, and calculation that's in my one eye? In short, do you believe that both the devil and you are fools, and that Gilbert Falconer is a wise man?"

"There's no speaking seriously to you about anything, with your low miserable attempts at wit."

"I'll prove it."

"No more of your proofs, else I am off."

"I was coming to the very point which you set out at, if you would have suffered me. I would have come to a direct answer to your question in less than forty minutes. But it is all one. Odds or evens, who of us two shall conform to Solomon's maxim."

"What maxim of Solomon's?"

"*Answer a fool according to his folly.* What say you?"

"Odds."

"I have lost. The wit, the humour, the fire, the spirit, of our afternoon's conversation is at an end. Wit! Wit! Thou art a wreck, a lumber, a spavined jade! Now for a rhyme, and I'm done.

"O Gilbert Falconer!
Thou hast made a hack on her!
For Nick is on the back on her!
Who was't spurr'd her last away?
Bear him, bear him fast away;
Or Nick will be a cast-away!"

"Is the fit done yet? In the name of all that is rational let us have some respite from that torrent of words, that resemble nothing so much as a water-spout, that makes a constant rumbling noise, without any variation or meaning. I wanted to have some serious talk with you about this. The family are getting into the utmost consternation. What can be the meaning of it? Do you believe that such a thing as the apparition of our late master has been seen?"

"Indeed, old Nicholas, seriously, I do believe it. How can I believe otherwise?"

"Don't you rather think it is some illusion of the fancy, that the people are deceived, and their senses have imposed on them?"

"A man has nothing but his external senses to depend on in this world. If these may be supposed fallacious, what is to be considered as real that we either hear or see? I conceive, that if a man *believes* that he *does* see an object standing before his eyes, and knows all its features and lineaments, why, he *does* see it, let casuists say what they will. If he hear it pronounce words audibly, who dare challenge the senses that God has given him, and maintain that he heard no such words pronounced? I would account the man a presumptuous fool who would say so, or who would set any limits to the phenomena of nature, knowing in whose hand the universe is balanced, and how little of it he thoroughly understands."

"Why, now, Gilbert, to have heard you speaking the last minute, would any man have believed that such a sentence could have come out of your mouth! That which you have said was certainly very well said, and more to the point than anything I could have *thought* on the subject for I know not how long. So I find you think a ghost may sometimes be commissioned or permitted to appear?"

"I have never once doubted it. Superstition has indeed peopled every dell with ideal spectres, but to these I attach no credit. If the senses of men, however, are in aught to be trusted, I cannot doubt that spirits have sometimes walked the earth in the likenesses of men and women that once lived. It is certainly not on any slight or trivial occasion, that such messengers from the dead appear, and, were it not for some great end, I would not believe in it. I conceive it to be only when all natural means are cut off, either of discovering guilt and blood, or of saving life. The idea of this is so pleasant, that I would not for the world misbelieve it. How grand is the conviction, that there is a Being on your right hand and your left, that sees the actions of all his creatures, and will not let the innocent suffer, nor the guilty go unpunished!"

"I am so glad to hear you say so, Gilbert, for I had begun to dispute my own senses, and durst not tell what I had seen. I myself saw our late master, face to face, as plainly as I see you at this moment.

And that no longer ago than the night before last."

"God have a care of us! Is it even so? Then I fear, old Nicholas, there has been some foul play going on. Where did you see him?"

"In the garden. He went into the house, and beckoned me to follow him. I was on the point of complying, for, though I have been deeply troubled at thinking of it, I was not afraid at the time. The deceased had nothing ghostly about him, and I was so used to do all his commands, that I felt very awkward in declining this last one. How I have trembled to think about it! Is it not said and believed, Gilbert, that one who sees the spirit always dies in a very short time after?"

"I believe it is held as an adage."

"Oh dreadful! Then I shall soon meet him again. How awful a thing it is to go into a world of spirits altogether! And that so soon! Is there no instance of one who has seen a ghost living for any length of time afterwards?"

"No. I believe not."

"I wonder what he had ado in appearing to me? But he never liked me, and had always plenty of malice about him. I am very ill, Gilbert. Oh! oh! Lack-a-day!"

"Oh fie! Never think about that. You are as well dead as living, if it should be so. Much better."

"And is that all the lamentation you make for your old friend? Ah, Gilbert, life is sweet even to an old man! And though I wish all my friends happy that are gone, yet such happiness is always the last that I wish them. Oh! oh! Good b'ye, Gilbert. Farewell! It is hard to say when you and I may meet again."

"You are not going to leave me that way? Come, sit down, and let us lean our two old backs to this tree, and have some further conversation about this wonderful occurrence. Tell me seriously, old Nick, or Father Adam, I should rather call you, for you delve a garden like him, and like him have been bilked by a lusty young queen;—tell me, I say, seriously, what you thought of the character of our late master, and what is your opinion of this our present one?"

"I do not think of either of them. Ah! there are many doors to the valley of death, and they stand open day and night! but there are few out of it!"

"A plague on this old fellow, with his valley of death! He thinks of nothing but his worthless carcase. I shall get no more sense out of him. I think, Father Adam, our young master is a wretch, and I now dread our late one has not been much better. Think you the dog can have killed his uncle? I fear he has. And I fear you have been privy to it, since you confess his ghost has appeared to you. Confess that you administered some of your herbs, some simples to him, and that it was not an apoplexy of which he dropped down dead. Eh! I do not wonder that you are afraid of the valley of death, if it is by a noose that you are to enter it."

"Poor fool! poor fool!"

"After all, is it not wonderful, Nicholas? What can have brought our master back from the unseen world? Do you think this nephew of his has had any hand in his death? He has now got possession of all his lands, houses, and wealth, which I well believe never were intended for him; while his younger brother Allan, and his lovely cousin, Susan Somerville, our late master's chief favourite, are left without a farthing."

"The cause of our master's death was perfectly ascertained by the surgeons. Though the present laird be a man without principle, I do not believe he ever harboured a thought of making away with his uncle."

"How comes it then that his spirit walks even while it is yet twilight, and the sun but shortly gone over the hill? How comes it that his will has not been found?—and, if our young laird and his accomplices represent things aright, not one tenth of his great wealth?"

"Heaven knows! It is a grievous and a mysterious matter."

"I suppose this mansion will soon be locked up. We must all flit, Nicholson. Is it not conjectured that the laird has himself seen the apparition?"

"It is believed that he encountered it in the library that night on which he grew so ill. He has never slept by himself since that night, and never again re-entered the library. All is to be sold; for the two young people claim their thirds of the moveables; and, as you say, we must all flit. But I need not care! Oh! Oh! Good b'ye, Gilbert! Oh! Oh! I wonder what the ghost of the old miser, the old world's-worm, had ado to appear to me? To cut me off from the land of the living and the place where repentance may be hoped for! Oh! Oh! Farewell, Gilbert."

Gilbert kept his eye on the bent frame of the old gardener, till a bend in the wood walk hid him from his view, and then he mimicked him for his own amusement, and indulged in a long fit of laughter. Gilbert had been bred to the church, but his follies and irregularities drove him from the university. He attempted many things, and at last was engaged as butler and house-steward to the late Laird of Welldean; but even there he was disgraced, and became a kind of hanger-on about the mansion, acting occasionally as wood-forester, or rather wood-cleaver; drank as much of the laird's strong beer as he could conveniently get; cracked profane jests with the servants and cottage-dames; talked of agriculture with the farmers; of Homer and Virgil with the schoolmaster; and of ethics with Dr. Lead-beater, the parish minister. Gilbert was every-body's body; but cared little for any one, knowing that few cared aught for him. He had nevertheless a

good heart, and a mortal abhorrence of everything tyrannical or unjust, as well as mean and sordid.

Old Welldean had lived a sober retired life, and was exceedingly rich; but was one of those men *who could in no wise part with money*. He had two nephews by a brother, and one niece by a sister. It was known that he had once made a will, which both the writer and one of the witnesses attested; but he had been cut off suddenly, and neither the will nor his accumulated treasures could be found, though many suspected that the elder nephew, Randal, had conccaled the one and destroyed the other. As heir-at-law, he had seized on the whole property, and his brother Allan, and lovely cousin, Miss Somerville, two young and amiable lovers, found themselves deprived of that which they had been bred up to regard as their own. They claimed, of course, their share of the moveables, which the heir haughtily proposed to bring to the hammer. These were of considerable value. The library alone was judged to be worth a great sum, as it had descended from father to son, and had still been increasing in value for several generations. But from the moment that an inventory began to be taken of the things of the house, which was nearly a year after the old laird's death, the family were driven into the utmost consternation by a visit of an apparition, exactly resembling their late master. It walked not only every night, but was sometimes seen in open day, encountering some with threatening gestures and beckoning others to follow it.

These circumstances confirmed Randal in his resolution, not only to sell the furniture, but even to dispose of the house and policies, and purchase another place in lieu of it. It was supposed he had got a dreadful fright himself, but this circumstance he judged it proper to conceal, lest advantage might be taken of it by intending purchasers; and he now manifested the utmost impatience to bring the sales about.

Among other interested agents, two wealthy booksellers, Pinchport and Titlepage, were applied to as the best and most conscientious men in the world, to give a fair price for the valuable library. These sent an old bookmonger to look over the library, and put down a certain value on every work. The man proceeded with great activity, and no less importance. But one evening, as he approached an oaken book-case in the middle of a large division, he perceived an old man standing before it, of a most forbidding and threatening aspect. The honest bibliopole bowed low to this mysterious intruder, who regarded him only with a frown, kept his position, and, holding up his right hand, shook it at him, as if daring him to approach nearer to that place.

The man of conscience began to look around him, for he had heard of the ghost, though he disregarded the story. The door was close shut! It was impossible a mouse could have entered without his having perceived it. He looked at the old man again, and thought he discerned the spokes of the book-case through his body; and, at the same time, there appeared something like a lambent flame burning within him.

The valuator of books made toward the door as fast as his loosened and yielding joints could carry him; he even succeeded in opening it; but, in his haste to escape, he lost all manner of caution, and fell headlong over the oaken stair. In his fall he uttered a horrible shriek, which soon brought the servants from the hall to his assistance. When they arrived, he had tumbled all the way to the bottom of the stair; and, though all mangled and bleeding, he was still rolling and floundering onward, in order somewhat to facilitate his escape. They asked him what was the matter. His answer to them was, "The ghost, the ghost;" and the honest bibliopole spoke not another word that any body could make sense of, for at least two months. One of his jaws was broken, which instantaneously swelling, deprived him of the power of utterance. He was besides much lacerated and bruised, and fell into a dangerous fever. No explanation having thus been given of the circumstances of the adventure, the story soon spread, and assumed a character highly romantic, and no less uncommon. It was asserted, on the strongest evidence, that the ghost of the late laird had attacked an honest valuator of books in the library, and tossed him down stairs, breaking every bone of his body. The matter began to wear a serious aspect, and the stoutest hearts about the mansion were chilled. A sort of trepidation and uncertainty was apparent in the look, gait, and whole demeanour of every one of the inhabitants. All of them were continually looking around, in the same manner that a man does who is afraid of being taken up for debt. The old housekeeper prayed without ceasing. Nicholas, the gardener, wept night and day, that he had so soon to go to heaven. Dr. Leadbeater, the parish minister, reasoned without end, how "immaterial substances might be imaged forth by the workings of a fancy overheated and bedimmed in its mental vision, until its optics were overrun with opacity; and, that visions thus arose from the discord of colours, springing from the proportions of the vibrations propagated through the fibres of the optic nerves into the brain;" and a thousand other arguments, replete no doubt with deep philosophy, but of which no one knew the bearing of a single point. As for Gibby, the wood-forester, he drank ale and laughed at the whole business, sometimes reasoning on the one side, sometimes on the other, precisely as the whim caught him.

Randal spent little of his time in the mansion. He was engaged in the career of dissipation to which heirs are generally addicted, and grew every day more impatient to accomplish the sale of his uncle's effects at Welldean. Matters were at a stand. Ever since the misfortune of the bookman.

further proceeding there was none. Most people suspected a trick; but a trick having such serious consequences was not a toy wherewith to dally. Randal lost all temper; and at last yielded to the solicitations of his domestics, to suffer the ghost to be spoken to, that the dead might have rest, as the housekeeper termed it.

Accordingly, he sent for Dr. Leadbeater, the great metaphysical minister of the parish, and requested him to watch a night in the library; merely, as he said, to quiet the fears of the domestics, who had taken it into their heads that the house was haunted, and accordingly all order and regularity were at an end among them.

"Why, sir," said Dr. Leadbeater, "as to my watching a night, that's nothing. It is not that I would not watch ten nights to benefit your honour, either mainpernorly, laterally, or ultimately; but the sequel of such a vigilancy would be a thoroughfaring error, that by insidious vermiculation, would work itself into the moral, physical, and mental intestines of those under my charge, in abundant multiformity; so that amaritude or acrimony might be deprehended in choler. But as to the appearance of anything superhuman, I can assure you, sir, it is nothing more than a penumbra, and proceeds from some obtuse reflection, from a body superficially lustrous; which body must be spherical, or polyedrical, and the protuberant particles cylindrical, elliptical, and irregular; and according to the nature of these, and the situation of the lucid body, the sight of the beholder or beholders, from an angular point, will be affected figuratively and diametrically."

"Why, doctor," said Randal, "that, I think, is all excellent philosophical reasoning. But in one word, you pretend to hold your commission from Heaven, and to be set there to watch over the consciences, and all the moral and religious concerns of your parishioners. Now, here is a family, consisting of nearly forty individuals, all thrown into the utmost consternation by what, it seems, according to your theory, is nothing more than *an obtuse reflection*. The people are absolutely in great distress, and on the point of losing their reason. I conceive it therefore your duty, as their spiritual pastor, either to remove this obtuse reflection out of the house, or quiet their apprehensions regarding it. One poor fellow has, I fear, got his death's wounds from this same peculiar reflection. Certainly the *polyedrical body* might be found out and removed. In one word, doctor, will you be so good as attempt it, or will you not."

"I have attempted it already, worthy sir," said the doctor; "I have explained the whole nature of the deceptive refraction to you, which you may explain to them, you know."

"Thank you, doctor; I shall. 'It is an obtuse reflection,' you say, 'from a body spiritual, polyedrical, protuberant, cylindrical, elliptical, and irregular.' Bah! if they don't understand that, they deserve to be frightened out of their senses."

"Oh, you're a wag. You are witty. It may be very good, but I like not your wit."

. "Like my uncle's ghost, doctor, rather *obtuse*. But faith, doctor, between you and me, I'll give you fifty guineas in a present, and as much good claret as you and an associate can drink, if you will watch a night in the library, and endeavour to find out what this is that disturbs the people of my establishment. But, doctor, it is only on this condition, that whatever you may discover in that library, you are to make it known only to me. My late uncle's hoards of wealth and legal bonds have not been discovered; neither has his will. I have a thought that both may be concealed in that apartment; and that the old miser has had some machinery contrived in his lifetime to guard his treasure. You understand me, doctor? It imports me much; whatever you discover, *I only* must be made privy to it. It is as well that my brother, and his conceited inamorata Susan, should be under my tutelage and direction, as rendered independent of me, and haply raised above me. Doctor, what would you think of a thousand pounds in your hand as the fruits of one night's watching in that library? You are superior I know to any dread of danger from the appearance of a spirit."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Squire Randal, as to the amatorculist, and his vertiginous gilt-piece of mutability, to such I have nothing to say, and with such I have nothing to do. But to better the fortune of my alderleivest friend, in reciprocation and alternateness with my own, squares as exactly with my views as the contents of an angle, which, in all rectangle triangles is made of the side that subtendeth the right angle, and is equal to the squares which are made of the sides containing the right angle, and this is a perfect definition of my predominant inclination. The discerptibility of fortune is not only admissible, but demonstratively certain, and whatever proves adminicular to its concentration is meritorious."

"I am rather at a loss, Dr. Leadbeater."

"Your proposition, squire, as it deserveth, hath met with perfect acceptability on my part. Only, instead of claret, let the beverage for my friend and me be hock."

"With all my heart, doctor."

"Fifty, at all events, for one night's watching; perhaps a thousand?"

"The precise terms, doctor."

Everything being thus settled, the doctor sought out an associate, and fixed on Mr. Jinglekirk, an old man, who, for want of a patron, had never been able to get a living in the church, though he had been for twenty years what is called a journeyman minister. He had a weak mind, and was addicted to tippling, but had nevertheless an honest and upright heart. The doctor, however, made choice of

him on account of his poverty and simplicity, thinking he could mould him to his will with ease, should any great discovery be made.

The next week, the reverend doctor sent word to Welldean, that he and a friend meant to visit there, to pray with the family, and watch over night, to peruse some books in the library, or rather to make choice of some, previous to the approaching sale. The two divines came—the laird kept purposely out of the way, but left directions with his brother Allan, to receive and attend on them until after supper, and then leave them to themselves.

All the people assembled in the library, and Mr. Jinglekirk performed family worship at the request of the doctor. Afterwards a plentiful supper, and various rich wines, were set, of which both the divines partook rather liberally. Allan remained with them during supper, but not perfectly at his ease, for he was at least next to convinced that there was something preternatural about the house—something unaccountable he was sure there was.

After supper, chancing to lift his eyes to the old bookcase of black oak and glass, that stood exactly opposite to the fire-place, he perceived, or thought he perceived, the form of a hand pointing to a certain pane of glass in the book-case. He grew instantly as pale as ashes, on which both the divines turned their eyes in the same direction, but there was nothing. Even to Allan's eyes there was nothing. The appearance of the hand was quite gone, and he was convinced it had been an illusion. They asked him, with some symptoms of perturbation, what he saw. But he assured them he saw nothing; only he said, he had not been very well of late, and was subject to sudden qualms, that one of these had seized him, and he would be obliged to wish them a good night. They entreated him to remain till they finished the bottle, but he begged to be excused, and left them.

As soon as they were alone, the doctor began to sound Jinglekirk with regard to his principles of honesty, and mentioned to him the suspicion and the strong probability that the late old miser's treasures were all concealed in that library, and moreover, that even their host suspected that he had contrived some mechanical trick during his lifetime to guard that treasure, and it was thus that the servants, and even strangers, were frightened out of the apartment.

The reverend John Jinglekirk listened to all this with tacit indifference, filled another glass of old hock, and acquiesced with his learned friend in the strong probability of all that he had advanced. But notwithstanding every hint that the doctor could give, John (as the other familiarly styled him) would never utter a syllable indicative of a disposition to share the treasure with his liberal friend, or even to understand that such a thing was meant.

The doctor had therefore recourse to another plan, in which he was too sure of success. He toasted one bumper of wine after another, giving first "the Church," and then some noblemen and gentlemen, particular friends of his, who had plenty of livings in their gift. Then such young ladies as were particularly beautiful, accomplished, and had *the clink;* in short, the very women for clergymen's wives. Jinglekirk delighted in these toasts, and was as liberal of them as his friend could wish, drinking deep bumpers to every one of them,

> "Till his een they closed an' his voice grew low,
> An' his tongue wad hardly gang."

At length he gave one whom he pronounced to be a *divine creature,* drank a huge bumper to her health, and then, leaning forward on the table, his head sank gradually down till it came in contact with his two arms, his tongue now and then pronouncing in a voice scarcely audible, "O, a divine creature! sweet! sweet! sweet! Ha-ha-ha! he-he-he! Divine creature, doctor, I shay, is not she? Eh? O she's lovely and amiable, doctor. I shay, she's the sheaf among ten thousand!" And with that, honest Jinglekirk composed himself to a quiet slumber.

The doctor now rose up to reconnoitre, and, walking round and round the library, began to calculate with himself where it was most likely old Welldean would conceal his treasure. His eyes and his contemplations very naturally fixed on the old book-case of black oak. He had previously formed a firm resolution not to be surprised by any sudden appearance which, he conjectured, might be made by springs to start up on setting his foot on a certain part of the floor, or on opening a folding door. On the contrary, he conceived that any such appearance would be a certain evidence that the treasure was behind that, and in that place his research ought to be doubled.

Accordingly, without more ado, he went up to the old book-case. The upper two leaves were unlocked, as the man of books had left them. There were a few panes of thick, blue, navelled glass in each of them, while the transverse bars were curiously carved, and as black as ebony. "It is an antique and curious cabinet this, and must have many small concealments in it," said the doctor to himself, as he opened the door. He began to remove the books, one by one, from the left hand to the right, not to look at their contents, but to observe if there were any key-holes, or concealed drawers behind them. He had only got half way along one shelf. The next three volumes were Latin classics, royal octavo size, in boards, and unproportionally thick. He had just stretched out his hand to remove one of them, when he received from some unseen hand such a blow on some part of his body, he knew not where, but it was as if he had been struck by a thunderbolt, that made him stagger some paces backward, and fall at full length on the floor. When he received the blow, he uttered the interrogative "What?" as loud as he could bawl, and, as he fell to the floor, he uttered it again, not louder, for that was impossible, but with

more emphasis, and an inverted cadence, quite peculiar to a state of inordinate surprise.

These two startling cries, and the rumble that he made when falling, aroused the drowsy John Jinglekirk, not only into a state of sensibility, but perfect accuracy of intellect. The first thing that he saw was his reverend friend raising up his head from the foot of the table, staring wildly about him.

"John, what was that?" said he.

"I had some thought it was your reverence," said Jinglekirk.

"But who was it that knocked me down? John, was it you who had the presumption to strike me down by such a blow as that?"

"Me, doctor? I offer to knock you down? I think you might know I would be the last man in the world who would presume to do such a thing. But simply and honestly, was it not this fellow who did it?" And with that Jinglekirk pointed to the wine bottle, for he believed the doctor had only fallen asleep, and dropped from his chair. "For me, doctor, I was sitting contemplating the beauty and perfections of the divine and delicious Miss Cherrylip! And when I presume to lift a finger against you, doctor, may my right hand forget its cunning! But, good heavens!" exclaimed he, lifting his eyes beyond the doctor, "who is this we have got here?"

The doctor, who had now got upon his knees, hearing this exclamation and question so fraught with surprise, looked around, and beheld in front of the book-case, the exact figure and form of his old intimate friend, the late Laird of Welldean. He was clad in his old spotted flannel dressing gown, and a large towel tied round his head like a turban, which he always wore in the house when living. His face was a face of defiance, rage, and torment, and as the doctor looked about, he lifted up his right hand in a threatening manner. As he lifted his hand, his night-gown waved aside, and the doctor and his friend both beheld his loins and his limbs sheathed in red-hot burning steel, while a corslet of the same glowing metal inclosed his breast and heart.

It was more than enough for any human eye. The doctor roared louder than a bull, or a lion at bay, and, not taking time, or not able to rise on his legs, he galloped on all fours toward the library door, tore it open, and continued the same kangaroo motion, not down the stair, like the hapless bibliopole, but, as providence kindly directed, along an intricate winding gallery that led around a great part of the house, all the while never letting one bellow await another. At the first howl that the doctor uttered, Jinglekirk sprung to his feet to attempt an escape, and would probably have been first out at the door, had he not stumbled on a limb of the table, and fallen flat on his face. Impelled, however, by terror of the tremendous and hellish figure behind, and led onward by the cries before, he made the best of his way that he was able after his routed friend.

The doctor at last came to the end of his journey, running against a double bolted door that impeded his progress. On this he beat with all his might, still continuing his cries of horror. While in this dark and perilous state, he was overtaken by his dismayed friend, the reverend John Jinglekirk, who, not knowing what he did, seized on the doctor behind with a spasmodic grasp. This changed the character of the doctor's cries materially. Before this accident, they were loud cries, and very long cries, but now they became as short as the bark of a dog, and excessively hollow. They were like the last burstings of the heart, "Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh," for he thought the spirit had hold of him, and was squeezing him to its fiery bosom.

The domestics at length were aroused from their sleep, and arrived in the Bow Gallery, as it was called, in pairs, and groups, but still, at the approach of every one, the doctor renewed his cries, trying to redouble them. He was in a state of utter distraction. They carried him away to what they denominated the safe part of the house, and laid him in a bed, but four men could not hold him, so that before day they had put him in a strait jacket, and had old Gibby Falconer standing over him with a sapling, basting him to make him hold his peace. It was long ere the doctor was himself again, and when he did recover, it was apparent to every one that the fright had deprived him of all his philosophy relating to the physical properties of light, reflection, refraction, the prismatic spectrum, as well as transparency and opacity. These were terms never more mentioned by him, nor did he seem to recollect ought of their existence. It likewise cured him almost entirely of his thirst after money; and all his life, the sight of a man in a flannel dressing-gown, with a white night-cap on his head, threw him into a cold sweat, and rendered him speechless for some time. Jinglekirk was not much the worse, for, though he was apparently acute enough at the time, having been aroused by such a sudden surprise, yet, owing to the quantity of old hock he had swilled, he retained but imperfect recollections of what had happened.

Randal came galloping home next day to learn the issue of the doctor's vigil; and though he could not help laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks, yet was he mightily chagrined and dismayed, not knowing what to do. After cursing the whole concern, and all the ministers of the gospel, and his uncle's restless soul, he galloped off again to the high and important concerns of rout and riot.

Susan had, ever since the death of her mother, lodged with an old maiden lady in the adjoining village. She generally visited her uncle every day, who had always manifested a great attachment to her. Yet for all that, he had suffered her to run considerably in debt to the lady with whom she lived, for no earthly consideration could make Welldean part with money as long as he could keep hold of it. Nevertheless, it having been known that his will was

regularly made and signed, both Susan and Allan had as much credit as they chose. They were two fond and affectionate lovers, but all their prospects were now blasted; and Randal, finding that they were likely to be dependent on him, had the profligacy and the insolence to make a most dishonourable and degrading proposal to his lovely and virtuous cousin.

How different was Allan's behaviour toward her! True love is ever respectful. His attentions were redoubled, and they condoled with each other in their misfortune, and the dependent state in which they were now left. Allan proposed entering into the army, there being a great demand for officers and men at that period; and as soon as he had obtained a commission, he said he would then unite his fate with that of his dear Susan, and by a life of economy they would be enabled at least to live independently of others.

Susan felt all the generosity of her lover's scheme, but begged him not to think of marriage for a season. In the meantime, she said, she was resolved to engage in some nobleman or gentleman's family as a governess, for she was resolved at all events not to live dependent on his brother's generosity. Allan besought her not to think of such a thing, but she continued obstinate. She had never told Allan of his brother's base proposal to her, for fear of embroiling them together; and Randal, finding this to be the case, conceived that her secrecy boded approbation, and forthwith laid a scheme to get her into his power, and gain her to his purposes.

Allan had told his brother in confidence of his beloved cousin's simple plan, and intreated him to protect her, and keep her in that independent station to which her rank and birth entitled her. Randal said that Susan was such a perverse self-willed girl that no one could prevail on her to do aught but what she chose, yet that he would endeavour to contrive something to benefit her. After this he ceased not to boast to his associates that he would soon show them such a flower in his keeping as never before blossomed within the ports of Edinburgh. Accordingly, he engaged a lady of the town to go out in a coach in a dashing style and wait on Susan, and engage her for the family of an Irish marquis. The terms were so liberal that the poor girl's heart was elated. She was to go with this civil and polite dame for a few months, that she might be attended by some masters to complete her education and accomplishments, all which was to be liberally defrayed by the nobleman. After that she was to go into the family as an associate, with a salary of £300, an offer too tempting to be refused by one in Susan's situation.

Now it so happened that the very night on which the two clergymen watched for the ghost of old Welldean, was that on which this temptress came to Susan's lodging with her proud offer. Both Susan and the old lady with whom she lived were delighted—entertained the woman kindly; and it was agreed that she should tarry there all night, and Susan would depart for Edinburgh with her in the morning. Susan proposed sending for Allan, but to this both the old dames objected as unnecessary, as well as indelicate. They were both in Randal's interest, and, as it afterwards appeared, both knew him.

When Allan left the two ministers he found his heart so ill at ease that he could not rest. The hand that he had seen upon the wall haunted his imagination, and he felt as if something portentous were hanging over him. He went out to walk, for the evening was fine and it was scarcely yet twilight; and he naturally went toward the village which contained his heart's whole treasure, and when there as naturally drew to the house where she resided.

When he went in he found them all in a bustle preparing for his beloved Susan's departure. The two dames evaded any explanation; but Susan, with whom all deceit and equivocation with Allan was out of the question, took him straightway into her apartment and made him acquainted with the whole in a few words. He disapproved of every part of the experiment, particularly on account of their total separation. She tried to reason with him, but he remained sullen, absent, and inflexible. His mind was disarranged before this intelligence, which proved an addition he could not bear with any degree of patience. Susan had expected to delight him with the news of her good fortune, and perceiving the effect so different from her anticipations, in the bitterness of disappointment she burst into tears. All his feelings of affection were awakened anew by this. He begged pardon again and again, pressed her to his bosom, and kissing the tears from her cheek promised to acquiesce in everything. "Only, my dear Susan," continued he, "do not enter on such a step with precipitation. Take a little time to inquire into the character of this woman with whom you are to be a lodger, and the connection in which she stands with this noble family. What if the whole should be a trick to ruin a beautiful and unsuspecting young creature without fortune and friends?"

"How can you suspect such motives as these, Allan? Of that, however, there can be no danger, for I am utterly unknown to any rake of quality that would be guilty of such an action."

"At all events," said he, "take a little time. I am frightened lest something befall you. A preconception of something extraordinary impending over our fates has for some time pressed itself upon me, and I am afraid lest every step we take may be leading to it. To a friendless girl so little known a situation so lucrative and desirable could not be expected to come of itself. Have you ever made inquiry by whose interest it was procured?"

No, Susan had never once thought of it, believing, perhaps through perfect inexperience of the world,

that her own personal merits had been the sole cause. The two lovers returned straight to the parlour to make this necessary inquiry. The wily procuress on several pretences declined answering the question; but Allan pressing too close for further evasion, she acknowledged that it was all the transaction of the young laird, his brother. The old lady, the owner of the house, was loud in her praises of Randal. Allan likewise professed all his objections to be at an end, and lauded his brother for the kind part he had acted with regard to Susan. But as his eye turned towards the latter, he beheld the most perfect and beautiful statue of amazement that perhaps ever was looked on. Her arms were stretched down by her sides, obtruding only a small degree from perpendicular lines—not hanging loosely and gently, but fixed as wedges. Her hands were spread horizontally, her lips were asunder, and her eye fixed on vacancy. There was no motion in any muscle of her whole frame, which appeared to have risen up a foot taller than its ordinary size. The women were both speaking to her, but she neither heard nor saw them. Allan watched her in silent astonishment till her reverie was over. She then gave vent to her suppressed breathing, and uttered as from her bosom's inmost core, "Ah! is it so!" and sitting down on the sofa beside Allan she seemed to be trying in vain to collect her vagrant ideas. At length she rose hastily, and retired to her own apartment.

The three now all joined loudly in the praises of Laird Randal; and long they conversed and long they waited, but Susan did not return. Her friend at length went to her, but neither of them returned until Allan, losing all patience, rung the bell and desired the servant to tell them that he was going away. Mrs. Mayder, the mistress of the house, then re-entered, and appeared flustered and out of humour. "Miss has taken such a mood as I never witnessed in her before," said she. "Pray, dear Allan, go to her and bring her to reason."

Allan readily obeyed the hint, and found her sitting leaning her cheek on her hand; and at the very first she told him that she had changed her mind, and was now determined not to go with that lady nor to move a step further in the business. He imputed this to pride, and a feeling averse to lie under any obligations to his brother, and tried to reason her out of it; but it was all in vain, she continued obstinate, and Allan for the first time in his life suspected her of something exceedingly cross and perverse of disposition. Yet she chose rather to remain under these suspicions than be the cause of a quarrel between the two brothers, which she knew would infallibly ensue if she disclosed the truth.

Her lover was about to leave her with evident marks of displeasure, but this she could not brook. She changed the tone of her voice instantly, and said in the most melting accents, "Are you going to leave me, Allan? If you leave this house to-night I shall go with you, for there is no one on earth whom I can trust but yourself. I positively will not remain alone with these two women. The one I shall never speak to again, and with the other, who has so long been a kind friend, I shall part to-morrow."

Allan stared in silence, doubting that his darling was somewhat deranged in her intellect; and though he saw the tears rolling in her eyes, he thought in his heart that she was the most capricious of human beings, and cherished at that moment the illiberal suggestion that all women were the same.

"I am an unfortunate girl, Allan," continued she, "and if I fall under your displeasure it will indeed crown my misfortune; but I am not what I must appear in your eyes to be at this moment. After what passed a few minutes ago, however, I can no longer be the lodger of Mrs. Mayder."

"You are out of humour, my dear Susan, and capricious; I beg you will not make any hasty resolutions while in that humour. Your rejection of that elegant and genteel situation merely because it was procured for you by my brother is beyond my comprehension, and because this worthy woman, your sincere friend, urges you to accept of it, would you throw yourself from under her protection? No earthly motive can ever influence me to forsake you, or to act for a single moment in any other way than as your friend; but I am unwilling to encourage my dear girl in anything like an unreasonable caprice."

"And will you leave me to-night when I request and entreat you to stay?"

"Certainly not. At your request I shall sleep here to-night, if Mrs. Mayder can supply me with a sleeping apartment. Come, then, and let us join the two ladies in the parlour."

"No. If you please you may go, and I think you should; but I cannot and will not face yon lady again. I have taken a mortal prejudice to her. Allan, you are not to forsake me. Will you become security for what I owe to Mrs. Mayder, and board me somewhere else to-morrow?"

Allan stood for some time silent, and looked with pity and concern at the lovely and whimsical creature before him. "Forsake you, Susan!" exclaimed he, "how can your bosom harbour such a doubt? But pray explain to me the cause of this so sudden and radical change in all your prospects and ideas?"

"Pardon me; I cannot at this time. At some future period perhaps I may, but I cannot even with certainty promise that."

"Then I fear that they are groundless or unjust, since you cannot trust me with them."

"I am hard beset, Allan. Pray trust to my own judgment for once. But do not leave this house to-night, for something has occurred which affrights me, and if you leave me here, I know not what may happen."

Allan turned pale, for the sight that he had him-

self seen recurred to his mind, and a chillness crept over his frame. He had a dread that something portentous impended over him and his beloved Susan.

"I fear I have as good reason to be affrighted," said he; "something unfortunate is certainly soon to overtake you and me; for it appears to me as if our very natures and sentiments had undergone a change."

"I have always anticipated good," returned she, "which is too likely to be fulfilled in evil at present. I do not, however, yield in the least to despair; for I have a very good book that says, 'Never give way to despondency when worldly calamities thicken around you, even though they may drive you to the last goal; for there is One who sees all things, and estimates all aright—who feels for all his creatures, and will not give up the virtuous heart for a prey. Though your sorrows may be multiplied at night, yet joy may arise in the morning.' In this is my hope, and I am light of heart, could I but retain your good opinion. Go and join the two ladies in the parlour, and be sure to rail at me with all the bitterness you are master of. It will be but reasonable, and it will not affect poor Susan, whose measures are taken." The trio were indeed right free of their censures on the young lady for her caprice; and Mrs. Mayder, who, ever since Allan was left fortuneless, discouraged his addresses by every wile she could devise, hinted broadly enough how much she had often to do to preserve quiet, and to bear from that lady's temper. Allan assured them that it was in vain to think of prevailing on her to go with her kind benefactress at present, whom she declared she would not see again; and that both his friend Mrs. Mayder and himself had fallen under her high displeasure for endeavouring to sway her resolution. But he assured both, that he intended to use his full interest with his fair cousin, and had no doubt of ultimately bringing her to reason. He never once mentioned what she had said of leaving her old friend, thinking that was only a whim of the moment, which calm reflection would soon allay.

He slept there all night, so that he was not at Welldean when the affray happened with the two parsons. He breakfasted with the two ladies next morning, and finally leading the elegant town dame to her carriage, he took leave of her with many expressions of kindness. Susan continued locked up in her own room until the carriage rolled away from the door. When they returned up stairs, she was come into the parlour, dressed in a plain walking-dress, and appeared quite composed and good-humoured, but somewhat absent in her manner. She fixed once or twice a speaking look on Allan, but unwilling to encourage her in what he judged an unreasonable caprice, he would understand nothing. At length he bade them good morning, and said he would perhaps call in the evening. She did not open her lips, but, dropping him a slight courtesy, she went into her chamber, and followed him with her eyes, as long as he remained in view. She then sat down, and gave vent to a flood of tears. "He even declines becoming my surety for a paltry sum of money!" said she to herself; "whatever it costs me, or whatever shall become of me, which God at this moment only knows, I shall never see him again."

Allan did not return in the evening. The events of the preceding night, and the horrific cries, looks, and madness of the doctor, had thrown the people of the hall into the utmost consternation, and occupied his whole mind. Between ten and eleven at night, he was sent for expressly by Mrs. Mayder. Susan was missing, and had not been seen since the morning. Search had been made for her throughout the village, and in the neighbourhood, without effect. No one had seen her, save one girl, who *thought she saw her* walking towards the bank of the river, but was not certain whether it was she or not.

The dismay of Allan cannot be described. He was struck speechless, and for a time bereaved of all his wonted energy; and grievously did he regret his cold and distant behaviour to her that morning. He found Mrs. Mayder at one time railing at her for leaving her thus clandestinely, and threatening to have her seized and imprisoned for debt; and at other times weeping and lamenting for her as for her own child. Allan commanded her, never in his hearing to mention the sum owing to her on Susan's account, for that his brother, as their late uncle's heir and executor, was bound for it; and that he himself would voluntarily be bound for it likewise, though he had it not in his power to settle it at that instant. Silenced on this score, she now gave herself up wholly to weeping, blaming Susan all the while for ingratitude, and denying positively that she had said one word to her which she could in reason take amiss. Allan knew not what course to take; but that very night, late as it was, he sent off an express to Edinburgh after his brother, informing him of the circumstance, and conjuring him to use every means for the recovery of their dear cousin; adding, that he himself would search the country all round on the ensuing day, but would trust to his dear Randal for Edinburgh, in case she had come that way. Randal rejoiced at the news of her elopement. He had no doubt that she would shape her course toward the metropolis, and as little that he would soon discover her, and have her to himself.

Allan remained at Mrs. Mayder's house all that night likewise, having sent up orders for his servant and horses to attend him at an early hour. He slept, through choice, in the chamber which his dear Susan had so long occupied, and continued moaning all night like one at the point of death. Next morning he arose at break of day; but as he was making ready to mount his horse, having stooped to buckle his spur, he was seized with a giddiness, staggered, and fell down in a swoon

The village pharmacopolist was instantly brought, who declared the fit to be a febricula in the pericranium, and that the gentleman was in a state of great danger as to phrenitis; and, therefore, that severe perfrication was requisite, until suspended animation returned, and that then he would instantly phlebotomize him.

To this last operation, Allan's servant objected strongly, observing with great seriousness, that he did not see the necessity of *flaying* any part of his master merely for a fainting fit, out of which he would soon recover; but if such an operation was necessary, why not rather take the skin off some other part than that he had mentioned, as his master was just about to ride?

Allan recovered from his swoon, but felt great exhaustion. He was again put to bed, blooded, and blistered in the neck; but for all these, before night he was in a raging fever, which affected his head, and appeared pregnant with the worst symptoms. In this deranged and dangerous state he lay for several weeks. Susan was lost, and could not be found either dead or alive. Randal was diligent in his researches, but failed not to console himself in the meantime with the company of such other fine ladies as the town afforded. The ghost of old Welldean kept one part of the house to itself. Mrs. Tallow-chandler, the fat housekeeper, continued to pray most fervently, but especially when she chanced to take a hearty dram. Nick the gardener did nothing, save preparing himself for another and a better state; and Gilbert the wood-cleaver was harder on the laird's strong beer than ever. Of all wasteful and ruinous stocks in this wasteful and ruinous world, a pack of idle domestics are the most so. I'll not write another word on the subject.

The last-mentioned worthy, happening to say to some of his associates, that he would watch a night in the library by himself for a bottle of brandy, and speak to his old master too, if he presented himself; and this being told to Randal the next time he came out, he instantly ordered the beloved beverage to be provided to Gilbert, and promised, moreover, to give him five guineas to drink at the village, when and how he had a mind. There was no more about it; Gilbert took the bait, and actually effected both, if his own word could be believed. It is a great pity there was nothing but the word of a man mortally drunk, to preserve on record the events of that memorable night. All that can now be done, is to give the relation he gave next morning; for after he had got a sleep, and was recovered from his state of ebriety, the circumstances vanished altogether from his mind.

Randal remained in the house all the night, though not by himself, curious to be a witness of Gilbert's experiment; for every one in the house assured him that he would be dislodged. Gilbert, however, stood his ground, never making his appearance; and after the rising of the sun, when the laird and a number of his attendants broke in upon him, they found the brandy drunk out, and honest Gilbert lying flat on the floor, sound asleep. With much ado they waked him, and asked if he had seen the ghost?

"The ghost! Oh yes—I remember now—I suppose so. Give me something to drink, will you? Eh! oh! my throat's on fire! Oh-oh-hone!

They gave him a jug of small beer, which he drained to the bottom.

"Vile wishy-washy stuff that!—Cooling though. That brandy has been rather strong for me. Hech-heh-heh, such a night!"

"Tell me seriously, Mr. Falconer," said Randal, "what you saw, and what you heard."

"What I saw, and what I heard? That's very good! He-he-he! *Very* good indeed! Why, you see, master (*hickups*), I—I saw the ghost—saw your un-(*hick*)ncle—state and form—never saw him better—(*hick*) quite jocular, I assure you."

"Did he indeed speak to you, Gilbert?"

"Speak! To be sure—the whole night. What did he else?"

"By all means, then, if you can remember, tell us something that he said, if it were but one sentence."

"Remember! Ay, distinctly. Every word. He-he-he-he! 'Gilbert Falconer,' says he; 'Your glass is out.' He-he-he-he! (and all this while Gilbert was speaking in a treble voice, and a tongue so altered with drunkenness, that it was difficult to understand what he said. 'Your glass is out,' says he—It was true too—there it stood as empty as it is at this moment. 'Gilbert (*hick*) Falconer,' says he, 'your glass is out.' 'Thank you, sir,'—says I—'Thank you for the hint, sir,' says—I—He-he-he! 'Your glass is out,' says he. 'Thank you kindly, sir,' says I, 'for—the hint—You're quite a gentleman—now,' says I,—He-he-he!—'Quite a gentleman,' says I—'I have seen other days with you,' He-he-he-he!—I said so—I did, upon my honour. Give me something to drink, will you? Ay; that was the way of it—He-he-he-he!—Gilbert Falconer,' says he; 'Your'"—(*hick*)——

"The old intoxicated idiot is mocking us," said Randal; "there is nothing to be made of such stuff as that."

"I never knew him tell a lie," said Mrs. Tallow-chandler, "even at the drunkenest time I ever saw him. Would it please your honour to ask him if that was the first sentence that the apparition spoke to him? If we can bring what passed to his mind by degrees, he will tell us the truth."

Gilbert was still sitting on the floor, rhyming over his story of the glass, and indulging in fits of idiotic laughter at it; when Randal again returned to him, and aroused his further attention, by asking him if that was the very first sentence that the ghost spoke to him?

"The first sentence!—No. Bless your honour, it

was the last. I took the hint and—filled that champagne glass—full to the brim—of brandy. I thanked him first though—upon my honour, I did,—'Thank you for the hint, sir,' says I—and drank it off. 'Here's a good night's rest to us both,' says I—I saw nae mair of him."

"Did he vanish away just then, Gilbert?"

"I daresay he did; (*hick*) at least, if he was there I did not see him. If there had been fifty ghosts it would have been the same to old Gibby. I think it's time we had both a sleep, if your honour, or your honour's likeness, or whatever you are, be speaking that way. So here's a——"

"In what way do you mean, Gilbert? What was he then speaking about?"

"Did not I tell you?"

"Not that I remarked. Or if you did, it has escaped me."

"Tut! I told you every syllable to the end. Give me something to drink, will you? And remember I have won my five guineas."

"Well, here they are for you. Only you must first tell me distinctly all that passed from beginning to end."

"Odd's my life, how often would you hear it? I have told you it word for word ten times. 'Gilbert Falconer,' says he, 'I think you are an honest man.' 'Thank you sir,' says I.—'You are come to the right way of thinking at last,' says I.—'There was no word of that when I lost my butlership,' says I.—'It agreed very well with my constitution, that.' He-he-he! I said so. He grew very serious then; I knew not what to do. 'I am now in the true world, and you still in the false one,' said he, 'and I have reason to believe you honest at heart; therefore, I have a sacred and important charge to give you; you must read through the Greek and Latin classics.' 'What!' said I. 'Yes,' said he, 'you must go through the classics from beginning to end.' 'I beg your pardon there,' says I. 'Do this for me,' said he, 'else the sand of your existence is run.' 'What!' said I, 'why, the thing is out of my power; if you are speaking that way, it is time we were both gone to sleep.' 'Gilbert Falconer,' says he, 'your glass is run out.' 'Thank you for the hint, sir,' says I. He-he-he! That was the best of it all; I thought matters were growing too serious. 'Thank you for the hint, sir,' says I; 'I can replenish it,' so I took a bumper to his better rest, that would have given three men up their feet; I saw no more. He may be standing here yet for aught I know."

"Gilbert, you are endeavouring to amuse us with the mere fumes of a distempered imagination. It is impossible, and altogether unnatural, that one should rise from the grave, and talk to you such flummery as this. Confess honestly, that there is not one word of it true."

"True? By this right hand it is true every word. May I never see the light of heaven, if it is not the down-right truth, as near as my memory retains it. A man can answer for no more." As he said this, there was a glow of seriousness in his drumly looks, as well as of anger that his word should have been doubted.

"I will answer for it that it is true," said Mr. Tallow-chandler.

"So will I," said old Nicholas.

"But was it not a dream, Gilbert?" inquired Randal.

"No," said Gilbert, with more steadiness than he had hitherto spoke. "I saw your late uncle with my bodily eyes, in the very likeness in which I have seen him in this apartment a thousand times, just as he wont to be, calm, severe, and stern."

"Were you nothing terrified?"

"Why, I cannot say I was perfectly at my ease. As far as I recollect, I struggled hard to keep my courage up. I did it. This was the lad that effected it—this black bottle. Come let us go down to the hall, and have something to drink."

These were glorious days for old Gilbert, as long as the five guineas lasted. Every night was spent at a little inn in the village, where he and Andrew Car, gamekeeper, more properly game-destroyer, to the Laird of Lamington, had many a sappy night. Andrew was the prototype of his jolly master, though only like the shadow to the great original, yet it was agreed by the smith and souter Fergusson both, that Gilbert's wit predominated; at least, as long as the five guineas lasted, the matter was not to be disputed, and that was not a very short time. At the inn where our old hearty cocks met, strong whisky was sold at three-half-pence a gill, and brandy at twopence. Of course sixpence each was as much as they could carry.

It is a pity that young men should ever drink ardent spirits. They have too much fire in them naturally. But it is a far greater pity that old men should ever want them. Drink reanimates their vital frame, and, as they recount the deeds of their youth, brings back, as it were, a temporary but present enjoyment of those joyous days. It would have done any man's heart good, to have seen the looks of full and perfect satisfaction that glowed in the faces of these notable old men, every time that Gilbert compounded the materials, grateful and inspiring, for a new reeking jug. How each sung his old hackneyed song, heard from night to night, and from year to year, but always commended; how they looked in each other's faces, shook each other's hands, and stroked one another's bald crown! It is a pity such old men should ever want something to drink.

In all these nights of merriment and confidence, however, Gilbert would never converse a word about the apparition. Whenever the subject was mentioned, he grew grave, and pretended to have forgot every circumstance relating to the encounter, and when told what he had said, he only remarked, that he had not known what he was saying; and it is not

certain if he had not by this time reasoned himself into the belief that the whole was a dream.

After a long, dangerous, and wasting illness, Allan grew better. Gilbert had visited him every day before he went to his carousals, and the attendants were of opinion, that Allan's recovery was more owing to the directions he gave for his treatment, than all that the medical men did for him. During the height of the fever, in the wanderings of his imagination, he was constantly calling on the name of Susan Somerville, and he generally called every one by her name that came to his bedside. She was still nowhere to be found; even Randal, with all his assiduity, had not been able to trace her. But for nine days running, there were two young ladies came in a coach every day to Mrs. Mayder's door, where Allan still lay, and the one went up stairs and saw him, while the other kept still in the coach.

As soon as his reason returned, his first inquiries were about Susan, and, as they were obliged to tell him the truth, it occasioned two or three relapses. At length, the guard of the mail coach flung down a letter. It was directed to Mrs. Mayder, but hers was only a blank cover, inclosing one to Allan. His was without date, and simply as follows:—

"I am glad of your recovery, and write this, to intreat you not to distress yourself on my account, for I am well, and situated to my heart's content. Make no inquiries after me, for, in the first place, it is impossible for you to find me out, and moreover, were you to do so, I would not see you. Look to our late uncle's affairs, only in as far as you are yourself concerned. I have engaged another to see justice done to me. If I had not found more kindness and generosity among strangers, than from my relatives and those I trusted, hard indeed would have been the fate of SUSAN SOMERVILLE."

Allan read the letter over and over, cried over it like a child, for his nerves were weak and irritable by reason of his late severe illness, and always, between hands, thanked Heaven for her health and safety. In the meantime, he planned fifty schemes to find her out, and as many to bring about a reconciliation. "I must have offended her grievously," said he to himself, "but it has cost me dear, and I was so far from doing it intentionally, that at that very time, I would cheerfully have laid down my life for her." He had only one thing to console him; he thought he discerned more acrimony in her letter than was consistent with indifference. He now got better very fast, for his mind was constantly employed on one object, which relieved it of the languor so injurious to one advancing toward a state of convalescence.

In the meantime, Gilbert's drinking money was wearing low, which he found would be an inconvenience for Andrew and him, and the two made it up one night over their jug, that they would watch for the ghost together, for the same sum each that Gilbert had formerly realized. One difficulty occurred, who it was that was to give them this. The laird had not been at Welldean Hall for a long time, and, as for Allan, his finances were so low that he could not spare them so much, though they had no doubt he would gladly have given triple the sum to have this mystery further explored. At the first proposal of the subject, Andrew Car was averse to it, but as their finances wore nearer and nearer to an end, he listened proportionally with more patience to Gilbert's speculations, and always at their parting, when considerably drunk, they agreed perfectly on the utility of the experiment. It is indeed believed that Gilbert had anxious and fearful desires of a further communication with this unearthly visitant, of whose identity and certainty of appearance he had no doubt. Nicholas had once seen it in the twilight, beckoning him from the garden towards the library, and he himself had again at midnight seen and conversed with it face to face, but from all that he could gather, the charges which it then gave him, appeared to have been so whimsical, he could make nothing of their meaning. That a spirit should come from the unseen world, to induce a man of his age to begin a course of studies in Greek and Latin, a study that he always abhorred, was a circumstance only to be laughed at, yet it was impossible he could divest himself of a consciousness of its reality.

On the other hand he perceived there was something radically wrong in the appropriation of his late master's effects. His will was lost, or had been fraudently concealed, and those to whom he was sure the late laird intended leaving the best share of his immense fortune were thus cut off from any, save a trivial part contained in moveables. It was no wonder that Gilbert, who was a well-informed single-hearted man, was desirous if possible to see those righted whom he conceived to have been so grossly wronged, and whom he now saw in very hard circumstances; but, alas, he did not know the worst!

From the time that Allan received the letter from Susan, to that of his complete recovery, he had done nothing but form schemes how to discover his fair cousin, and, after discussing them thoroughly for nights and days together, he pitched on the right one. He knew there was a young lady in Edinburgh, the only daughter of a reverend professor, with whom Susan had been intimate at the boarding school, and still kept up a correspondence. Though Allan had never seen this young lady, yet, as he knew Susan was shy of her acquaintance, and had so few in the metropolis that she knew anything about, he conceived that she must either be living with Miss B——, or that the latter was well aware of her circumstances, and the place of her concealment.

He knew that if he applied personally or by letter, he would be repulsed, and therefore went to Edinburgh, and took private lodgings, with a determination to watch that house day and night rather than not see who was in it, and to dog Miss B——

wherever she went, assured that she would visit Miss Somerville often, if they were not actually living together. His surmises were right. He soon discovered that Susan was living in this worthy professor's house, and not very privately either. She walked abroad with Miss B—— every good day.

Allan, full of joy, flew to his brother's rooms, and communicated to him the intelligence of the happy discovery he had made, intending, at the same time, to settle with Randal how they were to act, in order to regain their cousin's confidence. He found Randal confined to his room, undergoing a course of severe medicines, he having made rather too free with his constitution. He professed great satisfaction at hearing the news, yet there appeared a confused reserve in his manner that Allan did not comprehend. But the former was soon relieved from his restraint, by a visit from two of his associates in dissipation. The conversation that then ensued astounded Allan not a little, who had led a retired and virtuous life. He never before had weened that such profligate beings existed. They laughed at his brother's illness, and seemed to exult in it, telling him they had taken such and such mistresses off his hand until he got better, and therefore they hoped he would enjoy his couch for six months at least. Their language was all of a piece. Allan was disgusted, and left the house, and then Randal displayed to his honourable associates how he stood with his charming cousin, and how, if it were not for that whining sweet-milk boy, his brother, whom the foolish girl affected, he could be in possession of that incomparable rose in a few days. He told them where she was, within a few doors of him. One of the bucks had got a sight of her, and declared her the finest girl that ever bent a busk, and both of them swore she should not escape their fraternity, were she locked in the seraglio of the grand Seignor. Long was the consultation, and many proposals were brought forward, but these it is needless to enumerate, as the one adopted will appear in the sequel.

Both Allan and Susan had received charges of horning on debts to a considerable amount after their uncle's death. Allan applied to his brother, in whom he still placed the most implicit confidence, who promised that he would instantly cause a man of business pay them all up to a fraction. This he actually did; but the man who transacted this for him was a low specious attorney, quite at his employer's beck. He had plenty of Randal's money in his hand, but these bills were not particularly settled. This was a glorious discovery. Captions were served in the country, the one at Mrs. Mayder's the other at Welldean, as the places of residence of the two debtors, and none of them being there, the time expired. The attorney had got his cue; the unsuspecting lovers were watched apart, and both of them seized and conveyed to jail, but each quite unconscious of what had happened to the other. Allan wrote instantly to his brother, expostulating with him on his negligence. He answered him civilly, but carelessly, telling him that he had neglected to settle with the scoundrelly attorney, having run himself short of cash, but that he would lose no time in getting the affair settled. However, as his health was so bad he begged Allan to have a little patience, and not to accept of relief from any other person, else he would be both grieved and affronted. Allan lay still in prison and waited, but waited in vain.

Susan was seized in the Canongate at three o'clock, as she was returning with Miss B—— from viewing the palace of Holyrood. The latter was so confounded that she would have fainted on the street, had she not been supported by some ladies and gentlemen that were passing at the time. Susan suffered herself to be taken into custody in dumb dismay, never opening her lips. One of Randal's worthy and genteel associates was near at hand to abuse the messenger, the turnkey, and every one connected with the disgraceful affair; and at the same time he offered to become bound for the whole debt and take the lady off with him.

This being a business that required some consideration, his proposal was little attended to by the men in office, who regarded it as mere fustian; but poor Susan, in the forlorn and helpless state in which she found herself, could not help being struck with the young stranger's generosity, and thanked him in moving terms, but at the same time rejected his kind offer, and assured him she would soon be relieved. He swore he would rather see all Edinburgh burned to ashes ere he left such a lady in prison; and if she was determined not to accept of a temporary rescue from him, he would remain in prison with her till he saw her relieved in some way more suited to her ideas of decorum. She reminded him that such a proceeding would be the reverse of all decorum, and however much she might value his company, there was a necessity that he should leave her to herself and her own resources. No, no; he would be —— if he would. She should either go with him or he would remain with her—any of the alternatives she chose. It would be a disgrace to leave a lady in such circumstances, and he disclaimed the idea of it. The contemptible rascals! they should not want money. Did they think that he could not pay them the paltry sum of four or five hundred pounds, the confounded puppies? Rot their ugly bodies if he would think much to dust the pavement with them!

Susan smiled at the extravagance of the young man; but though it was a smile of pity, it made him still more outrageous. He cursed all lawyers and attorneys, as well as all people to whom ever debts were owing, sending them all to a certain place of retribution with one sweep. By the Lord Harry! if he were a messenger at arms, if any low-lifed miserable whelp desired him to seize and immure *a lady* in such a place as that in which they sat, and

such a lady as they have lodged here to-night!" said he;—"I beg your pardon, madam, but I can easily see that this is some vile plot; for you are born, bred, and educated to other fortune than this. For Heaven's sake, let me disappoint the culprits and convey you to a place of safety. I have given you my name; I am a gentleman and a man of honour, I hope; suffer me to write to some friends and relieve you forthwith!"

Miss Somerville positively declined his intervention for the present, and entreated that she might be left to her own thoughts and her own resources; yet still she did it in that civil and affectionate way that the puppy believed or affected to believe that she wished him rather to stay. "But are you sure the ragamuffin scoundrels will do you no harm?" said he, and without waiting for an answer returned one himself. "Confound them if I like their looks very well, though. No, no, madam; you must forgive me, but in truth I have not the heart to leave you here by yourself. Suffer me but to write to some friends. I'll raise all Edinburgh, but I'll have you set at liberty. I'll bring Major Graham and all the soldiers in the castle to storm the old hovel before I leave you here! Suffer me to write to my friends or some of yours; it is all one, provided I get you out of this."

Susan continued obstinate, telling him she would write to her own friends herself, if he would be so kind as give her leisure; and as for his agency, she assured him again that she was not at liberty to accept of it. He continued however to wrangle with her on that score, to flatter her one while and abuse her creditors another, until the arrival of Professor B——, who sent in his name and asked admission, his daughter having alarmed him and hurried him away to the prison without so much as knowing what was the matter. The spark then bowed and made off, as somewhat alarmed, saying he would call again. The reverend divine and he passed one another immediately within the door of the apartment. The buck bowed, and then cocked up his head again considerably to the leeward of the perpendicular line, while the professor stared him in the face as striving to recollect him. Both passed on, and the cause of meeting with Miss Somerville, the place, and the subject they had to converse on, quite banished from the professor's mind to ask who her gay visitor was. This parson came, honest man! with the full intent of relieving Miss Somerville, but when he heard the amount of the debt he turned pale—it was not a sum for a poor clergyman who had a family of his own to part with off-hand. Indeed, what man in the same vocation would have done it for a young lady almost a stranger, who had run herself into so much debt so early, and whom her natural guardians, it appeared, had not thought it prudent to relieve. He had besides heard so much of her sentiments relating to her cousin, the present laird, when he received her into his house, that he had small hopes of being reimbursed there, and that appeared to be the lady's principal dependence. In short, they could come to no conclusion whereby to obtain immediate relief. Miss Somerville proposed that he should borrow the sum on the security of her share of her uncle's effects; but even there he discovered that he would be involved, and fought shy, but concluded by observing that "something behoved to be done immediately."

Before leaving the place the professor had some conversation with the keeper, who informed him that the young gentleman, the lady's friend, who was lately gone, had bespoke the best apartment that was unoccupied in that part of the jail appropriated to debtors, and in case she was detained, every accommodation befitting her rank. He then asked the keeper who that gentleman was. He named him, name, surname, and title: the divine shook his head, knowing him to be one of the most notorious profligates in the kingdom, and left the prison nothing improved in his estimation of Miss Somerville, and almost resolved, whatever his daughter might say, to leave her to shift for herself.

When it was wearing late, Mr. M'——, Randal's gallant friend, returned to the prison, sent in his name and compliments to Susan, and after some demur was admitted. What would not youth and innocence grasp at for deliverance, if shut up within the walls of a prison and the darksome night approaching? Alas! the female heart clings too fondly to proffered kindness, especially in times of danger or distress; without suspecting or endeavouring to weigh the selfish principles from which the apparent generosity springs, the guileless heart judges from its own motions. It had been agreed among the associates that M'—— was never to mention Randal's name, else, as the latter alleged, Susan's delicacy in that point would ruin all; and as he was run quite short of ready cash and in an infirm state of health, M'—— was to pay the greater part of Miss Somerville's debt, on condition that he had the honour of seducing her.

Well, into Susan's apartment he came, bringing £200 with him in notes, and offering his personal bond for the rest, payable in two months with interest. Susan made many objections, but actually wept with gratitude at the disinterested kindness of the gallant young man. The attorney was consulted; but he had got his cue, and after many hems and haws and repetitions of learned law terms, consented, so that the poor innocent cygnet was now left fairly in the power of the fox. She had likewise given her consent, with an overflowing heart; but at the last, when everything was arranged for her departure, some slight demur arose about the place whereto she was to be taken. She insisted on being taken to the house of Professor B——; but this her benevolent guardian angel as violently protested against, declaring that the divine was unworthy of her confidence, a cold-hearted, calculating worldling, who

had gone off with a few dubious expressions, and left her in the prison without asking any more after her, or coming back even to wish her a good night.

"To what place do you then propose to take me in the meantime?" said Susan.

"I propose to take you to a relation of my own," said he, "who keeps a boarding-house for young ladies of quality, where you may either remain for a season, or for a few nights, or weeks, as you feel disposed."

"But will it not look awkward for an utter stranger to go to such a house? How can I expect that the mistress will receive among young ladies of quality a girl just relieved from prison, and going to her house at this time of the evening, in company with a gentleman whom she never saw till a disagreeable circumstance procured her the honour of his friendship this present day?"

"Why, the truth is, that I know no woman on earth who is so particular about the characters of her inmates as my worthy friend is. She must have the most absolute proofs of their capabilities, tempers, and dispositions, and is strict in these matters almost to a proverb. But it so happens that with her my word or will is a law. I have been a good friend to her house. My purse has been open to her by day and by night, and in short my fortune almost at her disposal. Into that house, therefore, you are certain of admittance. There you are perfectly safe, and from thence you can write to your friends, and arrange everything in future as you shall choose."

"Well, you are so generous and so candid that I can never distrust your honour. I will send for Miss B—— to your friend's house and consult with her there, and must trust myself to your protection for the night. What is the name of your friend to whose house I am going?"

"Mrs. M'——, St. James' Street."

"Very well."

What a dreadful confusion the ghost made at Welldean Hall that night! It was not as if one disturbed sinner had arisen from his grave only, but as if all his warlike progenitors for many ages had returned to that scene of bustle and array. Scarcely had the rubied west lost its summer dyes, and twilight drawn her veil over the bosom of nature, when the inmates of Welldean heard a noise as if half a score of men had been tearing down the shelves and books of the library, and dashing them on the floor. Nothing like it had ever been heard in the house before. All the domestics, high and low (for there is no class of people among whom such subordination of rank is preserved), crowded into the housekeeper's room, huddling one behind another, and testifying by their looks the mortal terror and astonishment that overwhelmed their hearts.

Little wonder was it! The noise continued to increase and redouble. It grew, so that it was not only as if the old folios had been dashed down in a rage on the floor, but as if the roof and rafters had been plucked down, and put into the hands of infernal giants to smash the building in pieces to its foundations. This turmoil was occasionally accompanied, when at the loudest, by a voice such as man never heard. It was not like any sound produced by art, nor was it precisely like thunder; but they all agreed, that there was nothing in nature to which it bore so strong a resemblance as a flooded roaring cataract, uttering human words. Gilbert was down in the village at his cups; but, low as they rated him, in this dilemma he was sent for. The work of devastation above stairs continued and grew. The housekeeper begged of them all to join in prayer. This they were very willing to do, for they saw no other staff on which they could lean; but then there was none to lead them. Mrs. Tallow-chandler said, though she was a poor, weak, and sinful woman, she would attempt it. Who knew but Heaven would have mercy on them? They all kneeled, and the good woman began; but her sentences were few and disjointed; and she continued repeating and repeating the same thing, till those around her were beginning to lose their gravity. At the first, when they began, and all were devoutly serious, every noise was hushed. The sudden stillness that ensued was in itself awful. Let erring and presumptuous man be assured of this, that the devotion of the heart never fails having influence in heaven, while all lukewarmness and indifference in sacred things is only a mockery of the Almighty, and aught but protection may be expected therefrom. At the beginning all was still; and the fiends, of which the house seemed full, appeared to be hushed and quelled, by the simple words of prayer devoutly offered up; but no sooner did the reverence due to that Being before whom they professed to be kneeling, begin to subside, than the noise began again gradually to increase; and, as Mrs. Tallow-chandler was continuing her imbecile repetitions, it came rushing nearer and nearer, like a speaking whirlwind, till at length it burst open the door of the apartment where they were assembled, and stunned them with a deafening yell. It was a sort of half-howling half-whistling sound; but nothing was seen. Mrs. Tallow-chandler joined it with a loud scream, and went into hysterics. No one regarded her. The female part of the family were all huddled into corners, and all uttering the same kind of shivering, moaning sound. The men were sitting on their seats in a half-stooping posture, with their shoulders up, their hair standing on end, and their eyes bent fearfully on the door. "May the Lord Almighty preserve us!" cried old Nicholas. "Amen!" cried a hollow, tremulous voice, at a distance; "and some that are better than you all! amen!"

None durst venture out in order to escape, for the inhabitants of another world seemed now to be crowding the passages between them and the door: neither durst they throw themselves into the sunk

area, for there was a story below them; though every one would gladly have been out, even though kingdoms had been their ransom. But when the women heard Nicholas, the gardener, pronounce the above sacred words, with the mysterious response that was added, from a feeling that the wrath of the spirit was appeased by it, they called on Nicholas with one voice, "Oh! Nicholas, pray! pray! for God's sake, pray!" Nicholas obeyed without delay; and in the agony of his heart prayed with great fervour. But in the course of a few sentences, his prayer grew selfish, and he began to mention his own fears—his own personal safety and well-being. Such imperfections cling to man's nature! The rest could not join with him in his petitions, forgetting themselves; and they felt sorry that the tenor of his words was of that nature that they could not. The derision of the spirit was withheld by Heaven no longer than this principle of self began to develope its cringing, cowardly, abominable features. A distant laugh of scorn was heard to begin as if in the library, with a hollow shaking tone, like that uttered by the bittern at midnight; but it increased every moment till it made the house tremble, and drew nigher and nigher, until the chairs on the floor began to totter. It seemed again approaching to the back of the door with tenfold violence. The heart of human being could not stand it. Some of the men that were next to the windows flung them open, and threw themselves into the area below. It was amazing with what celerity the rest followed, darting out at the windows head foremost, as swift as doves from their pigeon-holes, when scared in their habitation. In half a minute the whole family, consisting of nearly forty individuals, were weltering in three heaps on the gravel that bedded the sunk way, and every one escaped as best he could, and ran for the village.

What a figure they made when they went there! Every one was covered with blood; for those who were not cut and mangled in the fall, were stained all over by the rest who were. They looked like so many demons themselves; and they found that the housekeeper and two of the maids were missing; on which they rationally concluded, that they having been the greatest sinners, the spirit had got power over them, and taken them with him. The villagers were petrified; appearing to be even more confounded, and at their wit's end, as the saying is, than the fugitives themselves.

While these things, which have been narrated, were going on at the hall, Gilbert, and Andrew Car, late gamekeeper to the Laird of Lamington, were enjoying themselves at the public-house. They were both right far forward in their evening carousal, when the messenger from the hall arrived, to entreat Gilbert's attendance without a moment's delay. Gilbert was in no such hurry; he helped himself to a glass, Andrew Car to another, and the boy to a third.

"Here's for you, Master Rory, my good fellow; take this off to———to help your wind; and then tell us out your s———story at the utmost leisure. It is all buffoonery to be in such a haste. What signifies it to run puffing and—blowing through the world in that guise. Here's to you, boy. Your good health I say, Master Rory. Sit down, sirrah, and take time, I tell you. Is it not the best way, Andrew Car?"

Now Andrew had one peculiarity of which I must apprise my readers, that they may understand him aright. He had a very rapid utterance. Many a man speaks quick, but there never was a man in the world spoke half so quick as Andrew Car. Andrew had likewise two keys that he spoke on, C sharp and G natural, and his voice had no more but these, either intermediate or subordinate. He took the former on all occasions when his passions were ruffled, particularly when he disapproved highly of anything, and the latter in his ordinary conversation. I shall therefore put down all the sentences adapted by him to the former key in italic characters, that every one may go on with him, and understand him thoroughly. I hate that my characters, which are all drawn from nature, should not be properly comprehended.

"Should not a man always do a thing leisurely, Andrew Car? Is it not the best and most eligible way?"

"Ooo-yes-yes—right-Gibby—right-Gibby—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—right-right—luck-o'-leisure-Gibby—luck-luck—billy, luck-luck."

"I say, Master Rory—my boy—do you—hear—that? Is not that a beautiful specimen—of—Andrew Car's theory and mine? Eh?—He-he-he-he—Eh! Is it not, lad?"

"Oh, Mr. Gilbert, I have not time. Mrs. Tallow-chandler and a' the fowk sent me to gar you come hame directly, an' pray against the ghost. Oh, Gibby, the bogle has been very ill the night, an' we a' suspect it's the deil."

"The deil, Mr. Rory? the deil! Did you say it was the deil, lad? My faith—my man—if it be the deil—that's another thing than a bogle, let me tell you."

"He's layin' about him at an awfu' rate; an' gin ye dinna come an' speak to him, an' lair him, or pray him down, he'll soon hae a' the house about their lugs. When I came alang the ither wauk, rinnin' wi' fright, I heard a kind o' hooning sound, an' I lookit ower my shoulder, an'———Mercy! what d'ye think I saw? I saw the deil i' the shape o' the auld laird, but as heegh as an ordinar tree, standin' on the gavel wa' wi' a great burnin' kipple in his hand; an' he had a' the house daddit down the length o' the third storey. O Gibby, haste an' gang hame, and see if aught can be done."

"What can be done, boy! why, nothing can be done to pacify him, but reading Latin and Greek. Nothing but going through the classics. We'll go,

however. Andrew, you are a scholar, and have the Greek."

"Ooo, no-no-no-no-no—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—no-Greek, billy—no-Greek—no-Greek—no-Greek—no-no-no-no-no-no."

"Well, but we shall go, howsoever. You know we have now agreed to go together and speak to it. I am in a proper key to go anywhere—we'll go—it is as well soon as late, when the family is in extremity—we'll be well rewarded—come, let us go."

"*Oooo-no-no—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—not-the-night—not-the-night—not-the-night*—some-other—some-other—some-other—madness-billy—madness-madness-madness—folly-folly-folly—'nother-gill—'nother-gill—'nother-gill."

"Boy—give my compliments—to Mrs. Tallow—chandler, and tell her, that my—friend, Mr. Car, dares not come to-night, because the ghost is irritated—and it is dangerous to meddle with him; but———"

"True-Gibby—true-true-true—right-billy—right-billy—right-right-right. Kittle-business—kittle-business—kittle-kittle-kittle—'nother-gill—'nother-gill—'nother-gill—lass-lass-lass—gill-gill-gill."

"But as I was saying—if it is the deil he must have a sacrifice before he lay. They must give him one of their number, which may well be spared."

"Sacrifice? sacrifice—what-Gibby—what-Gibby—what-what-what—sacrifice—sacrifice—fie-fie-fie—no-no-no-no-no."

"It is a literal fact, sir—and well known to all exorcists. They must do it by lot, tell them, boy. Even if Satan should appear when we two watch together, we must cast lots which of us is to be his to appease him. Or, for instance, if I am the speaker, I have the power and right to consign you over to him."

"*Oooo-no-no-no—Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—no-no-no—no-right—no-right—no-right-billy—no-no-no-no-no*—living-soul—living-soul—not-yours—not-yours-billy—not-yours—no-no-no-no—soul-soul—soul-billy—not-do—not-do—not-do—no-no-no-no."

"I will reason this matter with you, my worthy friend. Suppose you and I make a contract together—to go and watch an incensed spirit, which, to a certainty, makes its appearance—we take our chance together, you know—why, is it not better that one of us should make a sacrifice of the other, than that it should take us both? or, for instance, if you take it on you to address him———"

"No-no-billy—not-address—not-address—not-speak—not-speak—no-no-no-no-no. Too-quick—too-quick—too-quick-quick. 'Stonish-him—'stonish-him—'stonish-him. All-wrang-Gibby—all-wrang—all-wrang—all-wrang-wrang-wrang-wrang. Precious-soul-billy—precious-soul—precious-soul—precious-soul-soul-soul—Gibby-lad—Gibby-lad—Gibby-lad. Have-you-there—have-you-there—have-you-there—ha-ha-ha! Soul-soul-soul-Gibby-lad—Gibby-lad—ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!"

This sort of argument used by Andrew Car is the worst to answer of all others, because the rest of the company severally join in it, and then the argument is at an end. At this time it was used by Andrew in such a way that it had precisely that effect. Gilbert joined in the laugh, and the gamekeeper chuckled and crowed over his victory.

Another smoking jug having by this time been made, the dilemma of the family at the hall was soon totally forgotten; even the lad Roderick said little more about it, having no wish to return; and there they sat till they were found out and joined by their bloody and half-deranged companions. And then, drunk as the two veterans were, the strangeness of the tale made them serious for a little, though always disposed, in a short time, to forget the subject. Nothing could cheer the hearts of the fugitives in the smallest degree. The horrid scene that they had escaped from, and the loss of their three companions, held their minds chained up in utter dismay. They marvelled what the ghost would do with the three women. Some said he would tear them limb from limb; some that he would take them to a high rock, and throw them headlong down; and some said that he would take them away to hell with him, soul and body; but none thought of attempting a rescue.

It chanced, however, to come into Gilbert's recollection, that he lay under many obligations to the fat housekeeper, for many a scold, and many a glass of strong beer and queich of brandy beside; and he gallantly proposed to go, for one, to the hall, and see if any remains of the women were left. No one would join him, a circumstance that always had the effect of exalting Gilbert's courage, and he persisted in his resolution, advancing many half-intelligible arguments in favour of the measure, which none of them regarded, till he turned his eyes on Andrew, and remarked, that he surely would not desert him, as he was always noted for befriending the fair sex.

"Ha-ha-ha, Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—some-ways-billy—some-ways—some-ways—some-ways-good-at-a-pinch—good-at-a-pinch—good-at-a-pinch—Gibby lad—hah-hah-hah-hah-hah!"

"Then you surely will accompany me, Mr. Car! —Eh?—aren't you?—you are bound in honour, sir. —Eh?"

"Don't-know-Gibby—don't-know—don't-know. No-joke-this—no-joke—no-joke—no-joke-at-all-billy. Long-spoon-sup-wi'-the-deil—long-spoon-sir—long-spoon. Not-safe—not-safe—not-safe-at-all-sir—no-no-no-no-no-no."

"Why, Mr. Andrew—let—me—tell you, sir—are you a man of honour—and courage, sir, as I always took you for, eh?"

"Ooo-yes-yes-yes-yes—hope-so—hope-so—hope-so-Gibby—hope-so."

"Then what are you afraid of, sir? Eh? I would defy the devil, the world, and the flesh, and despise them."

"*Oooo-no-no-Gibby-Gibby; no-no-no-no—not-the-world-and-the-flesh—not-the-world-and-the-flesh—no-no-no-no.* Nought-behind-at-all-Gibby—nought-behind-at-all—no-no-no-no. Not-do-sir—not-do-billy—not-do—not-do—not-do. Have-you-there—have-you-there—have-you-there—ha-ha-ha-ha-ha."

"Mr. Car, I know you to be a man of spirit. Eh?—I will lead the way. Will you go, or will you not? Eh?"

This was a home thrust; there was no evading it. Andrew was obliged to acquiesce, make a virtue of necessity, and value himself on his courage. Accordingly, Gilbert taking a brilliant lantern in his left hand, a stout staff in his right, and Andrew Car at his shoulder, staggered away to Welldean Hall, convinced, that though his companion had less drink in his head, he had likewise less courage at his heart, and therefore Gilbert was determined to *show off* that night, and in nowise to manifest fear of any created being. Andrew, though not quite so confident, had yet a certain character of manhood to support, which he judged it quite incumbent on him to retain; he could never otherwise have shown his face in social circle more. Up the street they went, not keeping exactly the same line of longitude. Gilbert sometimes took a swing, first the one way and then the other, like a ship beating up against the breeze.

"Come-come-come-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby; straight-straight-billy—straight-straight. Laugh-at-us-sir—laugh-at-us; laugh-laugh-laugh-laugh-sir; steady-steady."

"Steady—do—you—say—Mr. Car? We'll see—by—and—by—who—is most steady. Come on, my brave fellow."

Forward they went as they best could. The way was well known to Gilbert. His feet knew it by instinct, for many a hundred nights had they traced it, when his eyes were as completely closed as if they had been tied up with a napkin. The distance from the village to the hall was scarcely a mile and a half through the fields. When they were about half-way, Andrew, whose hearing was more acute than his associate's, began to mumble and speak with more than ordinary velocity, and drew Gilbert always to one side. The latter refused to go in any other direction than that in which he was proceeding, and a few paces onward the cause of Andrew's agitation became apparent. The most dismal groans were heard at about fifty yards' distance in the field. As soon as they fell on Gilbert's ears, he heaved up his lantern, and turned off towards the place from whence the sounds proceeded. Andrew instantly took his high key on C sharp, and poured forth such a torrent of speech that no man could catch a distinct sentence of it. They were all terms of decided disapprobation of Gilbert's adventure; but the only sounds that fell on his ear, that he could call language, were some such words as these.

"*Tell-ye-Gibby-Gibby—tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye. Noo-no-no-no-no-no. Make-nor-meddle-make-nor-meddle-make-nor-meddle—no-no-no-no. Sleeping-dogs-lie-dogs-lie-dogs-lie—tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye-Gibby-Gibby,*" &c.

Gilbert, without regarding this water-spout of human breath, proceeded straight onward to the object of his concern. Andrew was sometimes shouldering away, and sometimes drawing after the light, while the words by degrees died from his tongue; but the same sound still continued, and became very like the sounds uttered by the bird, called in this country the heather-bleater, when he wings the air in the gloaming. Gilbert, to his sincere grief, found his old friend and associate, Mrs. Tallow-chandler, lying stretched on the ground, unable to rise, moaning grievously. She told him, after blessing him for his kind concern, that her leg was broken; on which he called stoutly to Andrew for assistance. Andrew approached, speaking all the way. "Told-ye-told-ye-told-ye," he was saying as he came, half running; and when he saw who it was, and how grievously she was hurt, it is impossible to describe his manner and confusion of ideas; but always between he seemed to blame Gilbert for coming to her, as if that had been the cause of her misfortune: "Told-ye—told-ye—told-ye—told-ye. Would-not-be-told—would-not-be-told; no-no-no-no. Broken-broken-broken-broken? Ooo-no-no-no-no-no-impossible-impossible. Broken-broken-broken? What-what-what-what-what? Ooo-no-no-no-no-no-no."

Gilbert, in the height of his zeal and friendship, proposed that Andrew and he should carry the hurt woman to the village; and setting down his lantern, the two essayed the task, unfit even for a Hercules to perform. Andrew lifted her shoulders, and Gilbert her feet; and having with difficulty heaved her about two inches from the ground, they began to move toward the village, Andrew in a retrogade direction, and Gilbert pushing forward behind. Scarcely had they gained five feet in their progress toward the doctor, when the weight and pressure upon Andrew caused his heels to dip in the soil, and laid him fairly on his back; while Gilbert fell with his full weight above his fair injured friend, who screamed and groaned most piteously. The former of these sounds serving as a pitch-pipe to Andrew, he took his high sharp key—

"Told-ye-told-ye-told-ye-told-ye—body's-mad-body's-mad-body's-mad—hout-hout-hout-out-out-out. Never-do-never-do-never-do-never-do—no-no-no-no-no-no."

"What, did you mean to tumble down there, sir? The man has not the strength of a weazel! But he is drunk," said Gilbert. "Weazel-weazel-weazel-weazel? What-what-what-what-what-d'ye-say-d'ye-

say-d'ye-say? Body's-mad-body's-mad-body's-mad —H'm-h'm-h'm-h'm—weazel-weazel-weazel?"

Mrs. Tallow-chandler put an end to this growing heat between our two heroes, by begging that in pity they would return to the village, and bring or send a cart. Andrew took the lantern and ran back to the village; but Gilbert stayed to condole with his old friend, and lend her any kind office he was able until Andrew's return with the cart; and a frightful detail she there gave him of the incidents that had occurred at the hall in the evening, and confirmed the boy's strange asseveration that the ghost had nearly levelled the building.

A horse and cart soon came, with the doctor and apothecary in attendance, and in it they laid the house-keeper, whose limb the doctor found not to be broken, but sprained, and much swelled. The expedition of our two heroes to the hall was thus set aside, Andrew not having judged it proper to return, and Gilbert totally forgetting it in the misfortune of his friend, with whom he stayed during the remainder of the night, comforting and encouraging her. Indeed, as soon as she found that her leg was not broken, she grew as communicative and whimsically superstitious as ever. Sorely she regretted that Gilbert was not there to have spoken to the old laird, when he came in among them, "roaring like an elephant," as she expressed it; and Gilbert rather wished that he had, since matters had come to such a pass, assuring her, in the meantime, that he and his friend Andrew had agreed to sit up in the library a night together, some time or other, to see if they could learn what it was that the old laird had to communicate; and now, since his master's servants were all driven from the house, if she (Mrs. Tallow-chandler) would countenance the matter, he thought the sooner the better, and he had no objection that it should be the following night. She commended his undaunted spirit; promised that she would see them well rewarded; and moreover, that they should have the keys of the cellar and larder, and want for no entertainment that the hall could afford; and thus, before morning, the matter was finally settled between them.

As soon as the sun arose, all the servants hurried up to the mansion-house to witness the devastations of the last night, expecting that there would scarcely be one stone left standing on another. By the way, they discovered that the two young females that were amissing the evening before had joined the party; but both kept a mysterious silence as to where they had been. In the beginning of next year, however, it began to be suspected that the one had lodged with a journeyman tailor, and the other with the apothecary's apprentice in the village. Such a dispensation as that they had met with was an excuse for people doing anything!

At the hall everything was in its usual style. There was not an item injured or misplaced from the bottom to the top of the house; not a book in the library was altered, nor any one thing that they could discern; all was standing in state and form as they left it, with the doors bolted and the windows barred, all save those out at which they had effected their escape. This was the most wonderful thing of all! People could no more trust their own senses!

It is a difficult matter to tell a story as it should be told; for, after the party separates, it is necessary to fly always from one to another, to bring them forward to the same notch of time. In conformity with this laudable measure, the writer of this notable tale must return to his fair fugitive, whom he left in circumstances more perilous than any of his readers can well suppose, or than any of her connections, save her uncle's spirit, seemed to be aware of. If they were, they took no concern about the matter. Had Allan known of her danger, how his heart would have been wrung! but he concealed his name and disgrace from every one save his brother, who was in no hurry to relieve him, until the gallant triumvirate had accomplished their purposes with Susan, which the greater part of my readers will remember were wearing but too near to a consummation. They are, I know, quite impatient to get into a detail of all the circumstances; but there are some incidents that it is painful for an author to enumerate, and it is only in adherence to truth that he submits to the ungracious task. Without them, the tale cannot go on, so they must needs be told. The circumstances in the present case were then precisely as follows. * * * * *

"Well, I must trust to your protection for this night," said Susan. "What is the name of the lady, your friend, to whose house I am going?"

"Mrs. M'——, of St. James' Street," said he.

"Very well." She took her Indian shawl about her shoulders, and after turning six or seven times round in the apartment, as if looking for something else, she took hold of Mr. M'——'s proffered arm, and he led her out. "God bless you!" said she. "Amen with all my heart," said he, "and the lovely wisher to boot." "And God will bless you," added she, "for this unmerited kindness to a poor friendless orphan."

> "O wad some power the giftie gie us,
> To see ourse's as others see us!"

says Burns, but I have often thought this prayer should be reversed, for if we knew the motives and intentions of others, as well as we do our own, how often would we eschew the errors into which we fall! and if Miss Somerville had known her conductor's intentions at that time, as well as he himself knew them, how far would she have been from blessing him! Yet, poor fellow! he rejoiced in it, and nothing in the world could have made him so happy as taking that lovely and innocent young lady home with him that night, and ruining her. It is a pity there should be gentlemen of such dispositions, but nobody can help it.

"Mrs. M'——, in St. James' Street! Mrs. M'——, in St. James' Street!" In the hurry of departure, Susan could not think or suspect who Mrs. M'——, of St. James' Street was, but repeating it to herself all the way down the stair; just as she came to the door of the coach, it came to her recollection that she had met with that lady before, and not a very great while ago.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said she, "I have forgot something in the apartment that I left; excuse me for a little." "Please step into the coach, madam, I will go up and bring it." "No, you cannot bring it, I must go myself." With that she wrung her arm out of his, and ran up the stairs. When she came to the place she had left, the man was just in the act of locking it up. But when he saw her come thus hastily to the door, he opened it instinctively, and she entered. Instead of looking for aught she had left, she seated herself in the chair, and desired the turnkey to lock her up till to-morrow, and at his peril to let any one enter the door of that apartment till then. The honest man began to expostulate, telling her that the matter was settled, and that neither he nor his captain had any more charge of her; but seeing her so peremptory, he obeyed, and went to consult a higher power, thinking that the lady was a little deranged in her mind.

M'—— did not wait long below in the court of the prison, but impatient at the young lady's stay, went likewise up to her apartment, where he was refused admission. At first he began to abuse the turnkey, thinking he had locked her up through mistake, but finding that it was by her own desire, he began to suspect that she had discovered something of the ambiguous character of the house where he had proposed taking her. Finding out the under-turnkey's ideas of the state of her mental faculties, he said it was but too true, and however disagreeable it might be, there would be a necessity of carrying her away home by force. This he urged strongly as a last resource, and was joined by all the underlings about the prison, but the captain, or principal keeper, would not permit it, for fear of raising an alarm, and making a disturbance at that time of the evening. He undertook, however, to keep the lady in safe custody until next day, lest any evil might befall her. M'——, by dint of entreaty, got a conversation with her over a half-door before he went away, and there was no manner of blandishment, or passionate regret, that he did not use, insomuch that Miss Somerville was again melted into an affectionate generosity, which she could not repress, yet continued firm in her resolution. He was obliged to go home with a grieved heart, and relate to his associates this first failure of his grand enterprise; on which the rest of the night, or rather morning, was spent by them in devising new schemes more adapted to the characters of those with whom they had to do, and in relating other adventures of the like nature. Every man and woman in the world is engaged in the pursuit of happiness, and though they wonder at one another, yet all continue to pursue it in their own way. Nice young profligate puppies of gentlemen in general, believe that they enjoy life in a most exquisite way. We'll not quarrel with them about that, but we'll force them to admit what all the world sees, that they are of short duration, and generally followed by bitter fruits.

Susan spent a sleepless night, but scarcely were her thoughts ever otherwise employed than on Mr. M'——. His kindness and generosity interested her, and if it had not been for the naming of one lady, of whose character she had weighty suspicions, she thought she could have trusted him, and gone with him to any part of the kingdom. So difficult is it for suspicion to find entrance into a guileless heart.

Next morning she sent for the principal keeper, a man well known for probity and honour, and to him she communicated her case, all save two circumstances. The one was the private behaviour of her cousin Randal to her, and the other was the name of the lady to whose house M'—— proposed to have taken her over night. The latter subject was several times at the root of her tongue, but timidity withheld it from being uttered. She had a certain feeling of kindness, or generosity, hankering about her heart for the young gentleman, and she could not bear, with one dash, to run the risk of blotting it out for ever. She therefore asked the keeper only about his name and connections, and what circle of society he kept? The keeper had heard the name and title of the gentlemen, but knew nothing about him further. He promised, however, in a short time to satisfy her in all these points. "I have a Highland officer about the prison," said he, "principally for the purpose of carrying and bringing messages; I am sure he will either know the gentleman himself, or find those in a few minutes that will give you a list of all his pedigree for forty generations."

The keeper was glad thus to amuse the lady, and reconcile her to what appeared to him an inconsistency in her prosecutor. He had during the morning got one letter, and one charge after another, about his prisoner, until he knew not well how to proceed, yet, for his own security he resolved to detain her. The bucks, terrified that she should get away from under their thumbs, as they termed it, had put the attorney upon different manœuvres to detain her in prison, until she should be obliged to accept of their relief on their own conditions. They knew too well, that having secured Allan, they had little to fear the interference of any other. The keeper likewise entered into her scruples, or pretended to do so, of getting so deeply obligated to an utter stranger. "It is not, madam," said he, "what you or I may feel, and know to be the truth, but how the world may view it. A young lady's character is her all, or next to that, and better had

you remain a year in this place, than owe your liberty to some gentlemen, even though their motives may be unimpeachable. Though it is a truism that things must be as they are, yet their effects are too often modelled by the judgment of the world. I will send for Malcolm, and have this matter cleared up."

Malcolm was sent for, and soon arrived with his bonnet in his hand.

"Malcolm, do you know anything of the gentleman that came in a coach last night, and waited on this lady?"

"Does the lady not know anything of him her own self?" said Malcolm, with true Highland caution.

"That is no answer to the question I put to you," said the keeper, sternly.

"Hu, not at hall, your honour; but hersel was peen thinking—that if laidy would be tahaking in shentleman's——"

"Hold your peace, you Highland rascal! You have no right to form any conjecture of aught that passes here by my authority. I ask you, if you know aught of Mr. M'——, who was here last night, or of his connections, and I desire you to answer me without further circumlocution?"

"Te fillain!" said Malcolm, "has he peen pehaving pad to te dhear lhady?"

Miss Somerville never having conversed with a native Highlander, at least with one of Malcolm's rank, before, was so much amused by his shrewd and obstinate caution, as well as his uncouth dialect, that she smiled at this last question. The keeper also smiled, which, encouraging Malcolm in his petulance, he went on.

"Hu! hope she would only pe some frheedom lhove. Highland shentlemans pe fery pad for frheedom lhove; if te lhaidy pe peautifulmost, she pe very pad indheed."

The keeper, finding that nothing would be gotten out of Malcolm, if there was any risk of a Highlander's character being impeached, took a wiser course, and assured him, that so far from behaving ill to the lady, he had acted so nobly, that she was anxious to know a little more of him, to make him some amends, or acknowledgment, at least. Malcolm's eyes gleamed with joy and pride.

"Hu! she might pe shoor of tat! All tat you hafe to do with Highland shentlemans is, to confidence him. Hersel pe fery sorry tat she not kif cood informhation, she know so less of him. But there pe one Maister Ronald Macmurrich, a shairman of the Rhegister, who is his full cousin py te creat crhandmhother's side; she pe tell you all and mhore. Had she peen of Clan-Donachie, or Clan-Stuhart (all out of Appin) or te long Clan-Khattanich, she could hafe cone through all teir plood."

Here Malcolm was stopped short in his muster-roll, and sent in search of Ronald Macmurrich. In the meantime, the keeper remained conversing with Susan, and advised her strongly to apply to her cousin Randal, who, he said, was her natural guardian, and obliged both in honour and law to pay every farthing that was contracted during the lifetime of her uncle, as it was on his credit that the debt was taken on; and there being a part of her cousin's behaviour which she did not choose to divulge, the keeper wondered at her pride and shyness, and supposed that she had drawn too freely on her cousin's bounty previous to that time.

"This is Mhaster Ronald Macmurrich, sir," said Malcolm, entering briskly with his bonnet in his hand, and bowing with a grace becoming a man of higher rank, "and though I would peen saying it, she pe shentleman that you might pe thependance on him's worts."

"Come away, Mr. Ronald, I want to converse with you in this lady's presence for a minute or two. Malcolm, you need not wait. Ronald, do you know anything of Mr. M'—— of G——h? Malcolm, I tell you, you need not wait."

"Hu! it mak fery lhittle dufferance to her nainsel to whait a few mhinutes to be oblhiging your honour."

"No, no—off, off. What are you standing there for, sirrah?"

"I can stand anywhere that your honour plheases. I can be sthanding here then."

"Go out at the door, I tell you, and close it."

"Hu! but your honour will soon pe wanting hur ackain; and more the less Maister Ronald has peen got a fery pad mhemory, and he'll pe lhosing te for get of mhany things."

"Hu, shay, shay, she pe fery creat of truth all tat Maister Mhawcom has peen to say."

The captain finding that the two cronies were determined to keep together, thought it best to humour them; for he knew if any of them grew obstinate, he might as well contend with a mule.

"So you know the young laird of G———h, Ronald?"

"Hu, what then? Pless your honour, she pe full coosin to himself. Mach-Vich-Alaster More Machouston Macmurrich was her crhandmhother's fhather; and he was khotten upon a child of Kinloch-Mhudart's."

"And, py my faith, that's all very true that Maister Rhonald says; and she could pe taking her sworn oath to every whord of it."

"What sort of a gentleman is he?"

"Hu! the finest shentleman that's in the whole world. And upon my soul, you would not pe finding such a shentleman if you were to ride fhifty thousand mhiles."

"Ay, she be all truth and mhore that Maister Rhonald says."

"What sort of moral character does he hold?"

"More-ill? Hu, no. He has not cot one single spark of that in his whole pody and souhl."

"No, you may swore that, Maister Macmurrich."

"What? Not one spark of morality?"

"Morhality? Ay. Devil a single scrap of her, I'll pe sworn. Morhality? What she pe?"

Here the captain and Miss Somerville could not contain their gravity, which staggered Ronald a little, and made him ask the last question.

"That is, perhaps, too general a term to be fully understood," said the keeper; "we shall enter into particulars; and as it is all in good friendship, you may answer me freely. In the first place, then, can you tell me how he has behaved himself in general with regard to women?"

"Oo, ter never was a shentleman pehaved so petter since ta world was made. You know, if ta lhaidy was peing fhery pohnny, and fhery hamiable, and fhery khind, why you know I could not pe answering for myself, and far less for him; but I'll take it upon me to pe sworn, that he would not force a child against her own will."

"So you may, so you may, Maister Rhonald."

"What sort of company does he keep? Can you tell me the names of any of the ladies or gentlemen whose houses he visits at?"

"Hu, he goes to the roots of all the lhadies, and all the lhords of ta whoule kingdom; and to ta hadfucats, and to te grhand mhinisters tat prheach. There is not a shentleman in ta whoule world that is so well taken hould of. I can pe sworn of tat too."

"Indheed so you can, Maister Rhonald, and so can I too."

"He might have peen ketting one hearl's dhaughter last year; and I do know tat tere was mhany traps laid to hould him into her; but there were so very mhany fine lhadies after him, that he would not pe taken."

"Yes, Maister Rhonald, that is vhery troo. And he would have kotten fifty thousand pounds with her, and more; and there was none deserved it so well."

"Hu ay, you may pe saying tat; for it is a kood man, and so khind to the poor at home."

"Is he indeed noted for kindness to the poor?" said Susan, with some degree of warmth.

"Indheed it is, mattam. She pe so much cootness and khindness, that he'll pe koing through his poor fharmers once a year, and when any of them has peen kot a fhery pretty daughter, he takes them off their hands altogether, and pring them to this town to make lhadies of them. And it is fhery khind, for then they would pe trudging at home, and working like bhaists."

This was rather an equivocal recommendation; but Miss Somerville, noting that it was given in seriousness, put the best interpretation on it that it could bear; and before they could proceed any further with their inquiries, Mr. M'—— arrived, and, sending in his name, was admitted. In this most perilous situation we must again leave poor Susan, like a lamb strayed from the flock, whom three wolves are watching to devour, in order to bring forward our tale. Allan was in the same jail with her, astonished and grieved at the remissness of his brother in relieving him, and concerned about his dear cousin, whom he now found by experience to be dearer to him than life. At this period their circumstances were totally unknown to one another.

After Gilbert had taken a sound sleep, he rose about mid-day, and went in search of his friend Andrew, to whom he imparted his plan, and the agreement he had entered into with the housekeeper, in the absence of all higher concerns of the house; and it being no frightful thing to speak of a ghost, or to think of a ghost in fair day light, Andrew was nothing averse to the plan. Hunger is hard to bide at all times. Thirst is worse; but when fear is absent, it is disregarded; so the two friends had nothing ado but to sip a little brandy and water, and talk over the affair until the evening.

At rather an early hour they repaired to the library, in which they kindled a fire; and stored with all the good things of this life, they intended perhaps to remain there longer than one night. Andrew never seemed to believe that the ghost would really appear. Gilbert firmly believed that it would, and at first proposed that Andrew should speak to it, and that he himself would try to recollect distinctly what it said; but of this Andrew did not approve.

"No-billy-no-no-no-no—not-speak—not-speak—no-no-no-no. Speak-me-first—speak-me—speak-then—speak-then—speak-then—yes-yes-yes-yes-yes. Not-otherwise—not-otherwise—no-no-no-no."

Gilbert assured him that no spirit had power to speak to a baptized Christian until once it was spoken to, and that it was only permitted to answer such questions as were put to it. For his part, he said, though the world jeered his belief, he was convinced that this was a real apparition, and that it had something to communicate of importance; and he knew that he had not courage, or rather nerve, to speak to it, unless he was the length of a certain stage of inebriety, and then he was afraid of nothing either on earth or in hell. But, on the other hand, as it had once happened before, when he got to that regardless stage, he could remember nothing that passed, so that it served no manner of purpose his speaking to the apparition, unless a sober man were present to take note of every word, sign, and look. He said that there was therefore a necessity that Andrew should refrain, in a great measure, from drinking, till the issue of their night's adventure should be decided, and that he should then have a right to make up his lee-way with double interest. Violent and rapid were Andrew's protestations against this measure, but Gilbert's resolve was not to be shaken, and he possessed a control over the other, which, though never admitted, was daily practised. Andrew's portion of brandy toddy was limited to a small quantity. Gilbert's was to be without measure, otherwise than by the tappit-hen of discretion.

They were both taken rather at unawares. They had never calculated on any disturbance till about midnight, that being the usual time of the ghost's appearance in the library; so they had drawn in the corner of the table between them, and placed themselves, one on each side of the fire, resolved to enjoy themselves as long as they could, and, at all events, let the evil hour come hindmost. Gilbert had only swallowed one glass of strong brandy toddy, and Andrew one much weaker; and while they were yet in keen argument on this contested point, their elocution was cut short by Andrew, who made a sudden bolt across between the fire and table, nearly overturning the latter, and took his station in a cowering posture between his companion and the wall. This was the work of a moment. Gilbert, whose face was turned towards the fire, naturally looked about to see what had affrighted his associate, and there beheld the old laird walking composedly backward and forward before the old black book-case. He appeared to be dressed in his night-gown and slippers, and had, as it were, a white cloth tied round his head. It was so like him, that it represented him in every part, so that it was hardly possible to believe it to be anything else, save the old laird himself risen from the grave. Gilbert was struck motionless, and almost deprived of sense; and though he had made up his mind to be composed, yet his tongue clave to his mouth, his ears rung, and for a space he could neither be said to speak, hear, nor see. He felt as if falling into a faint, and longed exceedingly to be deprived of all feeling for a time. It would not do; the strength of his constitution carried him over it; but all that he could do was to sit like a statue, fixed on his seat, and stare at this strange visitant. It appeared as if studious not to alarm them; it had not any of the threatening looks or attitudes that it had assumed towards some, nor did it fix its looks at all on them, but walked with a slow gliding motion, from one side of the room to the other, and again retraced its steps, apparently in a state of patient sufferance.

Andrew, whose tongue was merely a pendulum to his feelings, and wagged of its own accord when the machine was wound up, was the first who broke silence, beginning, it is true, with a prayer, but ending with an injunction that brought everything to bear. *"O-Lord-God—deliver—'liver-'liver-'liver-'liver;—save-save-save-save-save-us-is-is-is-is.* Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby—speak-speak-speak-speak. Now-or-never—now-or-never—now-or-never—now-now-now-now. What-want—what-want—what-want—what-what-what-what-what?"

The ghost at this paused, and turned its face toward them; and, though it did not lift its eyes from the floor, made as though it would have come close to them. Andrew instantly took up his sharp key; *"No-no-no—keep-off—keep-off—keep-keep-keep. Gibby-Gibby-Gibby-Gibby,"* &c.

Unconnected and vehement as these speeches of Andrew's were, they had the effect of bringing Gilbert somewhat to himself, and he pronounced these words, rather down his throat than with his lips: "In the name of God, tell what you have to reveal, and what can be done for your repose."

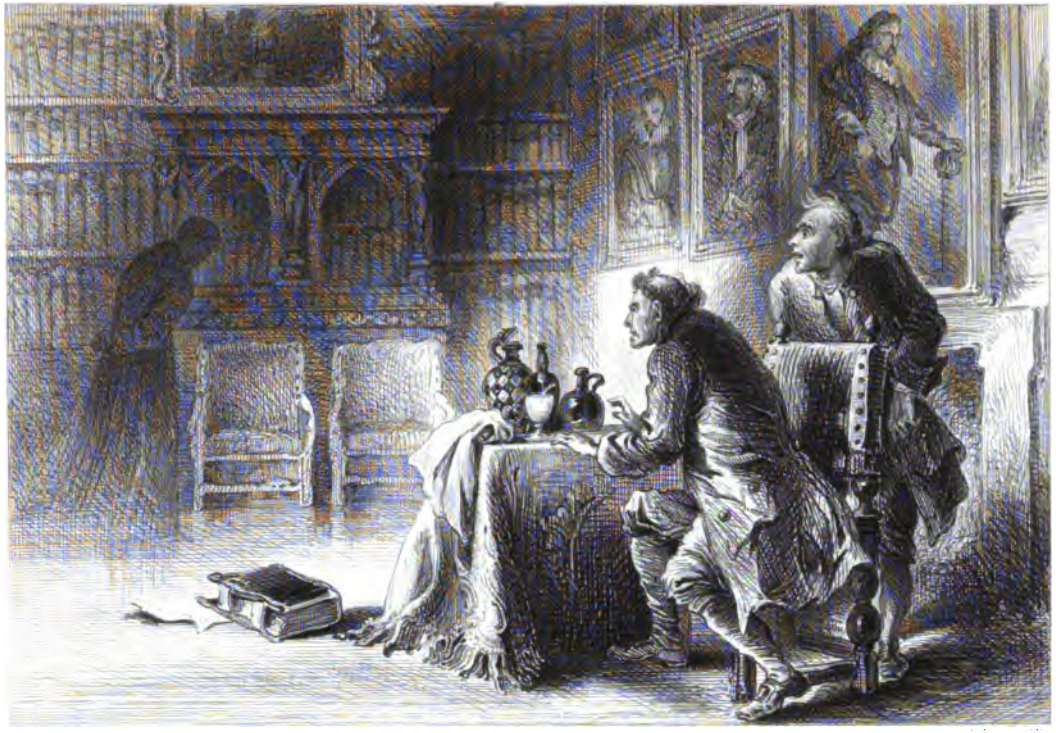
"I told you already, and woe be to you that you have not done it," said the apparition. "I give you the charge once more; and know, that virtue and life depend on its instant fulfilment."

"If I remember aright," said Gilbert, "the thing that you desired me to do was impossible, or at least would have taken a lifetime to have accomplished. In one word, what must I do?"

"Go through these books," said the spirit, pointing at the three huge volumes of Greek and Latin classics, "as you would wish to live and thrive, and never see my face again. It is a charge with which I intrust you; and if you have not patience to turn over every leaf, at least look into the pages marked on the boards. I know you to be honest; therefore, oh do this without delay, for my sake, as well as for your own. If you prove unfaithful, better had it been for you both that you never had been born. Farewell, and may the God of peace and mercy be with you!"

This moment he was standing before them in an earthly form, and speaking to them in an audible voice; the next he was gone, and none of them saw how, or by what place, he departed. They both averred that they believed they were, for the space of two or three seconds, blinded by some supernatural means, and saw nothing. For a good while afterwards, they sat in mute and awful astonishment, Andrew still keeping his hold between Gilbert and the wall. "This is wonderful," said Gilbert, after some minutes had elapsed; "What can be in these books?"

"See-that-billy-see-that-see-that-see-that-see-see-see-see." And so saying he arose from his den, gazing sternly at every corner of the room. "Blest-be-God-blest-be-God," said Andrew, and this he repeated at least a hundred times. Gilbert opened the press, and took down the three volumes, which they inspected narrowly. There was nothing marked on the boards that they could discern. They held them open, with the leaves downward, and shook them, but there was nothing that fell out of them. That was, however, little to be wondered at, for they were in boards, and not a leaf of them cut up. They had, therefore, nothing for it but to begin each to a volume, in order to cut them all up and turn over every leaf. They had not gone far on with this task until Andrew, who had again fallen a poring about the boards, discovered some figures on the inside of one of them, made with a pencil, and scarce distinguishable. These, he thought, might refer to some pages, as the apparition had hinted, and, turning to the first numbered on the board, in the double of the octave, which was uncut,



he found a note for £1000. Having now discovered the key, in the course of three minutes they had treasure lying on the table, in bonds, bills at interest, &c., to the amount of nearly a plum. But what they reckoned of most value was the late laird's will, regularly signed and witnessed, together with two short codicils in his own holograph. And besides, they found a paper, in which was contained a list of all his funds, small and great. It was almost without end, and puzzled our two heroes not a little. They found that every pound was at the highest legal interest, save in one concealed drawer within the book-case, which was full of gold; and though the shelf was described, yet with all their ingenuity they could not find out the secret. Had the bookseller succeeded in carrying his point, what a bargain some would have gotten of that clumsy collection of classical authors! So heavy and impenetrable had the old laird judged these works to be, that he trusted his dear treasures in them, in preference to any lock or key under which he could secure them. And after this great secret was discovered, it was remembered that he never locked that book-case; it stood always wide open. He found, by experience, how perfectly safe his money was there; and I am told, that a certain wealthy and very worthy gentleman at the Scottish bar practises the same mode of depositing his bills and cash to this day. I give this hint, as a sincere friend, to officious servants and lacqueys, in hopes they will have the foresight, at some leisure hour now and then, to cut up and inspect all their master's neglected books. They may find something there worth their while.

Our two gallant heroes forgetting, and altogether neglecting the pleasures of the jug, in this notable discovery of theirs, waited not till day, but, locking up the *classics* in a secure place, they packed up their treasures, the will, and the list of the monies, and marched for Edinburgh. Not knowing where to find any of the other members of the family, they of course waited on Randal, whom they found confined to his chamber, emaciated and diseased. Him they informed, that after all the servants had been driven from the house, they had taken their lives in their hands, trusted in heaven, and watched last night in the library, where they had made some discoveries of great importance, but which they were not at liberty to divulge, except in the presence of his brother Allan, and his cousin Susan Somerville, and therefore they begged that he would, with all haste, expedite such a meeting, accompanied by legal authorities.

Randal rung the bell, and ordered the servant to bring in some brandy and water. "My excellent and worthy friends," said he, "you have laid me under infinite obligations: if it had not been for your courage, my house might have been pillaged, and everything in it gone to waste. Come, sit down, take a glass with me, and tell me all that you have done, seen, and learned." Fatigued with their journey, both of them blythely accepted of the invitation, sat down, and drank to the better health of the laird, but at first were very shy in communicating the extraordinary intelligence with which their bosoms were charged, but which at the same time was working there like barmy beer in corked bottles, ready to burst. Consequently, by dint of elicitation, Randal, ere long, understood that they had discovered both his late uncle's will, and his concealed hoards. "Why, my most excellent and worthy friends," said Randal, "you know you are both poor men, and it is a pity you should be so, for two more noble, intrepid, fearless hearts, I believe, beat not in Christendom. It is on that I ground the proposal I am going to make. I know you fear none living; indeed, you have none to fear, and you have proven that you fear not the dead; therefore be men; put that will and that list into my hands, to whom they of right belong, and I'll give each of you a thousand pounds, and fifty pounds yearly to drink my health, as long as I live, and you together."

"Either-too-much-too-much-too-much-much-much-much. Else-too-little-billy-too-little-too-little-too-little. Ooo-ay-yes-yes-yea."

"Make your own terms, then, Mr. Car, my worthy honourable old buck; but let them be in conscience, you know—in some bounds of conscience between friends."

"Ooo-ay-yes-yes-yes-yes-yes—consh'-consh'-consh'-consh'-be-sure-be-sure-be-sure—what-else-what-else-what-*else?* What-what-what-what-what *what?*"

The desperate accents laid upon these two monosyllables in italics made Randal suspect that there was some small spark in Andrew's feelings that was scarcely congenial with his own, and he began to look a little sheepish, or rather scoundrelish, which is a much worse kind of look than a sheep's.

"I think, my frien Andrew," said Gilbert, "the proposal of my master is a noble and liberal proposal, and ought to be duly considered before we go farther. It will perhaps never be in our power again to make so good a bargain. We are both growing old, and it is a dismal thing to have poverty and age staring us in the face at the same time."

"Spoken like yourself, my old trusty servant! Spoken like a man whose spirit rises above being a drudge and a beggar all your days. The world has not been your friend nor the world's law, therefore obey the first law in nature, and stand for yourselves. I do not intend to bereave my brother and cousin of a farthing that is their natural right, only is it not better that they should be somewhat dependent on me? Is it not better in every point of view? For themselves it must be. Put then all these papers and documents into my hands, and henceforth you shall be my friends and confidants, and managers of all my concerns."

"What say you to this, my friend Andrew?" said Gilbert.

"What-say-Gibby-what-say-what-say-what-say-what-what-what-what-*what?* Tell-ye-what-say billy-tell-ye-what-say-tell-ye-tell-ye-tell-ye. Sa, hell-billy-hell-hell-hell-hell-hell-hell-*hell.*"

"Stop now and consider, my dear friend," said Randal. "You have been long known as a man of prudence and discernment. You must see that what I request is right and proper, and best for all parties. And moreover, what is it to you who possesses the funds, provided you get so good a share? There is enough for all parties, you know. Therefore just give me the hand of friendship each of you. Put the papers into my hands, and trust my honour."

"Do not you think, Andrew," said Gilbert, "that what my master requests is reasonable, and may be done with all honour and conscience? No one has seen these bills and papers but ourselves."

"*Damn'd-soul-Gibby-dam-soul-dam-soul-dam-soul-soul-soul.* Heaven-saw-Gibby-heaven-saw-heaven-saw-heaven-heaven-heaven-heaven!"

With that the tears poured over Andrew's furrowed cheeks, his inarticulate utterance entirely failed him, and he stood sobbing and looking ruefully in Gilbert's face, with his arm stretched upward at its full length, and his forefinger pointed to heaven. Gilbert contemplated this striking position of his friend for a while with apparent delight, then, coming slowly toward him, as if afraid of defacing so fine a statue, he threw his arms about him, and pressed him to his bosom. "My friend and my brother till death," exclaimed he, "I am so glad to see that your honour and integrity are not to be tarnished! Before I would have yielded to the disgraceful request preferred to us, I would have submitted to be hewn in pieces, and I wanted to try you a little, to find if I might depend on you standing by me."

Andrew threw up both his arms, flung his head a cast backward, and pulled up one of his knees as high as his breast, and shouted out, "Hurra-hurra-hurra-hurra-ra-ra-ra-ra-true-man-yet-true-man-yet-true-blue-true-blue-true-blue-trouble-trouble-trouble. Ha-ha-ha-hurra-hurra-hurra," &c.

"Gentlemen," said Randal, "are you come here to mock me? I think your behaviour testifies as much. But I will show you that I am not to be mocked by such boors and beggarly rascallions as you, and what you refuse to do by fair means, you shall be compelled to do." With that he rung the bell, and ordering the servant to bring a guard of police, he locked the door upon himself and our two heroes.

"Rascallions, Gibby—rascallions-'scallions-'scallions-'scallions. I'll-'nihilate-him-Gibby—'nihilate-'nihilate-'nihilate."

Gilbert restrained his friend, assuring him that the object of his resentment was neither worthy of being touched nor looked at by a man of honour, like Andrew Car, who would be disgraced by laying a finger on him. This calmed the indignant gamekeeper, who, in all probability, would have subjected himself and friend to a severe punishment by giving the *atomy*, as he called him, a sound drubbing.

The men of office soon arrived. Randal charged the two men with having robbed his house in the country, and taking from thence some papers and documents of value, which they refused to give up. The lieutenant of the guard said it was a most serious charge, and took the two companions forthwith into custody, locking them up in the black hole till the hour of cause.

They were examined by the sheriff-substitute, and Randal being unable to leave his chamber, his worthy friend, the attorney aforementioned, appeared in his stead, and in a laboured harangue, accused the prisoners of "having got clandestinely into the house of Welldean, under pretence of watching for a ghost that they say had disturbed the family, and from an apartment in that house, had stolen and secreted some papers of great value, of which they refused to give any account to the owner." And forthwith prayed judgment against them, that they might be searched, the papers restored to the rightful owner, and the delinquents committed for trial!

The judge said the charge was of a serious as well as singular nature, but that it bore inconsistency on the very face of it. For how was it supposable, that if the two men had robbed the house only last night of things of so much value, that they should post up to town to the very man whom they had robbed, to inform him what they had done, and lay a statement of the matter before him. He then requested the prisoners to speak for themselves, that he might thereby be enabled to form a judgment according to truth.

Gilbert arose, and in a clear and concise speech of considerable length, related the circumstances precisely as they happened, to the great astonishment of the court; and then proceeded to put into the sheriff's hands, the valuable documents and bonds that he held, saying, that he would merely keep a list of them for his own satisfaction, and was glad of having this public opportunity of depositing so weighty a charge; it having been because he and his friend refused to give it up privately to his master that they were sent there.

The judge said they had proven that it could not have been deposited in safer or better hands. But as the papers were of too high value to be carrying about one's person, he would lock them in a place of safety till the legatees and executors could be convened. At the same time he commended, in high terms, the intrepidity, truth, and candour of the two friends; and remarked, that the spirit manifested by the young gentleman, in the demand he made upon them, and afterwards in seizing them as depredators, was disgraceful to the country and to all concerned with him, and ought to be held in the

utmost reprobation. He then dismissed them, desiring them to go with all diligence in search of the young gentleman and lady that were co-heirs with the present possessor, and, as it appeared by the will, more favoured than he, of which he hoped they would likewise be more deserving.

The honest attorney, perceiving how matters were likely to turn about, made a virtue of forwarding that which he could no longer oppose, and conducted our two heroes straight to the Canongate jail, where Allan and Susan lay confined in sorrowful mood, little aware of what fortunes they were now possessed. They had only that morning made a discovery of each other, and that at a most critical period, just as Susan was going finally off with Mr. M'——— after many demurs. When she beheld her lover so emaciated by sickness, grief, and misfortune, she melted into tears, and stretched out her hand to him, which he clasped in both of his, and pressed to his lips. They found themselves companions in misfortune, as they had been in infancy and youth, and their reconciliation was made up in the heart, and took place naturally, without any effort of the one to refuse, or the other to beg it; and for all the forlorn and neglected state in which they found each other, that was perhaps the sweetest morning ever they had spent in their lives.

On Allan being introduced, Mr. M'——— and the keeper withdrew, but the two former bowed to each other slightly, as men slightly acquainted do when they meet. As soon as the two lovers got a little breath from more important matters, Miss Somerville asked Allan what he knew of that young gentleman that went out with the captain? "I only saw him once in my brother's lodgings," said he; "he is a constant associate of his; a young man of loose principles, or rather, of no principles at all. He is said to have led my brother into many follies."

"An associate of your brother's?" said she, with something more than ordinary earnestness. "Yes," said he, "they live together."

Susan became fixed like a statue. She saw, as through a glass darkly, the machinations that had been laid for destroying her peace. She thought of the disgraceful proposal that had been broadly made to her by her cousin Randal—of Mrs. M'——— in St. James' Street, the very woman who had tried, in concert with Mrs. Mayder, to get her into his power; and she strongly believed that this imprisonment and proffered relief had all proceeded from the same source. "What a vile heartless wretch that man of fashion, my cousin Randal, is!" thought she to herself; "no matter, he is Allan's brother, and Allan shall never know his true character if I can prevent it." They were instantly released, on granting the attorney their joint-bill for the two sums, and were man and wife in three months thereafter. Randal never left the chamber to which he was then confined, till carried out of it to his grave. He fell, unlamented, the victim of youthful folly and unrestrained libertinism. Gilbert was again constituted house-steward and butler at Welldean Hall, which two *lucrative* posts he maintained as long as he lived. Andrew Car was made gamekeeper, and the two friends had a jug or two of brandy toddy together, unrestrained, for many long years. The concealed drawer of gold was at last found out; the ghost of the old laird was never seen any more; and the year before last, when I was at Welldean Hall, Allan and his lady were both living in great happiness, though far advanced in age.

TIBBY JOHNSTON'S WRAITH.

"Holloa, Wat, stop till I come up w'ye. Dinna just gallop at sic a rate, man, else you'll founder your horse, an' brik your ain neck into the bargain. Whatten a gate o' riding is that? Stop till I speak to you; I have something to say to you."

"What do you want with me? Tell me directly, for I hae nae a moment to wait. Do you not see that I am in a hurry?"

"To be sure I see that, but then you are always in a hurry. Stay till I come up w'ye, an' then I'll tell you what I want. I have something very particular to say to you. What nonsense is it to ride at that rate? I'll tell you what I want w'ye: can you tell me precisely what o'clock it is?"

"Confound the fellow! What do you mean to stop me for sic a trifle as that, an' me riding atween death an' life for the doctor?"

"For the doctor? Hech! wow! Wat, man, but I didna ken that. What is it that's gane wrang w'ye?"

"What's gane wrang! O, bless your heart, man, a's gane wrang thegither. There was never sic a job kend i' this world. Our mistress has seen a wraith; she saw Tibby Johnston's wraith last night, an' she's dead wi' the fright this morning."

"Dead wi' the fright! Wow, Wat, is she really dead?"

"Dead! bless you, sir, she's clean dead. There never was sic a business in this country. My heart's like to break, an' I'm amaist fleyed out o' my wits among a' ither mischiefs. O, bless your heart, man, there never was the like o' this!—Never, never! Oh! dead? Bless ye, she's cauld dead, sir!"

"Why then, Wat, it was real true what ye said, that ye war riding atween death an' life; for, gin the wife be dead and the doctor living, there's nae

doubt but ye're riding atween them. But, dear Wat, mony a daft thing ye hae done i' your life, but ye never did aught half sae ridiculous as this, to gallop at sic a rate bringing the doctor to a dead wife."

"O, bless your heart, man, what can folk do? Folk are glad to keep a grip o' life as lang as they can; an' even after it flees out at the window, they'll whiles hing by the tail. But it's the fashion now. Everybody sends for the doctor to their wives after they're dead."

"Ay, an' gin a' tales be true, the doctors whiles come to them after they're dead an' buried baith, without being sent for. But truly, Wat, there is something sae far ayont a' ordinary things in this business, that ye maun 'light an' tell me a' about it. Your mistress saw Tibby Johnston's wraith, you say, an' is dead wi' the fright. But what is come o' Tibby Johnston? Is there ought the matter wi' her?"

"O, bless your heart, sir, Tibby's dead too. There never was sic a job seen! I hardly ken what I'm doing. Of a' the nights that ever was about a town, O, bless you, sir, you never saw the like o't! I maun gae ride, ye see. If the beast should drap dead aneth me there's nae help for it."

"Tak just a wee time, Wat, an' dinna be in sic a fike. What do ye expect that the doctor can do for the dead woman?"

"O, bless your heart, wha kens? It's a' that folk can do. Auld Kilside says he'll maybe open a vein, and gar her refusticat. Hap, woy, beast. For gude sake, get on; fareweel."

"Open a vein an' gar her refusticat! ha, ha, ha! Hap, woy, beast. There goes Wat like a flying eagle! Weel, I canna help laughin' at the gouk, although I'm sorry for the cause o' his confusion an' hurry. If thae twa women really are baith dead, thae haena left ither twa like them i' the parish, an' few i' the hale country. I'll e'en gae up the water a mile or twa, an' try if I can get the particulars."

David went away up the water as he had resolved, and every one that he met with, he stopped to ask what time of the day it was; to make some observations on the weather; and, finally, to inquire if there were any news up the country; knowing, if any of them had heard of the events at Carlshaw, they would inform him; but he got no satisfactory account until he reached the place. It was at the foot of Milseyburn-path that he stopped Wat Scott riding for the doctor, and from that to Carlshaw is at least six miles; so far had he travelled to learn the particulars of that distressing event. David Proudfoot was a very old man, herding cows, when I was a tiny boy at the same occupation. He would often sit with the snuff-mull in his hand, and tell me old tales for hours together; and this was one among the rest. He cared for no tales, unless he had some share in the transactions himself. The story might be told in few words, but it would spoil my early recollections, and I could not endure to see it otherwise than as David told it, with all its interpolations.

"When I wan to Carlshaw, I gaed first into the stable, and then into the byre, but there was naebody to be seen. The yauds were standing nickering at the manger, and the kye were rowting ower the crib. A' isna right here, indeed, quo' I to mysel, as I sneckit the door ahint me; for when Mrs. Graham was in her ordinary way, there was nae servant about the house durst neglect their charge that gate. The plough was standin' idle on the houm, an' the harrows lying birstling on the sawn croft. It's e'en a picture o' desolation, quo' I to mysel. Every ane's missed amang their ain; but gae without the bounds o' the farm, just beyond that dike, an' there's no ane thinkin' o' the loss. I was right. When you an' I slip away to our lang hame, my man, others will just pop into our places, an' laugh, an' fike, an' mind their ain affairs, an' never ane will think o' us ava.

"Weel, I didna like to intrude on a family in distress, for I was but a young man then; sae I thinks that I'll chap away up to Matthew Hyslop's bit house, and see if it be true that the gouk said: for if he has lost his wife, Tibby Johnston, says I to mysel, he'll never put the like o' her in her shoon. When I gaed up near the cot-house, they had nae apartments there to hide themselves in frae the ee o' the warld; an' there I saw Matthew sitting on the green brae side, an' a' his five bairns about him; an' he had the muckle Bible open in his hand, but when he saw me he closed it, and laid it down.

"'How's a' wi' ye the day, Matthew?' quo' I.

"'I canna complain, an' I winna complain, Davie,' said he. 'I am just as it has been the will o' the Lord to make me. Hale in health, but broken in heart, Davie. We hae been visited wi' a heavy dispensation here last night.'

"'Wow, Matthew, but I'm wae to hear that,' quo' I. 'Pray, what has happened i' your family!'

"'It has pleased the Almighty to take thae poor bairns' mother frae their head last night, David; and here am I left as helpless and disconsolate a poor man as the sun o' heaven has this day risen on.'

"'It is a heavy trial, Matthew,' quo' I. 'But ye maunna repine. Ye maun bear it like a man, and a Christian. Your wife has only paid a debt that she has been awn for these forty years, an' ye maun trust in Heaven, an' be resigned.'

"'So I am, so I am, David. You have said the truth, and I am resigned. But our fallen nature is weak, and the human heart maun be allowed some yearnings ower what it held dearest in life. I hope my kind Maker and Redeemer will forgive my tears, for my grief's no out o' my repining at the execution o' his just decrees; but, oh! David, sic a woman as I hae lost.'

"'She was a good woman, Matthew,' says I. 'If Tibby Johnston wasna a good woman and a Christian, mony ane may be feared.'

"'There's nane kens what she was but mysel, David. We hae lived thegither for these fifteen years, and I never heard the word of discontent frae her tongue, nor saw a frown on her brow. She had the true feelings of a wife and a mother; for she only lived in and for her family. Their happiness was hers; an' a' their pains, an' a' their wants, she felt as her own. But, ower and aboon that, she had a warm heart to a' mankind, and a deep reverence for every sacred thing. Had my dear woman died in my arms, my heart wadna hae been sae sair; but oh, David! she died out on the hill, wi' no ae friend near, to take her last farewell, to support her head, or to close her ee.'

"I held my tongue, and could make no answer, for he was sobbing sae hard that his heart was like to burst. At length he came to himsel, and composed his voice as well as he could.

"'I maun tell ye ower ilka thing as it happened, David,' said he; 'for I hae nae pleasure but in speaking about her whose head's lying low in that house the day. When she waken'd yesterday morning, she says to me, 'Bless me, Matthew,'———Ay, she had ay that bit sweet, harmless by-word—'Bless me, bairn,' or, 'Bless me, Matthew.' Mony a time she said it; though I whiles reproved her, and said it was sae like a papish signing and blessing hersel, that I didna like to hear it. Then she wad gie a bit short laugh—ye mind her good-natured, bashfu' laugh, David?—and say, that she would try to remember no to say't again; but out it came the very next word, and there was nae mair about it, for laith wad I hae been to hae higgled wi' her, an' vex'd her about ony thing! My canny woman! Sae, as I was saying, she says to me, when she waken'd, 'Bless me, Matthew, sic a dream as I hae had last night! I dreamed I was gaun away the day to be married to a new bridegroom, an' leave you an' the bairns to shift for yoursels. How wad ye like that, goodman?' I said something in a joking way, whilk it is needless to repeat, that there was nane wad be sic a fool as to take her aff my hand, but if they did, that I wad soon get a better. 'Ay!' quo' she, 'it is easy for you to say sae, but weel I ken it's far frae your heart. But, Matthew,' continued she, in a graver tone, 'does it not bode ill to dream o' marriage? I think I hae heard my auld aunt say, that to dream o' marriage was death.' 'Daft body,' quo' I, 'ye trouble aye your head wi' vagaries. Whoever follows freets, freets will follow them.' 'I saw mony a braw man riding on their horses, but I mysel gaed i' the fore-end, and was the brawest mountit o' them a',' said she. I thought nae mair about it, and she said nae mair about it; but after we had gotten the breakfast, I sees her unco dinkly dressed, for she was soon made neat and clean. 'What are ye after the day, Tibby?' quo' I. 'I'm gaun to the market,' said she. 'I hae three spinles o' sale yarn for auld Tammie, an' I'm gaun to buy barley, an' saut, an' some ither little things for the house wi' the price o't.' 'Ye're a good creature, an' a thrifty ane,' quo' I: 'there never was a better about a poor man's house.' Then she leugh, an' fikit about putting a' things to rights for the bairns and me through the day; for she likit a bit praise, and whenever I roosed her, she was as happy and as light-hearted as when she was nineteen years auld. Then, after settling wi' the bairns what she was to bring ilk ane o' them, she set out wi' her yarn on her back, saying, that she wad be hame about the gloaming; but I wasna to be ony feared for her though she was gayen late, for she had been rather lang o' winning away and had muckle ado.

"When the gloaming came, I began to weary, but I couldna get the bairns left, and was obliged to look and listen, and mony a lang look and lang listen I took in vain. I put the bairns ane by ane to their beds, and sat up till midnight. But then I could rest nae langer, sae I ran to a neighbour to come and bide i' the house, and aff I set for the market town, expecting at every turn to meet my woman wi' her bit backfu'. I gaed a' the gate to the town without meeting wi' her, and cried the folk out o' their beds that I kend she dealt wi', but she hadna been seen there after three o'clock. At length after it was daylight I got some spearings o' her at the holm-head. The weaver's wife there had seen her and spoken wi' her, and she told her that she was gaun to try the hill road, that she might be hame wi' some hue o' day. I took the hill road as fast as my feet would carry me, and a wild road it is, unfit for a woman wi' a burden to travel. There was but ae sheiling in the hale gate, if she keepit the right track, and I had strong hopes that she had been nightit and stayed there until day. When I came to the sheil and asked for her, the shepherd's wife started to her feet, 'What!' said she, holding up both her hands, 'did your wife no come hame last night?' 'No,' said I. 'Then you will never see her again in life,' said she with great emotion, 'for she left this house after sunset. She asked a drink of milk, and complained of something about her heart that made her very ill; but nothing would prevail on her to stay.' My heart grew as cold as a stone; and without uttering another word I took the hill on my way homeward. A wee bit after I came ower the height, and no very far aff the road—no aboon a hunder steps aneath the sand o' the mossy grain———Oh, David, I canna tell ye nae mair! The sight that I saw there will hing about my heart to the day o' my death, an' the sooner that comes the better. She had died at her devotion, whilk was a great comfort to me, for she was in a kneeling posture, and her face on the ground. Her burden was lying beside her. My dear kind woman! there wasna the least bit necessary thing forgotten! There

was a play for ilk ane o' the bairns—a whup to Harry, a knife to Jock, and a picture-beuk to little Andrew. She had us a' in her breast, and there's little doubt that her last petition was put up to Heaven for us. I can tell ye nae mair, David, but ye maun come up again Sabbath first and render the last duty to the best o' women.'

"'I promised that I would, and said some words o' comfort to him that he was a great deal the better o'; but I hadna the heart to tell him what had befallen at Carlshaw, for I thought he couldna thole that. But down I comes mysel, to see if I can make ony further discoveries about matters. I was mair fortunate this time: an' it's wonderfu' what effect mortality has in making folk devout, for there I finds auld Yiddie the barnman, who never cared a fig about religion, sitting broggling and spelling at a kittle chapter in Nehemiah, thinkin' I daresay that he was performing a very devout act. An' Yiddie really had the assurance when I came to him to pretend to be in a very religious frame o' mind. But gin ye had but heard Yiddie's sawpient sayings about *the end o' man*, as he ca'd it, really, callant, they wad hae edified ye very muckle. 'Ye're thrang at your beuk, Yiddie,' quo' I. 'O ay, what can we do? The end o' man's comin' on us a'! We maun be preparing, lad; for death spares naebody, an' the mair's the pity. He maws them down as the gerse on the field, an' as a thing fa's in time it maun lie through a' eternity, ye ken. It is a hard compensation this. But it shaws the workings of man, and the end of a' things is at hand. We maun e'en be preparing, lad, and do the best we can for a good up-pitting.'

"'I said something to Yiddie that he was a hantle the better o'. 'Yiddie,' says I, 'do you expect to mix wi' the auld Jews i' the neist warld?' 'What has put that i' your head?' quo' he. 'Because I dinna see how reading that lang catalogue o' names,' quo' I, 'can prepare ye for death or for another warld, unless ye expect to meet wi' a' the auld Jews that came back frae Babylon, and wish to be able to name ilka chap by his ain name. I'll tell ye what wad be as wiselike, Yiddie. If ye wad repent o' a' your sins, and beg forgiveness and mercy at the throne o' grace, it would be as likely to gain you acceptance wi' Heaven as putting on a grave face, and spelling ower a string o' auld warld names. But gie us a' the particulars o' this *hard compensation*, Yiddie. Has the doctor no been able to restore your mistress to life?'

"'Na na, lad, he wad be a wice doctor could do that; an' muckle sale he wad get; an' oh sic a benefit he wad be to man!' (I heard Yiddie didna like to die at a'.) 'But as to our mistress that's gane, honest woman! there was nae doctor to be had, an' it was a' ane for that, for she was past redemption. I said there was nae mair hope after she fell into the second fit; an' neither there was; but the goodman wad be hoping against nature an' reason. After a', I dinna wonder muckle at it; for it was an awfu' thing to see a wraith.'

"'Did she indeed see something that couldna be accounted for, Yiddie?' said I, 'and was that the immediate cause of her death?'

"'There's nae doubt but it was the cause o' her death,' said he, 'although the minister is sae daft as to say that she had been affectit wi' the trouble afore, an' that had made her believe that she saw the shape o' her neighbour gaun at her side. But ony body kens that's nonsense. Thae ministers, they will aye pretend to be wicer nor ither fouk, an' the feint a sperk o' sense they ken ava, but just rhaim, rhaim, rhaiming aye the same thing ower again, like gouks i' June. But as to accounting for the thing, that's what I canna say naething about. She saw Tibby Johnston's wraith; but whether a wraith can be rightly accountit for or no, is mair nor I can persoom.'

"'I can account for it very weel, Yiddie,' says I, 'and I'll do it to set your mind at rest about that, for I hae heard it explained by my ain mother, and several cunning old people. Wraiths are of twa kinds, you see. They appear always immediately before death, or immediately after it. Now when a wraith is seen before death, that is a spirit sent to conduct the dying person to its new dwelling, in the same way as the Earl o' Hopetoun there, for instance, wad send a servant to conduct a stranger to his house at Rae-hill that had never been there before. These are sometimes good, and sometimes bad spirits, just according to the tenor of the person's life that lies on the bed o' death. And sometimes the deil mistakes himsel, and a spirit o' baith kinds comes: as, for instance, when Jean Swinton departit, there was a white dow sat on the ae end o' the house, an' a corby on the ither; but when the death psalm was sung, the corby flew away. Now, when the wraith appears after death, that's the soul o' the deceased, that gets liberty to appear to the ane of a' its acquaintances that is the soonest to follow it; and it does that just afore it leaves this world for the last time; and that's the true doctrine o' wraiths,' says I, 'and we should a' profit by it.'

"'Hech wow, man, but that's wonderfu'!' says he; 'how do ye come to ken sicken things sae young! Weel, of a' things i' the world I wad like warst to see a wraith. But your doctrine hauds very fair in this case; for you see our mistress gaed away up to Matthew's house yestreen to see Tibby after she cam hame frae the mercat, for she was to bring her some word that deeply concerned her. Weel, she stayed there till the gloaming, and as Tibby wasna like to come hame, she came away, saying, 'She wad see her the morn.'

"'Ay, sae she will, Yiddie, sae she will!' says I. 'But little did she ken, when she said sae, that she was to see her in a country sae far away.' 'It is a queer warld this,' said Yiddie. 'Howsomever I'll gang on wi' my story, as I dinna want to dive into

morality e'en now. Weel, as I was saying, she comes her ways; but in her road hameward, ere ever she wist, saw Tibby gaun twa or three steps afore her, and at the aff side o' the road, as if she had gaen by without tenting her. She had on her Sunday claes, and appeared to hae a heavy burden on her back, and she was gaun rather like ane dementit. The mistress then cried after her, 'Tibby, is that you? I think you're come by your ain house the night.' It made nae answer, but postit on; and turned a wee aff the road and fell down. Our mistress made a' the haste down to the place that she could, still thinking it was Tibby Johnston hersel, and she was gaun to lift her, and see what was the matter; but when she came to the spot there was nothing there, and no living creature to be seen. She was nae frightit that time at a'; but, thinking she hadna seen distinctly, she lookit a' round about her, and cried out several times, 'Tibby, what's come o' you? where away are ye gane?' or something to that purpose. But neither seeing nor hearing ought, she came back to the road, and held on her way. In less than three minutes after that, she saw Tibby gaun before her again, but still mair unsettled and distressed like than she was afore. The mistress didna speak that time, for she thought something was the matter wi' her, but she walked as fast as she could to come up wi' her, and thought aye she was winning some ground. At length she saw her drap down again on her face, and she thought she fell like ane that was never to rise again. On this our mistress gae a loud scream, and ran up to the spot, but there was nobody there.

"'She saw nae mair, but came hame by hersel, and wonderfu' it was how she was able to come hame. As soon as she came in and saw the light she fainted, and gaed out o' ae fainting fit into anither the hale night, and was in great distress and horror o' mind. A' the servants o' the house sat up wi' her, and about day she fell into a quiet sleep. When she awakened she was a good deal composed, and we had hopes that she would soon be quite better, and the goodman went to a bed to get some rest. By ill luck, havering Jean Jinkens came in about nine o'clock to see the mistress, and ere ever ane could prevent her, tauld that Tibby Johnston had died out on the hill the last night; and that her husband had found her this morning lying cauld and lifeless, wi' her burden on her back, and her face on the ground.

"'This intelligence threw Mrs. Graham into a stupor, or rather she appeared striving to comprehend something that was beyond the grasp of her mind. She uttered some half-articulate prayers, and then fell into a complete franazy, which increased every minute to a terrible degree, till her strength was clean gane, and she sank back lifeless on the bed. After muckle exertion by her attendants, she revived, but she wasna like hersel; her voice was altered, and her features couldna hae been kend. Her delirium increased, and forced her again to a little bodily exertion, but it soon came to an end, and she fell into that sleep from which a' the attendants and a' the doctors in the warld could not have awaked her again. She's now lying a streekit corpse in her ain bed, and the goodman, I fear, will gang out o' his right mind.'

"'Yiddie didna just tell it sae weel, or sae properly as that, but that was the subject matter. I came my way hame right douf an' heavy-hearted, for I had gotten a lesson read to me that I never could forget.

"'On the Saturday afore the twa burials, I was down at the road-side afore the sheep as usual, and there I sees Wat Scott coming galloping faster than ever. When he saw me he laid on his horse, thinking to get by ere I wan on the road, but I was afore him; and, fearing I couldna stop him otherwise, I brought my coat-tails o'er my head, and cowered afore him on the middle o' the road. Nae horse nor dog in the world will face ane in that guise, and in a moment Wat was galloping faster up the water than before he was doing down. But, goodness, as he was flyting and banning at me!

"'"Wat, just 'light aff your beast feasible like,' says I, 'and lead it down the path, else never a foot ye shall win farther the day.' He was obliged to comply, and I questioned him what was the matter, and if he was riding for the doctor again?

"'"Doctor, man! od bless your heart, it's ten times waur than the doctor this. There never was sic a job, sir, sin' this world stood up. Never. I *do not* see, for my part, what's to come o' folk. I think people be infatuate! Bless you, sir, you never knew sic a business in your life. A' things are gawn to utter confusion now."

"'"What is it, Wat, man? What is it?'

"'"What is it! Bless my soul, man, did you no hear? you never heard, sir, sic a business *all your life*. What think ye, the confounded idiot of a wright has done, but made our mistress' coffin so short that she canna get a foot into it. There never was sic a job seen in this country. Lord, sir, she'll never look intil't!'

"'"It is a very awkward and disagreeable job indeed, Wat,' says I, 'and highly reprehensible; but I should think, by using a little art, it might still answer.'

"'"The thing is impossible, sir! perfectly impossible! The man must be a blockhead! Bless your heart, sir, she'll never keek into it. Disagreeable! Ay, there never was ought in the least like it. There, think of it—this is Saturday—the morn's the burial day. I wadna wonder but I hae a coffin to tak hame afore me the night after dark. It's enough to put ony man alive out o' his judgment. I think the folk be a' gane mad and stupid thegither.'

"Wat galloped away from me, actually crying with perplexity, and exclaiming, that *there never was sic a job kend i' the world*. The burials were

baith in the kirkyard on the Sabbath-day, at the same time:—and that is the hale story o' Tibby Johnston's wraith, my little man, sae often spoken about in this country. When ye come to my time o' life, ye may be telling it to somebody, and, if they should misbelieve it, you may say that you heard it from auld Davie Proudfoot's ain mouth, and he was never kend for a liar."

A STORY OF GOOD QUEEN BESS.

It is a fact well known to those versed in the annals of illustrious British families, that, after the death of Mary Queen of Scots, there was still another accomplished young lady, who was an only child, and so nearly related to both the English and Scottish crowns that Elizabeth became restlessly jealous of her, and consulted with the timid James by what means the young lady might be prevented from having a legitimate offspring. James, entering keenly into the same feelings, urged Elizabeth to claim her as a royal ward, and then, having her under her own eye, she might readily find means, on some plausible pretence or other, to prevent her from marrying. Elizabeth acquiesced, and forthwith sent a message to that effect. The young lady, little knowing with whom she had to do, would willingly have gone to the court of her cousin, the English queen; but neither her mother, step-father, nor guardian, would permit it. And though the answer they returned to the queen was humble and subservient, there was one intimation in it which cut Elizabeth to the heart, and prompted her to the most consummate means of revenge; it was, that the young lady was placed by her father's will under noble guardians in Scotland, who would not suffer the sole owner of two earldoms, and *the presumptive heir of two crowns*, to be removed from under their charge. This roused the jealousy of the old vixen into perfect delirium, and from that moment she resolved on having the young lady cut off privately.

These being known and established facts, the following story will easily be traced by a few to the real actors and sufferers; but, at the same time, I judge it incumbent on me to change the designation of the family and of the castle in some degree, that the existing relatives, numerous and noble, may not be apparent to every reader.

Shortly after this message, there came into Scotland, by King James's permission, a party of Englishmen, with a stud of fine horses for sale. They lingered in the vicinity of Acremoor Castle (as we shall denominate it) for a good while, showing their fine horses here and there; and one of them, on pretence of exhibiting a fine Spanish jennet to the young lady, got admittance to the castle, and had several conversations with the mother and daughter, both together and separately.

At the same period, there came to a farm-house on the Acremoor estate, late one evening, a singular old woman, who pretended to be subject to fits, to be able to tell fortunes, and predict future events. Her demeanour and language had a tint of mystical sublimity about them, which interested the simple folks greatly; and they kept her telling fortunes and prophesying great part of the night. Among other things, after a grand fit, she exclaimed, "Ah! is it so? Is it so? How came I to this place to-night to be the herald of treachery and misfortune! The topmost bough of the noble tree must be lopped off, and the parent stem fall in the dust! Woe is me! The noble and beautiful! The noble and beautiful! Curses on the head of the insatiable wretch!" And with such ravings she continued, till suddenly she disappeared.

There lived in the castle a very pretty girl, named Lucy Lumsdaine. She was the young lady's foster-sister, her chief waiting-maid and confidant, and there subsisted a strong attachment between them. That very night, about midnight, or, as some alleged, considerably after it, Lucy raised such an alarm in the castle as roused the terrified sleepers with a vengeance. She ran from one room to another, screaming out "Murder!" and after the menials were aroused and assembled together, the poor girl was so dreadfully affected that she could scarce make herself intelligible. But then she had such a story to deliver! She heard some strange sounds in the castle, and could not sleep, but durst not for her life leave her chamber in the darkness. She kept constantly listening at her key-hole, or looking from her lattice. She at one time heard her young lady sobbing, as she thought, till her heart was like to burst; and then the door of the catacomb beside the dungeon open and shut; then heavy steps moving stealthily to and fro; and finally, long after, she saw a man leap out at a window on the ground-floor, and take the dead body of her young mistress on his back in a sack, and retreat with hasty steps towards the churchyard. She saw one arm and the head

outside the sack, and the beautiful long hair hanging down; and she was convinced and certain that her young lady was murdered by an English horse-jockey.

The ladies were both amissing. They had never been in their beds, and what to do the terrified inmates knew not; but in the plenitude of their wisdom, they judged it best to proceed in a body to the churchyard, and seize the murderer before he got the body buried, and wreak ample vengeance on him. When they arrived at the burial-ground, there was nobody there, nor anything uncommon to be seen, save an open grave newly made, into which not one of them dared to look, pretending that they knew for whom it was made. They then returned home contented after this great exertion. Indeed, what could they do, as no trace of the ladies was heard of?

There was little cognizance taken of such matters in that reign; but on this occasion there was none. King James, perhaps, either knew of or suspected the plot, and kept quiet; and the only person who made a great outcry about it was poor Lucy, who tried all that she could to rouse the vassals to inquiry and revenge; and so far prevailed, that proclamation was made at the pier of Leith and the cross of Edinburgh, and rewards offered for the apprehension of those who had carried the ladies off, and kept them in concealment. Murder was not mentioned, as a thing not to be suspected.

But behold, in a few days, Lucy also, the great mover of all this, disappeared; and her sweatheart, Alexander Graham, and her only brother Lowry, with many other relations among the peasantry, were left quite inconsolable, and knew not what course to take. They had resolved to take vengeance in their own hands, could they have discovered whither to have directed it; but the plot had been laid beyond their depth.

The old witch-wife about this time returned; and having obtained universal confidence from her prophetic ravings about the topmost bough being lopped off, and the parent stem, and the noble and the beautiful, &c. &c., at the farmer's request, she was placed by David Dallas, the steward on the estate, in a little furnished cottage, a sort of winter resting-place for the noble family, near a linn in the depth of the wood; and there she lived, feared and admired, and seldom approached, unless perchance by a young girl who wished to consult her about a doubtful sweetheart.

After sundry consultations, however, between Alexander Graham, Lucy's betrothed sweetheart, and Lowry Lumsdaine, her only brother, it was resolved that the latter should go and consult the sibyl concerning the fate of Lucy. One evening, near the sun-setting, Lowry, taking a present of a deer's-ham below his plaid, went fearfully and rapidly away to the cot in the linn. That his courage might not eventually fail him, he whistled one while, and sung another, "Turn the blue bonnets wha can;" but in spite of all he could do, heavy qualms of conscience sometimes came over him, and he would say to himself, "Od, after a', gin I thought it was the deil or ony o' his awgents that she dealt wi', shame fa' me gin I wadna turn again yet!"

Lowry, however, reached the brink of the bank opposite the cottage, and peeping through the brambles, beheld this strange being sitting in a little green arbour beside the cottage, dressed in an antique and fantastic mode, and, as it appeared to him, employed in plucking leaves and flowers in pieces. She sometimes cast her eyes up to heaven, and then wiped them, as if she had been weeping. "Alas! poor creature!" said Lowry to himself, "wha kens what she may hae suffered i' this wicked world! She may hae lost an only daughter or an only son, as I hae dune an only sister, and her losses may hae injured her reason. Aye, I hae little doubt, now when I see her, but that has been the case; an' that's the way how she sees intil hidden mysteries an' events. For it is weel kend that when God bereaves o' ae sense, he always supplies another, and that often of a deeper and mair incomprehensible nature. I'll venture down the brae, and hear what she says. How's a' wi' ye, auld Lucky o' the linn? Gude-e'en t'ye. What's this you are studying sae seriously the night?"

"I'm studying whether a she-fox or a wild-boar is the more preferable game, and whether it would be greater glory to run down the one with my noble blood-hounds, or wile the other into a gin. Do you take me, Mr. Lumsdaine?"

"Lord sauf us! she kens my name even, an' that without ever seeing me afore. I thought aye that we twa might be auld acquaintances, Lucky, an' see what I hae brought ye in a present. It will be ill for making you dry, but ye're no far frae the burn here."

"You have been a simple, good-natured fool all your life, Lowry; I can perceive that, though I never saw your face before. But I take no gifts or rewards. Leave your venison, for it is what I much wanted, and here are two merks for it. Do as I bid you, else you will rue it."

"Aih! gudeness, d'ye say sae? Gie me a haud o' the siller then. It will sune turn into sklait-stanes at ony rate; sae it will make sma' odds to ony o' us. But, gude forgie us, what war ye saying about hunting? Ye may hunt lang ere ye start a wild-boar here, or a she-fox either, as I wad trow; sae an ye wad tell me ony thing, it maunna be in parables."

"Aye, but there's a she-fox that sees us when we dinna see her, and whose cruel eye can pick out the top chickens of the covey, and yet they cannot all suffice her insatiable thirsting after blood. She reminds me of the old song, to which I request your attention. It will tell you much:—

"'The boar he would a-wooing go,
To a mistress of command,
And he's gone away to the lady fox,
And proffer'd her his hand.
'You're welcome here, Lord Bruin,' she says,
'You're welcome here to me;
But ere I lie into your den,
You must grant me favours three.'

'Yes—favours three I will grant to thee,
Be these whate'er they may,
For there is not a beast in the fair forest
That dares with me to play.
Then bid me bring the red deer's heart,
Or nombles of the hind,
To be a bridal supper meat,
Fitting my true love's mind.'

'O no, O no,' said the lady fox,
'These are no gifts for me;
But there are three birds in fair Scotland,
All sitting on one tree;
And I must have the heart of one,
And the heads of the other two,
And then I will go, for well or woe,
To be a bride to you.'

Now woe be to that vile she-fox,
The worst of this world's breed,
For the bonny, bonny birds were reaved away,
And doom'd by her to bleed;
And she tied the boar up by the neck,
And he hung till he was dead."

As she sung these verses with wild vehemence, Lowry looked on and listened with mingled terror and admiration, trying to make something out of them relating to the subject nearest his heart; but he could not, although convinced that they bore some allusion to the subject. "I am convinced, Lucky, that ye hae a swatch o' a' things, past, present, an' to come," said he; "for ye hae foretold some wonderfu' things already. But I can mak naething o' sic wild rants as this, an' unless ye speak to me in plain, braid Scots, I'll never be a bawbee's worth the wiser."

"Because, Lowry, that head of yours is as opaque as a millstone. Kneel down there, and I'll throw a little glamour over you, which will make you see a thousand things which are invisible to you now."

"Na, na, Lucky! Nane o' your cantrips wi' me. I'm as feared for you as if you were a judge o' death an' life afore me. I just came to ask you a few rational questions. Will you answer them?"

"Perhaps I may, when I get a rational being to converse with. But did it ever strike that goblet head of yours, that it formed any part or portion of the frame of such a being?"

"But then, Lucky, I hae nature at my heart, an' that should be respectit by the maist gifted body that exists. Now, as I am fully convinced that ye hae a kind o' dim view of a' that's gaun on *aneath* the heaven—as for ony farer, that's rather a dirdum—we maunna say ought about that. But ainee for a', can ye tell me ought about my dear sister Lucy?"

"Alas, poor fellow! There, indeed, my feelings correspond with yours. Can it be that the rudest part of the creation is the most affectionate? Yes, yes, it must be so. From the shaggy polar bear to the queen upon the throne, there is one uniform and regular gradation of natural affection. In that most intense and delightful quality of the human heart, the lowest are the highest, and the highest the lowest: and henceforth will I rather ensconce myself among nature's garbage than snuffle the hateful atmosphere of heartless indifference and corruption. Why did it behove poor Lucy to suffer with her betters? Her rank glittered not in the fox's eye. But the day of retribution may come, and the turtle-dove return to her mate. There is small hope, but there *is* hope; such a villain can never sit secure. Mark what I say, hind:—

"When the griffin shall gape from the top of Goat-Fell,
And the falcon and eagle o'er Scorbeck shall yell;
When the dead shall arise, and be seen by the river,
And the gift with disdain be returned to the giver,
Then you shall meet Lucy more lovely than ever."

Now leave me, good hind, leave me; for a hand will come and lead me in, which it is not meet you should see. But ponder on what I have told you."

Lowry was not slow in obeying the injunction, not knowing what might appear to lead her in; and as he trudged homeward, he conversed thus with himself:—"She's a terrible auld wife that! an' has something about her far aboon the common run o' women, wha are for the maist part great gouks, for as bonny an' as glib-tongued as they are. But here is an auld grim wrinkled Lucky, wha, forby good sense an' right feeling, has a tint o' sublimity about her that's perfectly grand. May they no as weel be good spirits as evil anes that she converses wi'! If ane could but trow that, what a venerable creature she would be! She bids me ponder on her rhymes, but I can make naething o' them. That last ane refers to something they ca' coats wi' arms that the gentles hae, an' sounded like a thing where there was some hope, save ae bit o't, 'when the dead shall arise.' When she came to that, oho! that's rather a dirdum, thinks I, and lost hope, and I'm now fairly convinced that my young lady an' sister are baith murdered; for I dreamed ae night that the spirit o' my dead mother came to me an' tauld me, that they were baith murdered by this new lord, and sunk wi' sackfu's o' stanes in the Acremoor Loch. Now, O what heart can stand sic a thought as that!"

All the three females being thus lost, without the least trace of any of them having been discovered, shortly thereafter an heir appeared, with a patent from King James for the estates, but not the titles; and he took forthwith uninterrupted possession. He was a sullen and gloomy person; and though at first he tried to ingratiate himself with his people, by giving to the poor, and employing many day-labourers, yet every one who could shunned his presence, which seemed to shed a damp and a chilliness over his heart. At his approach the schoolboys left the play-green, retiring in detached and listless

groups, till the awe-inspiring look scowled no more upon them. The laugh along the hay-field ceased at his approach, and the song of the reaper was hushed. He was styled Sir Herbert; but Sir Herbert soon found that his reign was likely to become an uneasy one. For word coming to Acremoor that he had been expressly sent for by Queen Elizabeth, and having waited on her, had left her on some private commission for Scotland shortly before the disappearance of the young heiress and her mother, then it was that an indefinable sensation of horror began to inspire all ranks in that district. Their young lady's claim to both crowns was well known, and often boasted of among her vassals, and they dreaded that some dark and infamous deed had been committed; yet they wist not by what means to implicate their new and detested master, whom they thenceforward regarded as either a murderer or an accomplice of murderers, and disclaimed allegiance to him.

The government of Scotland was at that time very inefficient, the aristocracy having quite the ascendent; and between the chief and his vassals there was no interference, his will being the supreme law among them, from which there was rarely any appeal. But with regard to who was their rightful chief, to whom they were bound to yield this obedience, that power the vassals kept in their own hands, and it was a right that was well looked into. Of course, at this very time, there was a meeting among the retainers and chief tacksmen on these extensive domains, to consult whether or not it was consistent with honour and propriety to pay their rents to this upstart chief, while their late lord and master's only daughter was probably still in life, and might require double payment from every one of them; and it was decided unanimously, that, unless a full explanation of his rights was laid before them, they would neither pay him rent nor obedience in future; so that at this time Sir Herbert found his vassals in open and avowed rebellion. It was in vain that he showed them his titles of recognition by the king: the men answered, that their young lady's rights and titles never had been forfeited; and, without a charter from her, they denied his rights of inheritance. They said further, that they would take no single man's word or oath that their lady was dead, and they were determined to preserve her rights till they had sufficient proof *where* she died, *how* she died, and where she was buried.

While the chief vassals were thus interesting themselves more and more about the fate of their young lady, Lowry and Graham were no less perplexed about that of their beloved Lucy. The former had again and again waited on the sibyl, with whose wandering and visionary aspirations he was mightily taken; and having attended her by appointment early one morning, the following dialogue concluded their conversation:—

"But I hae been thinkin', dear Lucky, what's to come o' you gin you tak your death here, for ye ken that maun come some time; an' there's naebody to tak care o' ye, to gie ye a drink, or haud your head, or to close your een, whan ye gang awa."

"Fear not for me, honest lad, for I am resolved to die beneath the open eye of heaven, with my eyes open upon it, that I may feel the odours of paradise descending from it, and breathing their sweet influence over my soul; for there is a living, animating spirit breathes over the open face of nature, of which mine forms an item; and when I breathe it away at last, it shall be into the pure elastic element."

Lowry was so struck with this, that he stepped aside, and exclaimed to himself, "Now, wha could suspect sic a woman as that for a witch? The thing's impossible! There's something heavenly about her! Breathe her soul into an element! I wonder what an element is! Aha, there's the dirdum! Dear Lucky, gin it be your will, what is an element?"

"Now, what do you think it is, honest Lumpy?"

"I'm rather in a dirdum; but I think it is a great muckle beast without joints." Then, aside, "Hout, that canna be it neither, for how could she breathe her soul into a great unfarrant beast?"

"What is that you are muttering to yourself, fool? It is an elephant you are wrestling with. The elements are the constituent parts of nature. Fire is the primeval and governing one."

"Aih! gudeness preserve us! that's ten times waur than a muckle beast! Then she is a witch after a'; an' when she dies, she's gaun to breathe her soul into fire. That gars a' the hairs o' my head creep; I wish I were away. But dear, dear Lucky, ye haena tauld me aught about Lucy as yet, or whether she be dead or living?"

"I have never seen her spirit. But death's safest to hide the crimes of a villain.

> "There's villany at the heart, young man;
> There's blood upon the head;
> But the worms that he would tread upon,
> Shall lay him with the dead."

Lowry was little or nothing the wiser of this wild rhapsody, and went away to his work with a heavy heart. But that day one of the most singular incidents befell him that ever happened to mortal man. Lowry was draining a meadow on the side of Acremoor Loch, and often wishing in his heart that Lucy's fate might be revealed to him one way or another, when, all at once, he felt a strange overpowering heat come over him, and on looking about to see from whence it proceeded, there was his mother standing close by his side. "Gudeness preserve us, mother!" cried Lowry, "whereaway are ye gaun? or what has brought you here?"

"O fie, Lowry, whaten questions are these to ask at your mother? Where can a mother gang, or where should a mother gang, but to her only son? Ye maybe thought I was dead, Lowry, but ye see I'm no dead."

"I see sae indeed, mother, an' glad am I to see you lookin' sae weel an' sae bien. But stand a wee bit farrer aff, an it be your will, for there's a heat about ye that's like to skomfish me."

"Na, na, Lowry lad, ye're no sae easily skomfished; ye'll hae to stand a hantle mair heat than this yet. But tell me now, son, are you just gaun to delve and houk away a' your days there, an' never think o' revenging the death o' your dear sister?"

"Why the truth is, mother, that's rather a dirdum, for we canna discover, neither by witchery nor warlockry, what has come ower her, or wha to revenge her death on; or, my certy! but they would get their dickens!"

"Dear Lowry, didna I tell ye lang syne that she was murdered an' sunk in the Acremoor Loch in a sackfu' o' stanes, an' that exactly opposite to the place where we stand."

"Weel, mother, in the first place, I think I *do* mind o' you telling me this afore; but in the next place, as to where I am to find her, that's rather a dirdum, for ye ken twa things or twa places are always right opposite ane anither. Sae unless you can gie me a third mark, I may fish in that great braid loch for my sister an' her sackfu' o' stanes for a towmont."

"Then, Lowry, do you see yon willow-tree on the ither side o' the loch? yon lang sma' tree that stands by itsel, bent i' the tap, and wantin' branches?"

"Aye, weel aneugh, mither."

"Then, exactly in a line between this spot, and yon willow-tree, will you find the corpse o' your sister an her lady, my other dear bairn, sunk in that loch, wi' sackfu's o' stanes tied to their necks. Didna I tell you a' this afore, Lowry!"

"Aha, Lucky, but I didna believe ye, for, d'ye ken, I never had muckle to lippen to your word a' my life; for as for telling ane the even down truth, that never ainee cam into your head. I winna say that ye didna sometimes tell the truth, but then it was merely by chance; an' for that very reason, I'm a wee doubtfu' o' the story still, it is sae unnatural for a man to murder twa bonnie young creatures, an' sink them into a loch wi' a sackfu' o' stanes tied to their necks. Now, be sure o' what ye say, mother, for life and death depend on it. Did ye see them murdered an' sunk in that loch wi' your ain bodily een?"

"Baith, baith, by your new laird's ain hands! He is the villain an' the murderer!"

"Then, mother, off goes his head, an' on the clay dumpling—that's settled! Or how would it do to rack his neck to him? But for mercy's sake, stand a wee bit farrer off, an it be your will, for I declare there's a heat about you like a fiery furnace. Odsake, stand back, or I'll be baith suffocat an' roasted in five minutes."

"O Lowry, Lowry! my dear son, Lowry!" exclaimed the old wife, clasping him round the neck, and smothering him with kisses of the most devouring heat. Lowry bellowed out most lustily, laying on both with feet and hands, and then added, "Od, I declare she has downed me, the auld roudas, and smothered me, an' roasted me into the bargain! I'll never do mair good! Mither, where are you! Mither, what's become o' you? Hilloa, mither! where awa are ye gane? Gude forgie me, gin this disna ding a' things that ever happened in this world! This is beyond the comprehension o' man!"

Gentle reader, honest Lowry had all this time been sound asleep, with a burning sun beating on him. He had sat down on the edge of his drain to rest himself, and ponder on the loss of his sister, and, laying his broad shoulders back upon the flowery meadow, had fallen asleep, while in the meantime the heat of the day had increased to such a pitch, that when he awoke from the struggle with his mother, his face and breast were all blistered, and the perspiration pouring from his ample sides like water. But the identity of his mother, and the reality of her personal presence, were so strongly impressed on his mind, and everything having been so particularly related to him, he believed all as a real vision. He could work no more that day, but there he sat panting and conversing with himself in something like the following style:—

"Was there ever aught like my stupidity, no to remember a' the time that my mother was dead! an' yet that never ainee cam into my head, although she gaed me a hint about it. I saw her dee wi' my ain ee, saw her nailed in the coffin; aye, an' laid her head mysel in a deep grave, an' saw the mools heapit on her, an' the green sods aboon a'; an' yet never to remember that the grave separated her an' me; that the great valley o' the shadow o' death lay between us! Wow me, but there be mony strange things in nature! things that a body's comprehension canna fathom, if it should rax out its arms till they crack. It was my mother's spirit that spak to me, there can be nae doubts about that, an' it maun hae been my spirit, when I was in a dead sleep, that spak to her again; for spirits hae nae comprehension o' death. Let me now consider what's to be done, for I can work nae mair at my handiwork. She has tauld me that our new laird is a villain and a murderer. May I take this for gospel? Can I seriously believe this to be true? It is rather a dirdum that. Not that I think my mither's spirit wad come frae the ither warld to tell me an e'endown lee; but then it may hae been mista'en. It strikes me that the spirit o' nae mortal erring creature can be infallible. They may see wrang wi' their mental een as easily as I may do wi' my mortal anes. They may hear wrang, an' they may judge wrang, for they canna be present everywhere, an' maun often see an' hear at a distance. An' whether ane is warrantit in taking justice into his ain hands on sic information, is mair than I can compass. I have it! I'll drag for the bodies, an' if I find them, I'll take the rest for grantit."

Lowry now began to settle his land-marks, by setting up a coil of sods on the place where he slept, but

the willow-tree on the other side he could not discover. He then went and communicated the whole to Graham, who agreed at once that they ought to drag for the bodies, but not let any one know what they were about, or on what grounds they had proceeded.

The next morning they were out early with a boat and grappling irons; but the loch being broad and deep, they found, that without discovering the willow-tree, it was a hopeless and endless task. But as soon as Sir Herbert rose and discovered them, he sent express orders for them to come instantly ashore, which, when they did, he was exceedingly wroth with them, ordering all the boats to be chained up and secured with padlocks, and even threatened to fire on the first vagabonds he saw out on the lake disturbing his fisheries.

But this injunction proved only a new incentive to the young men to persevere, for they were now assured that all was not right, as the loch had hitherto been free to all the parish, and over it they had been accustomed to ferry their fuel, and all other necessaries. The two friends spent the remainder of that day searching for the willow-tree among all the hedges and ditches on the south side of the lake; but willow-tree they could find none. Towards the evening they came to a single willow stem on the verge of the loch, a mere twig, not exceeding four feet in length, and as they passed it, Graham chanced to say carelessly, "There is a willow, but oh! it will be lang afore it be a tree!" Lowry turned round, and looked eagerly at it. "That's it, that's it! That's the verra tree!" cried he. "How that should be the tree is rather a dirdum, but things are a' gane ayont my comprehension now. Wow me, but a spirit's ee does magnify a thing terribly, for that willow was ten times as big when I saw it in my vision. Nae the less, it *is* the same, the very same, I ken it by its lang stalk without branches, an' its bend at the tap." There the two set up their landmark, and, the night being a summer night, and moonlight, they soon procured a boat, and began a-dragging in a line between the marks. They had not dragged ten minutes ere the grapple fixed in some moveable body, which they began a-heaving upward, with strange looks in each other's faces. Lowry at last stopped the windlass, and addressing his friend in a tremulous voice, said, "Wad it no be better to stop till we hae daylight, an' mae een to see the sight? I'm feared my heart canna stand it i' the moonlight. The thoughts o' seeing my dear sister's corpse a' riddled wi' the eels, an' disfigured, an' a sackfu' o' stanes tied to her neck, are like to put me beside mysel."

"I hae something o' the same sort o' feeling," said Graham. "But I wadna like to bring out a' the folks in the morning, merely on suspicion that this is a corpse, whereas it may be only a log o' wood."

"Weel, weel, if you will bring it aboon I shall reel the windlass," said Lowry, "only ye're to allow me to turn my face the tither gate." On this arrangement they proceeded, until Graham was assured, by sensible demonstration, that it was a human carcase tied in a sack, and sunk with a weight! They then let it go, and tying the boat-bunker to the end of the rope for a buoy, went ashore, to consult what was next best to be done.

Early in the morning they had a number of their friends assembled at the side of the lake. But the late offence taken by the lord of the manor at the two friends, and his threat of firing upon any who should venture out on his fishing-ground, induced all the friends present to counsel the asking of his liberty. A deputation accordingly waited on Sir Herbert, who requested permission to drag the lake for some bodies which were suspected to have been sunk there. But without deigning any answer to the men, he, to their astonishment, that moment ordered out a body of his people, and at their head hasted down to the side of the loch, driving his assembled friends off with blows and threats, and then left a guard of seven men with firearms, to guard the boats and the loch in general.

The two young men were now assured of the truth of the vision, but said nothing of it to their associates, who were all astonished at their laird's unreasonable conduct. Lowry and his friends were convinced of his heinous guilt, and determined not to give it up; but they knew not how to proceed, for there was no sheriff in the county, that office having been hereditary in their chief's family, so that if Sir Herbert was the real heir, he was likewise sheriff.

But it so happened that John, Earl of Montrose, the king's viceroy for Scotland, was at that time in the vicinity, taking infeftment of some new grants of land, and he had likewise some of the principal official people of the country along with him. To him, therefore, the young men went, and told him all the story from the beginning, including Lucy's tale of the murder of their young lady. The lord-viceroy was a good as well as a great man. He had been a lord of session, Lord-chancellor of Scotland, and was now raised as high as a subject could be raised, being his sovereign's viceroy, and acting by his authority. He was greatly taken with the young men's candour and simplicity, perceived that they were serious, and had too much discernment not to see that there was something wrong with this upstart, knowing, as he well did, the powerful and relentless enemy the late heiress had in Queen Elizabeth, and that the present possessor was her tool. It was probably on some previous knowledge of these events, that, at the very first, he entered strenuously into the inquiry, but when he asked the two friends who it was that told them where the bodies were deposited, they refused to tell, saying they were not at liberty to mention that.

Without pressing them further, he accompanied

the young men to Acremoor Castle, taking his official friends along with him. It may well be supposed that Sir Herbert was a little surprised by this unceremonious visit from the lord-viceroy; he, however, put on a bold and hardy look, welcoming the party to his castle, and inviting them to alight and enter it, which they declined, till they saw the issue of the affair on which they had come. Montrose then asked him sternly his reasons for preventing the young man from searching for the body of his only sister, and the vassals for that of their lady? He answered that it was all a pretence, in order to get opportunities to destroy the salmon; that he heard the scoundrels had been out by night, and he determined to check them in time. The viceroy answered, that, by virtue of his authority, he not only granted warrant for the search, but had come with his friends to witness the issue, and examine the evidences. Sir Herbert bowed assent, and said, as long as his highness was present, no depredation on his preserved fishing-ground could take place, only he requested him not to leave any such warrant behind him. He then furnished them with boats, but refused to accompany them himself on what he called such a frivolous expedition.

The viceroy and his friends, however, went all out in several barges, for he had been too long a judge not to perceive the truth, though told to him in simple guise. Of course they at once brought up the one body, to which the buoy was attached, and found it to be that of a female, wrapped in a fine winding-sheet, and then put into a sack, with her head towards the bottom, and sunk with a large stone, and an iron ring in it. The stone was at once recognized by all the old vassals as one that had belonged to the castle dairy, but the identity of the body was uncertain. It was not greatly decayed, having been sunk among mud in the bottom of the lake, and all the stranger gentlemen thought it might have been recognized by intimate acquaintances. But it was manifest that a great uncertainty prevailed, as some thought it the body of their young lady, some that of Lucy, and more thought it neither. Even Lowry and Graham both hesitated, notwithstanding of the extraordinary information they had received, and its no less extraordinary accuracy.

The party continued to drag on, and at length actually fished up another female corpse, similarly disposed of in every respect, save that it was sunk by a leaden weight, which was likewise known to have been appended to the castle gate. The bodies were conveyed to a barn in the village, and all the inhabitants of the castle and its vicinity were summoned to attend on the instant, before the bodies were corroded by the action of the atmosphere, and the suspected murderer was obliged to attend, like a culprit, among the rest.

Strange as it may appear, though all the people suspected that the two bodies were those of their young lady and Lucy, not one of them would swear to the special identity of either. The viceroy was fully convinced in his own mind that they were the bodies of the two young females. He made it clear that these two had been murdered at the castle about the time these ladies disappeared, and if no other person in the neighbourhood was missing, the presumption was strong that the bodies were either those of the mother and daughter, or those of the latter and her foster-sister. Nevertheless, for all this clear and explicit statement, not one would swear to the identity of either. The viceroy then stated, that as no criminality attached to any one from all that he was able to elicit, nothing more remained to be done, but to give the bodies decent interment, and leave the murderers to the judgment of the Almighty. When he had proceeded thus far, Lowry stepped up and addressed him as follows:—

"My Lord, the maist part o' the folks here *think* that these bodies are the bodies o' my sister and her young mistress, an' if ye wad swear us a', we wad swear to that purpose. But ye see, my lord, death makes an awfu' change on the human face and frame, and waste and decay mair. But as ye hae gi'en up the murderer to the judgment o' Heaven, to the judgment o' Heaven I make appeal. There is an auld law o' nature, or rather o' divine providence, which I can depend on, and I humbly request that it may be tried; if these are the bodies o' my sister and young mistress, the murderer is among us. [At this word, Lowry lifted his eyes to one, which he had no right to do.] Now, wad ye just order every ane present to touch these bodies, it wad gie a great satisfaction to my heart, an' the hearts o' mony mae than me."

The viceroy smiled at the seriousness of the demand, but added, "If such a direct appeal to the justice of God can give satisfaction to the minds of friends and relatives, the process is an easy one." He then lifted up his hands, and prayed the Almighty to give a just judgment, and straight ordered that all present should pass between his friends and himself, arranged on each side, as witnesses that every one touched the bodies. Sir Herbert also ranked himself up among the gentlemen as one of the witnesses. The people passed one by one, and touched the bodies, but they bled not. Lowry and Graham, who had touched first, stood looking on with apathy until the close, when the viceroy, ordering them forward as witnesses, first touched the bodies himself, then his friends, one by one, touched them, and last of all, Sir Herbert approached. Lowry's eyes then gleamed with an unearthly ardour, from an internal assurance of divine justice and retribution being instantly manifested, and clasping his hands together, he exclaimed, "Now, now, now!" Sir Herbert fixed on him a look of rage and indignation, went forward and touched both bodies. No! neither of them gushed out a bleeding, nor was there any supernatural appearance whatever.

Lowry's elated eye sunk, and his heart was humbled, but it was to the will of providence, for he lifted both his hands, and said, "Well, it is past, and no more can be said! The will of the Lord be done! But as sure as there is a God in heaven, the murderer of these virgins shall not go down to his grave in peace, for their blood shall cry to their Creator from the ground, and his curse shall be upon the guilty heart for ever! They hae met wi' a cruel and untimely death, but be they who they may, I'll lay them baith in my ain burial-place."

Every heart bled for Lowry and his friend, and every tongue was muttering curses, not loud, but deep, on their new laird, whom all the old vassals both suspected and detested. And no sooner had Montrose left that quarter to preside in the parliament at Perth, than Sir Herbert's people began to show symptoms, not only of dissatisfaction, but of open rebellion. Resolved to make an example of those most obnoxious to him, in order to strike others with terror, he warned seven tenants and feuars off the estate, against Friday next, Lowry and Alexander Graham's father being among the number.

The community were amazed at these tyrannical proceedings, so different from the kind treatment they had been accustomed to receive. Accordingly, they seemed, by some mutual assent, to regard the mandate with disdain, and made no motions of removal, either previous to or on the appointed day. As if glad of such an opportunity of revenge, and of manifesting his power, down came Sir Herbert with his proper officers, and ordered all the furniture of the devoted families to be thrown to the door, and if not removed before night, to be burned. The men did as they were ordered, and this work of devastation went on from morning till towards the evening, the women crying, beseeching, and uttering anathemas on the usurper, as they called him. He regarded them not otherwise than to mock them, and superintended the work the whole day, encouraging the tardy and relenting officers.

But while the women and children were thus bewailing their hard lot, there appeared a dogged resignation among the men, who sauntered about in pairs, regarding the aggressor often with grim smiles, as of satisfaction, which inflamed him still the more. They probably knew what he little dreamed of, that there was then in preparation for him a catastrophe, which, if it had not been kept on record in the family annals, would not gain credit at this distance of time. It was the effect of one of those bursts of popular indignation against oppression which is most apt to break out when there is no other redress; and in this case the provocation was double, for they regarded their oppressor as likewise the murderer of their rightful mistress.

But the term of lording it over the trusty vassals of an ancient and noble stock was concluded. About seven o'clock in the evening of the 23d of July, 1602, a body of armed men rushed from a barn, which, it appeared, they had entered by a back door. Some of them had their visors down, others their faces blackened, and concerning their numbers there were many differences of opinion. But the main facts were well authenticated. They instantly surrounded Sir Herbert, seized him, and ordered him to prepare for instant death. At that fearful injunction, the nature of the villain and craven became manifest. He fell on his knees, and cried out, "Mercy, mercy!" He prayed, he tore his hair, and wept, yelling like a maniac. He proffered free remission of all debts—all offences. He even proffered to leave Scotland, and renounce all claim on the estate. "We'll make shorter wark wi' such a cursed claim as yours," said they, and instantly put a running cord about his neck, and bore him on their arms into the barn, with ferocious alacrity, while he continued roaring out, "Murder, murder!" and "O mercy, mercy!" time about; but none pitied him or came to the rescue. "Mercy!" cried they in derision; "such as you gave, so shall you have." With that they threw the end of the rope over a high joist of the barn. A gigantic fellow, who seemed the leader of the gang, seized it; and wrapping it round both his hands, tightened it, and then asked his victim if he had no prayer to pray, and no confession to make?

"O yes, yes! I have, I have! I have a prayer to pray and a confession to make," cried the wretch, glad to gain a little respite by any means, in hopes of some motion in his favour. "Grant me a reprieve and I will confess all."

"Then in this world there is only one chance of a respite," said the gigantic chief, "which is, by confessing all that you know regarding the deaths of our young lady and her friend Lucy Lumsdaine."

"I will, I will!" cried he—"Only let me be heard before a tribunal of justice, and not be tried by masked assassins. This, however, I will confess, that my hands are guiltless of their blood."

"It is a lie!" said his accuser fiercely; "and it is meet that such a ruffian go to hell with a lie on his tongue. Pull him up!"

"O no, no!" cried he in agony—"I tell you the truth. The hands of another assassin shed *their* blood. These hands are clean of it, as I shall answer at the tribunal above!" And so saying, he spread forth his hands towards heaven.

"It is a lie, I tell you, and a blasphemous one!" said the chief. "So either confess the whole truth, or here you go; for we know you for the Queen of England's agent, and guilty of their murder." So saying, he tightened the rope, and began to heave the guilty wretch from the ground.

"Stop, stop, master!" cried one; "perhaps he will yet confess the whole truth and live."

"Yes, yes! Hold, hold!" cried the culprit in the utmost desperation, seizing the rope with both hands, and dragging it down to slacken it; "I will, I will! I will confess all and *live*. Did you not say *live*,

friend? I long only to live until brought to a fair trial, and I *will* confess all. I swear then, by all that is sacred, that I did not murder the maidens. But to save my own life, and at the express command of my sovereign, whom I dared not disobey, I connived at it. They *were* murdered, and I saw them sunk in the place from whence they were taken."

"Then the corpses could not bleed," observed one, "since he was not the actual murderer. This is wonderful! The judgment of Heaven still is just!"

"So is that of Eachan M'Farlane!" cried the gigantic chief, who held the farther end of the rope, and in a moment he had the victim dangling round and round in the air, five feet from the ground. Then there was a great hubbub, some crying one thing and some another, and some madly trying to pull him down again, which finished his existence almost instantaneously. They then fastened the end of the cord, and leaving him hanging, they marched away in a body, going over the Burrow Swire in the evening, as if men from another district.

This singular violence was very little looked into. There was little intermeddling between chief and vassal in those days; and moreover, it was probably shrewdly guessed from what high and dangerous source the removing of the heiress proceeded. Lowry and Graham were seized next day, but shortly released, it having been proven at once that they were not present, having been both engaged in loading a cart with furniture at the time the outrage took place, and totally ignorant of what was going on; and it is a curious fact, that there never was one of the perpetrators discovered, nor was any one of that district particularly suspected. A M'Farlane there was not in it; and it has therefore been often hinted that the vassals had bargained with that wild clan for a body of men to come down and rid them of their upstart tyrant.

That very evening, as a number of the retainers were going to remove the body from the barn, who should they see but the countess-dowager, their late young lady's mother, who had disappeared on the same night with her daughter, and whom they believed to have been murdered along with her? Yet there she was standing at the door of the barn! True, there had been no confession made of her death, neither had it been revealed to Lowry in his vision. But she was missing with the rest, and the horror of the group may well be conceived when they beheld her standing watching the corpse of the murderer. She was recognized at once, and though she beckoned them onward, and moved forward slowly and majestically to meet them, this was a visitation they had not courage to abide, but retreated in a body to the castle. Still she advanced. It was the dusk of the evening, and as she approached the great front door that looked towards the lake, there were visages of dismay peeping from every window; and as the spectre entered the gate, there was a rush from the castle by the other entrance which created a noise like thunder.

Great was the consternation that ensued; for from that moment no one durst enter the castle either by day or night, for there were wailings heard within it, and lights seen passing to and fro in the darkness of midnight. At length the old witch wife issued from her cot in the linn, and summoned Lowry and Graham, and several of the head families, to attend at the castle and receive their lady-dowager's commands, who was actually returned to her daughter's castle and estate, living, and in good health. But the warning, coming as it did from such an equivocal source, remained unattended to for a time, the people believing it was the countess's spirit, not herself, till she showed herself walking about publicly, and then the servants and retainers gathered to her, and obeyed her as in former times.

As she did not reveal to any one where she had been, so no one took it on him to inquire. But she told them that her grief and perplexity had never till then reached its height, for until the dying confession of the wretch whom she knew to be the accredited agent of a tigress, she had strong hopes that her daughter was alive. But that confession had changed her fondest hopes to the deepest sorrow, and she durst not set a foot in England while Queen Elizabeth lived, nor yet remain in Scotland, save in concealment, therefore she thought of proceeding to Flanders.

While things were in this confusion at the castle, who should make his appearance in the vicinity but the identical horse-jockey who was *known* to have been the murderer of the young lady their mistress, and suspected likewise to have made away with poor Lucy, the only witness of his atrocities. The fellow now came in grand style, having livery servants attending him; and he was despatching messengers backwards and forwards to England every day. He had even the effrontery to ride openly about, and make many inquiries of the state of affairs about the castle, supposing, as the vassals judged, that in his new and grand capacity he was not recognized. But his features had left among them an impression of horror not to be obliterated. Every one who had seen him on the former occasion, knew him, and none better than Alexander Graham.

A consultation was called of all the principal retainers, on which it appeared that every one suspected another English plot, but neither knew what it was, nor how to frustrate it. No one who has not heard the traditionary story, or consulted the annals of that family, will guess what was resolved on at that meeting. Simply this, that they would go in a body and hang the English villain. The late event had been so much talked about, so much applauded, and so well kept, that hanging had become rather popular among these sturdy vassals. It was the order of the day; and accordingly that

very night a party was made up, accoutred much as the former one, who proceeded to the stranger's hostel, which was not in the village at the castle, but in the larger one at the west end of the loch. There they made a simultaneous attack, demanding the English scoundrels to be delivered into their hands. But they had to do with better men in these English scoundrels than the other party had, and in all probability the attacking party was greatly inferior to the former one, for the Englishman at once, with many tremendous oaths and curses, prepared to defend himself against the whole mob, with no one to support him but his two livery servants. A stout battle ensued at the door, and ten times did the English hero drive them back almost single-handed, cursing them, meanwhile, for all the cowardly assassins of their country gathered together, and swearing, moreover, to extirpate every soul of them; but at length rushing too far forward, he was surrounded, wounded, and taken. For all that, he never ceased laying about him and struggling to the last; and it was questioned if all the men there would have been able to have put the rope about his neck. They never would, without binding both his feet and hands, and neither of the pairs were very easily restrained.

They were dragging him away to a tree, when Habby Simpson, the landlord, arrived to the rescue with a strong band of villagers, who drew up in front and opposed the assailants; and Habby told them that he would be security for the gentleman's appearance at any tribunal in the kingdom; but that before a stranger should be butchered in such a cowardly way within his premises, he and his assistants would fight till the last drop of their blood. And, moreover, he requested them to remember that men who appeared in masks were held as vagabonds, and that he and his friends were at liberty to shoot them all with perfect impunity.

"Why, but, honest Habby," said one, "ye perhaps dinna ken that this is the ruffian who murdered our young lady and Lucy Lumsdaine?"

"It is a *lie*, you scoundrel," cried the horse-dealer, with great indignation; "mine are the hands that never injured a woman, though I have risked my life often to save them. But mine is a tale that will not tell here. I appeal to your lady, and backed by this mine host and his friends, I defy you."

The conspirators then insisted on taking him to the castle, but Habby Simpson would not trust him in their hands, but kept him, and became bound for him. The next day, David Dallas, the steward on the estate, came down to take the deposition; but the Englishman lost all patience at the accusation, and would do little else save curse and swear. He denied the murder of the virgins, with many horrid oaths, and proffered to produce them both alive if suffered to depart on his parole.

David replied, "that as for producing the virgins alive, when their murder had been confessed by his companion, with the rope about his neck, after their bodies had both been found and buried, was what no Scottish judge would swallow; he doubted if even an English one would; and that it was natural for such a culprit to wish to be set at liberty; but for his part, he certainly knew of no man living who better deserved the gallows."

The Englishman then began an explanation, as well as his rage would let him; but his dialect was not quite intelligible to David Dallas, who could only smile at such a strange defence, the tenor of which was, that "he undertook the murder of the two young ladies to save them alive." The steward had no further patience; so he ordered him to be manacled, conveyed to the castle, and chained in the dungeon. The countess, after consulting with the steward and several others, entertained no doubt that this man was the murderer of her only daughter and Lucy. Indeed, as the evidence stood, it was impossible to believe otherwise. And it is therefore probable that, before she left her country, she had resolved to give up the detested agent of a detested woman to popular vengeance, for shortly after he was brought to the castle, at least in a few days, a great mob assembled and peremptorily demanded his life. So he was, as if by compulsion, given up to them, placed on a platform in front of the castle, the rope put about his neck, and a certain time allowed him to make a full confession. He began the same confused story about the Earl of Northumberland, and of his undertaking the murder of the two young ladies to save their lives; but his voice was often drowned by repeated *hurras* of derision. At length, as if driven to desperation, he began hurraing louder than any of them, jumping on the platform as if gone mad, and shouting louder and louder, till, on looking around, they beheld a party coming up at full canter, their own young lady in front, and the young Lord Percy on her right hand, and Lucy on her left, who were now shouting out to save the brave fellow. The order was instantly obeyed; he was set at liberty, and ere he left the platform, was invited to be the principal guest of the noble party in the castle.

So ends my tale; and it would perhaps be better to let it end here, without any explanation, as there is one circumstance, and one only, which I cannot explain. This brave Englishman's name was Henry Wilson. He had been for a number of years house-steward to the Earl of Northumberland, and heard daily that this great and royal heiress's name was a favourite theme with that ambitious family. On his lord's going up to court at London, Wilson was dismissed for some irregularities, which he took greatly to heart. And he being a man out of place, and probably a dissipated character, was applied to, among others, to make away with this dangerous heiress to two crowns. He agreed to it at once, promising, for a high reward, to be the principal agent, but determined, by some means or other, to save the young lady's life, as the sure means of ingratiating himself

with his beloved and indulgent master. Fortune favoured him particularly on his gracious intent in the first instance; for, on the night when he had promised to bring the young lady, dead or alive, to his associates, there chanced to be the corpse of a French girl in the castle, newly dead and screwed in her coffin, and it was for her the new grave was made in the churchyard. That body he took to his associates, filling the coffin with rubbish; and the young lady he conveyed safe to Alnwick Castle. She being most anxious to have her foster-sister Lucy with her, and the latter proving a great stumbling-block to the new claimant, he undertook, on the promise of another reward, to make away with her also, and sink her in the loch beside her mistress. He so managed matters that he received the reward, and deceived the villain a second time, conveying Lucy safe to her beloved mistress; but where he procured the second body that was sunk in the sack, is the only circumstance which I never heard explained. The presumptive heiress of two crowns was joyfully received, and most honourably treated by the Percys; young Lord Percy and she were privately betrothed to each other, and the indefatigable Henry Wilson was raised higher in his chief's favour than ever.

I must now add a suggestion of my own, of the certainty of which I have no doubt. It is, that the witch-wife was the countess-dowager in deep disguise, remaining on the estate to watch and assist the progress of events. And I think that, in order to keep her people free of all blame or suspicion, it was she who had engaged a sept of the M'Farlanes to come down and cut off the intruding incendiary.

SOUND MORALITY.

"It is a grand thing, true and genuine morality! If I were a minister, I wad never preach up ony-thing but just pure morality," said Cuddy Cauldrife to his neighbour shepherd, Michael Moody, one morning as they sat on the top of Lochfell, and cast their eyes over the fair dales of the West Border.

"An' what for wad ye no be preaching aught but morality, Cuddy? We hae muckle need o' hearing some other sort o' doctrine than cauld morality, an' to hae some other thing to put our trust in too, beside that."

"Quite wrong, my good fellow, I assure you. There is no doctrine which should be inculcated at all times, and in all places, but that of sound morality, because it is the bond of society and good manners, and goes to counteract the enormous mass of general turpitude within us."

"I dinna think that observation is quite applicable to us as Scotsmen."

"And wherefore not applicable to Scotsmen?"

"Because ye ken it is reported that we are unco subject to the Scots fiddle. Now, if there war sae *verra* muckle turpentine within us, ane wad think it should act as a preventative."

"Whew! There's naebody can ever get a solid argument frae you, but aff ye flee at a tangent into the wilds of absurdity."

"I'll tell you what, my friend Cuddy. As I take it, there's just as muckle solidity in your morality as your turpentine—a' aff in a bleeze. Have ye ony kind o' notion that ye are a man o' sound moral principles?"

"I hope and trust that there has never been any great moral turpitude perceivable in my character or demeanour."

"Maybe sae, maybe sae. I hope it is true; but let us bring things to the test. The first an' leading error that we shepherds fa' into, is that o' kissing the lasses. That's weel kend to be our besetting sin. Now I dinna think you are *very* guilty o' that, for there winna ane o' the lasses let you come near her, or touch her. But, Cuddy, wasna there ance a kind o' queer story about a wild young wife, a neighbour o' yours? Was there nane o'—what is't you ca' the thing then? Moral something?"

"I don't know if there was any great depravity or moral turpitude in the action, supposing it to *be* true, for argument sake, if the consarcination of their conjugality is taken into account."

"There for it! There goes sound morality, full sail afore the wind o' delusion! I'll tell you what, neighbour Cuddy, when a man has to modify the law o' God to suit his sinfu' propensities, it is a braw easy way o' squaring his accounts. The moral law is gayan explicit on that point; an' yet try it a' point by point, an' you will find that you have not only broken the whole law, by being guilty of one breach, but broken the sum total of all the righteous commandments. For instance, I dinna ken if ever you *killed* ony o' your neighbours; but that you haena used a' lawfu' endeavours to preserve their lives, I ken weel. For do you no mind when we were gaun awa' to the courtin' ainee, that ye persuadit me against my ain conviction, to venture on the ice, and after I

had gaen down ower the lugs, an' was within a hair's-breadth o' being drowned, ye were a' the time lying laughin' sae, that ane might hae bound you wi' a strae? What kind o' morality was that? I trow, right near mor*tal*ity to me. And mair by token, I dinna think ye wad steal ane o' your neighbour's sheep, but weel do ye like to get a pluck o' his gerse at a quiet corner."

"My dear fellow, there was no moral turpitude there. That was probably because I know that neighbour to be daily getting part of his grass from me."

"Ay, that's just the way wi' a' you grand moral men! Ye never square your actions to the law, but the law to your actions. But that is just the way wi' poor human nature; whenever she tries to uplift herself, she is degraded. And particularly in this, that I never yet knew a grand declaimer on the principles of sound morality, who ever was an upright, charitable, and amiable character; and I hardly ever knew a man of humility, who placed his hopes on the works of another who had stood in his stead, that was not a model of what the other inculcated. But the best way o' settling a' these points atween herds is by instances, and as I remember a beautifu' ane, I'll just tell you it.

"Weel, ye see, there are twa towns stand near other, no very far frae here, and we shall distinguish them by the twa names that their neighbours ca' them, *The Gude Town* and *The Bad Town*. They belang baith to the same parish, but far frae being friendly wi' ane another; for the fo'ks o' the gude town scorn to associate wi' the others. Now there was a body in the bad town that they ca'd Betty Rae, wha let out lodgings to poor fo'ks, at a penny the night, an' a weel filled house she often had, though her lodgers warna just the maist respectfu' i' the community. Yet, I believe mony a good Christian, and mony a humble heart, wha hadna great routh o' the things o' this warld, were obliged at times to take shelter aneath Betty's roof. Ilk ane paid his penny as he came in, and there were nae questions asked; an' whatever else they wanted was a' paid for aforehand.

"Weel, there was ae night, amang others, a woman and her daughter came in for lodgings, paid their twopence, and went away to a bed in the end where the women slept, without asking for anything to eat or drink. The woman had the appearance of having seen better days, for in her manners she was a lady, although in her looks much emaciated; and the little girl, scarcely ten years of age, was as beautiful as a cherub. Betty had learned long before to read in the looks and bearing of her customers the precise state of their finances; so, when she returned from showing this pair to their bed, she said to the rest of her burly customers, 'I fear that puir body an' her bit lassie are rather run short o' the needfu', for I'm unco far mistaen gin they haena mair need o' their supper than ony o' us hae the night, and yet they hae ordered naething. I hae just been thinkin', if you could hae spared me happenies apiece, I wad hae added twa or three mysel, an' bought something good for them. For, d'ye ken, the poor wee lassie's greetin' o' hunger?'

"'Hoh! deil hae them! wha cares for rattans like them?' quo' a gruesome Scots tinkler.

"'I waudn't be mynded to help wonysooken trash for my own peart,' said an English gaberlunzie.

"'The buddies 'll mubby hae sumthing alangs wee thum. Far de they cumm frae?' said an Aberdeen man.

"'And, by my shoul and body, man, what is the matter where they come from, or where they are going either, if they are to be after dying of hunger in the first place? And, troth, if you will all give a penny apiece, I will give my last one, before the dare shouls should be under the death warrant of hunger,' said a ragged Irishman.

"'Hersel pe hafing no shange, else she would pe kiffing tem a pawpee,' said Nicol Shaw, an old Highlander, who sat with a snuff-horn in his hand, and which horn had a snuff-spoon, a hare's foot, and a neese-pike appended.

"'O, but I'll gie you change, honest man,' said Betty Rae. 'What is the soom ye want changed?'

"Shaw winked with the one eye, and looked silly with the other, like one catched in a fault, brushed his nose with the hare's foot, and replied, 'She pe fery pad shange in tis pad town.'

"Paddy losing patience, cursed them all for hard-hearted rascals, and pulling down a decanter of tin, he ran out, and after an absence of about ten minutes returned with a penny roll, and a brimming decanter of sweet milk, warm from the cow.

"'Where got you these, Paddy? How came you by these?' was asked by all.

"'Pray thee don't be after bothering people with so many questions just now,' said Paddy, and rushed with his earnings ben to the poor woman's bed.

"'Oho, mistress, and so you thought to chate us out of your swate company, and go supperless to bed? But may Shant Patrick be my namhe[1] if you shall do so. Oh botheration, no! And this little dare shoul too? Why Paddy Murphy would rather be after wanting his supper twenty times than the swate little darling should be famishing with hunger. That's my swate honey! Take your supper heartily! And when it is done you shall have plenty more.'

"In this manner did Paddy Murphy run on all the while the half-famished pair were at their meal. A Scotaman would have tried to discover their names, friends, or qualities; an Englishman, if they had any connection with any mercantile house; but Paddy had no conception of anything of the sort. When he returned to the kitchen he could neither tell who they were, whence they had come, or

[1] Enemy.

whither they were going, but only that they were there, that he was sure of, and had been very hungry; but he had cured them of that disease.

"There having, by this time, been some interest excited about the two strangers, Betty Rae went to reconnoitre farther, and returned with word that the poor woman was very ill, and like dying, for that 'the meat had taken her by the heart, and she was a' drawn thegither wi' pain.' She added farther that the woman was a minister's daughter, and belonged to the Highlands, but her husband had been killed in the wars, and she was left destitute, and far from home.

"'But poor woman, she'll never see hame,' said Betty mournfully, 'an' what's to come o' her bit bonny helpless bairn, the Lord only kens!'

"This observation made Paddy wipe his eyes, but he could do no more, for he had spent his last penny on a roll for her, and stolen the milk, by milking some of Squire Hardy's cows; and so Paddy was obliged to content himself with blessing them a hundred times or two, and praying that all the saints would take the swate darlings under their care. But old Nicol Shaw, hearing they belonged to the Highlands, after a good deal of hesitation and exclamations of pity, actually, at last, untied his cotton neckcloth. Below it there was another one, which he also loosed; and from a knot in the inner corner of that, and which corner lay exactly in the hollow part of his neck, he took a small parcel of gold pieces, and gave his hostess one in exchange for silver. What part of that he gave to the sufferer next day he kept to himself. The rest of the lodgers suspected that he had given her nothing; but in this they were wrong, as afterwards became manifest.

"The next day, the mother was so ill as to be unable to lift her head, and old Betty Rae, who had long been compelled, by the uncertain characters among whom she dealt, to give nothing for nothing, was sadly puzzled how to act, for a sick person in her dormitory was a blow to her business; so, after a private conference with Nicol Shaw, she set away over to the good town, to the parish minister, to lay the case before him and his session.

"Now, this parish minister, it is well known, is the most brilliant and most strenuous preacher up of good works in the whole kingdom. Sound morality is with him, as with you, all in all—the only path to heaven and to happiness; yet no kind or disinterested action has ever been recorded, even in the traditions of his parish, of this man. So, when told that Betty Rae wanted him, he said he had nothing to say to Betty Rae; she was always seeking something for some of her delinquent customers. Betty, however, told the servant girl, that she would not leave the manse till she had spoken with the minister, who was obliged to lift his window reluctantly, and ask the intruder's business.

"'Troth, sir, it is joost neither less nor mair than this. There is an officer's widow taken ill at my bit house owerbye yonder, and lying, I fear, at the point o' death. She has a follower, too, poor woman! a dear, kind-hearted, little girl. An' ye ken, sir, I canna afford to maintain them, an' get skeel for them, an' nurse them; sae ye maun consider, and say what fund is to draw on for this purpose.'

"'Draw on your own funds, Mrs. Rae, since you have been so imprudent as to encumber yourself with such lodgers; get quit of them the best way you may. Your house, by drawing beggars about it, is a perfect nuisance in the parish.'

"'I win my bread as honestly, and a great deal hardlier than ye do, sir, an' yet I dinna trust to my good warks awthegither. But I hae nae ither means o' keeping mysel out o' your parish funds, and think I rather deserve praise than blame for my poor exertions. But that's naething to the purpose: tell me what's to be done wi' the poor lady an' her bairn, for, as the head o' the session, you are bound to see after her, that I ken; an' gin I dinna get a satisfactory answer, I'll lay her down at your door in the course of an hour.'

"There was nothing terrified the minister so much as this, and that Betty kend weel. So he then judged it proper to come to terms with this hostess of the poor, by asking to what parish the woman belonged, and what was her name?

"'Alack-a-day, sir, I fear she is far frae her native parish,' said Betty; 'for they ca' it Abernethy, on a great river ca'd the Spey, that rises somegate i' the Heelands, near the North Pole; and her name's Mistress M'Queen, and she's a minister's daughter. An' as ye hae daughters o' your ain, sir, an' dinna ken what they may come to, you should open your heart to the condition o' the poor woman, wha has seen better days.'

"'Why, Mrs. Rae, there is only one rule in our parish laws, which is this:—We must convey her to the next parish. That parish to the next again, and so on, till she reach her own. I have no power of ordering anything further.'

"'Than ye may save yoursel the trouble of ordering that, sir, for if ye offer to lift her out o' her bed just now, and pit her intil a cart, ye may as weel hing her ower a bauk at aince, or cut off her head an' be done wi' her. Sae, for the sake o' Christian charity, ye maun think o' some ither plan for the present; for I'm mistaen gin ye be lang fashed wi' her. A little wine, or as muckle siller as wad hire the carter, wad hae been a mair feasible award frae ane that's sae keen o' good warks.'

"'Why, Mrs. Rae, if she is so very badly, it would be dangerous to take her out. Most dangerous! and the person who did it might be tried for murder. Therefore, I think your best way is to keep the woman and child, and I shall represent the case at our quarterly meeting.'

"'Ay, ay, sir! weel I ken that's a get off, for fear

I bring her to your door. But take ye care, an' be upon your guard, for I maun e'en try to look to mysel, as weel as you. An' O, it will be lang afore ye find out ony redress for me. As the auld sang says,

'To seek for warm water aneath cauld ice,
I trow it is a grit follye.
I hae askit grace of a graceless face,
An' there is nae mercy for mine or me.'

"But auld Betty Rae was only hard and niggardly by habitual practice, it being by pennies and halfpennies that she made her livelihood; for she had many of the tender feelings so natural to a woman and so inherent in a true Christian. She never thought of parting with the stranger, unless she could procure a better lodging for her, which she had little hope of, knowing the fountain-head at which she had to apply. But she *did* hope to secure some remuneration for the expense and trouble she was likely to incur. She was mistaken. The minister, who had on his dressing-gown, retired to his study, to continue the penning of his splendid eulogium on good works, but left such poor devils as Betty Rae to the practice of them.

"As Betty went home, she could not help entertaining some severe reflections on 'the hale fashionable principle o' gude warks,' as she termed it; and as she was buying some wine and cordials from Christopher Little, she says to him, 'Gudesake, gie me fair weight an' measure, Christie! But I believe ye're a man o' sound morality?'

"'Ay, just sae an' sae, Bessie, neighbour like.'

"'Ye dinna expect that your gude warks are to tak ye till heaven, then—do ye?'

"'If we had nae ither grip, I fear you an' I wad hae baith but a poor chance, Bessie.'

"'Ay, like enough. But d'ye think our minister's are sure enough to tak him there?'

"'Our minister's! O, I couldna say about that, for it is the first time ever I heard tell o' them.'

"'Ah, ye've a way, Christie! But there's nae fun i' my mind; for I hae a poor dying widow lady i' my house, an' the minister winna help me wi' onything but a cart to take her away in.'

"'She maun be ill-looking, I fear. An' in that case the parson's resolution is quite orthodox—because ye ken, Bessie, gude warks shoudna be extendit to aught that's no beautifu' in itself—Eh?'

"Bessie smudged and leugh at the shopman's insinuations, and returned home with a physician, who prescribed to her patient; and in short, for a whole quarter of a year there was not a *good* thing that the *bad* town could produce, that Mrs. M'Queen was not treated with. Neither did Betty ever apply any more to the minister; and instead of doing her house ill, the singular act of benevolence raised her character so high among her motley customers, that they were proud of counting acquaintance with her; and her house became so well frequented, that she was obliged to take in an assistant, and raise the price of her lodgings. She grew particularly attached to the little girl, Annabell M'Queen, a perfect pattern of comeliness and kindness of heart. Betty often insinuated to the sufferer, that she should write to her friends in the north, but this she always declined complying with, from what motive was not understood, but it was most probably from an aversion at being found in such mean circumstances.

"However, after three months' confinement in Betty Rae's house, the poor woman was enabled to proceed on her journey homeward. Nor did she travel far on foot, for, near the village of Graitney she got into a coach, and the driver afterwards declared that she paid her fare, and was set down in Edinburgh. No further word was heard of her for many years, but the act of benevolence made Betty Rae's fortune. It was blazoned over the whole country what she had done, and what the minister of the gospel had refused to do; and there was not a lady in the parish, and but few in the district, who did not send Betty presents. It was calculated that she got at least fifty presents, every one of which amounted in value to the whole sum expended on the invalid. And to crown all, at the next quarterly meeting of the heritors, a gentleman (Mr. Ker of Holm) laid the case before the others, to the great shame and prejudice of the minister, and got a liberal allowance for Betty.

"Now, mine hostess of the mendicants chuckled in her sleeve, and took all this bounty with great thankfulness and humility, after saying, 'Dear sirs, dear sirs! I had nae merit at a' in sheltering the poor woman. How could ony Christian soul turn out a poor sick creature to dee at the back o' the dike? Od, we may easily ken that by oursels. How wad ony o' us like to be turned out wi' a poor little orphan i' our hand, to dee at the back o' the dike? I had nae merit at a', and I wish you wadna mention it ony mair, for fear ye mak me as proud o' my gude warks an' sound morality as the minister is o' his.'

"Now the truth is, that Betty had *some* merit, but not half so much as the country supposed, or that you, Cuddie Cauldrife, are at this moment supposing.

"It will be remembered, that on the night of Mrs. M'Queen's arrival in the bad town, there were lodged at Betty's house a Scots itinerant tinker, or gipsy, a character well known; an Englishman, who was an excise spy, and a great blackguard, and who subsequently got himself shot in an affray with smugglers, and well deserved it; an Irishman, who was on his way to the east country for harvest, and who was at no loss to beg his way till he found work; and an old Highlander, yclept Nicholas Shaw, but more commonly denominated *Old Nick*, or Nicol, in courtesy. This old carle, it will be remembered, changed half a guinea with the landlady, in order to give the sufferer a part of it; and

had a short conference that night with Mrs. M'Queen, from which he returned greatly agitated. Now, this old Nicol Shaw was not a beggar, though he had very much the appearance of one; for Nicholas in his own country of Strathspey was accounted a very independent man: but an Englishman, or even a Scots Lowlander, has no conception to what extent Highland frugality can be carried, especially when there is any family object in view. The attachment of a genuine Highlander in the first place to his family, in the second place to his kinsfolk, and in the third and last place to his whole clan, is beyond what any man but a Highlander can comprehend; and even in all these three, there are but very small shades of difference; for, in spite of existing circumstances, he still looks upon the clan as in reality one family, of which the chief is the parent—a charity extending beyond these, her nainsel does not comprehend.

"Old Shaw was one of those truly patriarchal characters. He had occupied extensive possessions as a farmer, mostly from the Laird of Grant, but a small part from the Duke of Gordon; and these he had parted among his sons always as they had been married, with a stipulation that every one was to pay him so much annually; but to save his sons from paying that annuity, he subjected himself to every sort of toil and every privation. He had, at this time, gone all the way from Badenoch to Norwich, in the vicinity of London, as topsman on a drove of cattle belonging to Mr. Macpherson of Corriebeg, a neighbour of his; and though he had, by that means, realized a considerable sum, amounting to seven pounds, yet, in order to save every farthing, he had taken up his abode at the 'cheap lodgings' for a night.

"But, alack for worthy old Nicol and his well-earned purse both! For it was not destined that either of them should leave the town so soon as intended. One word from the sufferer—the mere mention of her name and her family rivetted Nicholas Shaw to the spot; and that very night he entered into an agreement with Betty Rae, under the most solemn promises of secresy, that he was to pay all expenses incurred by the lady and her daughter, and the lodgings too, *if he could*. In the meantime, Betty was to try to get some assistance elsewhere, and better lodgings, if she could obtain them, at any expense save his own; for being uncertain of the duration of her illness, he was, of course, uncertain of his ability to answer all demands. Betty could make nothing of the minister; could get no better lodgings; but she made her own lodgings as comfortable as it was in her power to make them, and that with the resolute purpose of charging nothing for them, should exigencies render such a sacrifice necessary. And when the nursing is taken into account, really Betty had a good deal of merit. Everything, however, was paid punctually to a farthing, lodgings, nursing, and outlay, by old Nicholas, before ever Mrs. M'Queen left her lodgings; so that scarcely ever such a windfall came to the lot of a poor woman, as did that night to Betty Rae, in the arrival of Mrs. M'Queen at the 'cheap lodgings.'

"But worthy old Nicol had now to begin a new occupation. For, terrified that his funds should run short before the lady got better, he had no other resource but to begin the begging, which he practised with such effect, as to have rendered his success proverbial over all the dales of the West Border. His custom was to traverse all the remote places in the forenoon, and pick up whatever was offered to him; but it was towards the evenings that his success was altogether unparalleled. He let his beard grow, and wore a tremendous *skean-dhu*, or Highland dirk, in his breast, so that he became a most frightful and dangerous looking chap; and then, ere the sun went down, he began to ask lodgings, or 'te quarter,' as he called it. One look at him was enough; he was dismissed with a penny, and very often he induced goodwives to make it 'te tree pawpee to pay her supper and her bed.' Then away to another house, and another, always with the same request for lodgings, without the least intention of accepting of them if offered; and never was he refused the penny at least, to pay for his bed. When any body appeared to hesitate about letting him in, he took care always to show the handle of his dirk in his coat breast, which settled the bargain, and the halfpence were produced.

"I heard a gentleman (Mr. Knox) say, that when he heard the genuine Highland twang at his door one night very late, he determined on letting the old man in for the night, and accosted him thus: 'I think you travel unco late, friend? What are ye that is gaun asking quarters at this time o' night?'

"'O, she just pe te poor heelant pody tat nhone of te Sassenach will pe lhetting witin him's toor for te sake of Cot.'

"'That's very hard, man. What ails a' the folk at you, think ye?'

"'Oo, she hafe cot te wort of peing fery pad on te tief and te moorter!' and as he said that he put his hand to the handle of his *skean-dhu*.

"'Aih! L—— preserve us!' exclaimed Mr. Knox, 'baith a thief and a murderer! Gudesake gae away about your business! There's a saxpence t'ye, gang and get lodgings where you best can.'

"In this manner did he persevere on every night till midnight, aye as long as there was a light in a window in the whole valley; and always the later it grew, his alms grew the better, and were the more readily bestowed. About ten at night, he would go through whole villages, insisting on having 'te quarter' at every door; and from every house he extracted something, that the inmates might be quit of him. And then, when no more was to be got, he lay down and slept in an out-house till the morning. His earnings averaged about half-a-crown

a day. But twice every week he visited his cheap lodgings, attending to every wish and want of the broken-hearted sufferer and her darling child, without once hinting at the means he took of supplying their wants. Their discourse together was always in Gaelic, and Betty often remarked how the old patriarch's face would glow with a thankful benevolence when he perceived Mrs. M'Queen's advancing state of convalescence. He begged for her till she recovered, and never quitted her till he landed her safe in the bosom of her own and her husband's friends in Strathspey.

"Now, Cuddy, this is what I call SOUND MORALITY—pure practical morality, unadulterated by any self-interest or theoretical quibbling. I have often envied the feelings of this old Highlander. There are traits of benevolence in his character that do honour to human nature. To think of a respectable and independent old farmer begging night and day to supply the couch of distress, appeared to me rather like a romance than a portraiture of real life."

"Why, Mr. Moody, it has only this fault. It wants generalization for true and splendid magnificence; and the moral excellency of the action depends on the proximity or remoteness of the consanguinity of the parties."

"That's surely an extraordinary grand speech for a herd, Cuddy; I gie you credit for that speech. 'The proximity or remoteness of consanguinity!' Ha! ha! ha! Excellent! Well, then, the deed had all the moral excellence that could attach to it in that respect, for twelve years afterwards it came out that old Nicol Shaw and Mrs. M'Queen were no otherwise related than being of the same clan, and he had heard her father preach twice or thrice at the distribution of the sacrament of the Supper.

"I said twelve years afterwards, for it was just so much that a handsome carriage stopped at the door of the cheap lodgings in the bad town, out of which a beautiful lady looked and asked for old Betty Rae. The woman of the house answered that 'Betty had gi'en up business lang syne, an' leeved like a lady now,' and pointed out the house. The carriage drove up to the door of a cleanly thatched cottage, and this beautiful creature, entering without ceremony, in one instant had old Betty in her arms. Betty was confounded; and when the divine creature asked the raised-looking dame if she did not know her, she replied—

"'Oo, deed no, deed no! how should I ken a grand lady like you? But I'se warrant ye're outher Lady Annandale, or Lady Queensberry, or Lady Westeraw, come to speer about the auld story o' the officer's widow?'

"'Ah! dear, dear Betty, and do you not remember your own child, who sat so often on your knee? Do you not remember little Annabell M'Queen?'

"'Aih, gude sauf us to the day! are ye her? Oh, the blessings o' the God o' heaven be on your bonnie face. But are ye really her? Aih wow? How is your dear blessed mother? Is she leeving yet? And how's auld Nicol Shaw, poor man? But gude sauf us to the day, where are ye gaun this gate? O, ye maun forgie an auld doited body, for I'm sae happy, I neither ken what I'm doing or saying. I hae good reason to bless the day ye entered my poor door. It was a visit of an angel o' heaven to me; and there has never a night gane ower this auld head, on whilk I hae nae prayed for your welfare and your mother's at the throne o' grace.'

"To cut short a long story, that was a happy meeting—Annabell was on her marriage jaunt—A lovelier flower never bloomed on the banks of the Spey, and she was married to a baronet, a most amiable young man, while her mother was still living, healthy and happy, in the house of Colonel M'Queen, her husband's father. But neither of them ever forgot, or ever will forget, auld Betty Rae, and the cheap lodgings i' the bad town."

TRIALS OF TEMPER.

"I SAY she is neither handsome, nor comely, nor agreeable in any one respect, Mr. Burton, and I cannot help considering myself as rather humbugged in this business. Do you account it nothing to bring a man of my temperament a chase of three hundred miles on a fool's errand?"

"My dear sir, I beg a thousand pardons. But really if you esteem Miss Eliza Campbell, your own relation as well as mine, as neither handsome, beautiful, nor accomplished, why, I must say you have lost since you went abroad every sense of distinction, every little spark that you once possessed of taste and discernment in female accomplishments. Why, now I suppose a lady to suit your taste, doctor, must be black—as black as a coal, and well tatooed over the whole body?"

"None of your gibes and jeers with me, Mr. Burton. I did not and do not mean to give any offence; but it is well known to all your friends, and has been known to me these thirty years, what a devil of a temper you have."

"Temper! I short of temper? Why, I must say, sir, that I would not be possessed of a temper as irritable as yours to be made owner of all the shops in this street, as well as the goods that are in them. You are a very nettle, sir—a piece of brown paper wet with turpentine—a barrel of gunpowder that can be ignited by one of its own grains, and fly in the face of the man who is trying and exerting himself to preserve it. I am a clothier; I do not deny it, and think no shame of my business. Miss Campbell is too good—much too good for you, sir, and I must say that I regret exceedingly having invited you so far to come and insult her—in my presence, too, her nearest relation! I must say, sir, that you had better take care not to say as much again as you *have* said, else you may chance to be surprised at the consequence."

"Why, certainly the devil has entered personally into this retailer of gray cloth and carpets! There, he would persuade me that I am irritable and passionate, and he the reverse, while in the meantime here has he got into a violent rage, and chafing like the vexed ocean, and I as cool as a summer evening in Cashmere!"

"Cool?—you cool, sir? Why, you are at this moment in a furnace of a passion! Wherefore else should you knock on my counter in that way? You think to intimidate me, I suppose, but you shall neither fright me out of my reasonableness nor equanimity."

"*Your* equanimity! St. Patrick save the mark! How long is it since you were sued at law and heavily fined for knocking down your shopman with the ell-wand? And how many honest customers have you threatened across that counter with the same infernal weapon before you could bring your reason to control your wrath? And when we were at school together, how often did the rest of the boys combine to banish you from all their games, calling you 'the crabbed tailor,' and pelting you without mercy? And what is worst of all, how often did I get my head broken in your defence?"

"It is too true—perfectly true! I remember several of the circumstances quite well. Give me your hand, my old and trusty friend, and come and dine with me to-morrow; for my heart warms to you when I think of our early friendship, and the days of our youthful enjoyments."

"And well may mine warm to you, for you assisted me out when no other friend would venture, and I had reason to fear, put your little credit right hardly to stake on my account. And do you know, Burton, that when I left Scotland, and took leave of all my friends, with much probability that it would be for the last time, not a man or woman amongst them shed tears at parting with me but yourself. That simple circumstance has never been erased from my memory, nor ever will. And before I left India I made a will, which is safe in the Register Chamber of Fort William, and whereby, in the event of my dying without a family, you will find yourself entitled to the half of my fortune."

"My dear sir, that little pecuniary matter has been doubly repaid long ago; and as for that part of the will which is deposited at Fort William, and that devises to me, I shall do all in my power to render it of none effect. Come and dine with me to-morrow."

"I will, with all my heart. Have you not some daughters of your own, Mr. Burton?"

"I have two very amiable girls, and one of them marriageable too; but after hearing your opinion of the most accomplished young lady of the realm, I dare not submit them to your scrutiny. You shall not meet them at dinner to-morrow."

"I insist on meeting them at dinner. What! shall I not be introduced to the daughters of my best friend?"

"Your taste has been so horribly sophisticated, and then you speak out your sentiments so plainly, that no girl is safe from insult with you. Remember,

my girls are not blackamoors any more than Miss Campbell is."

"There the bad temper flies out again! This Miss Campbell is a sore subject. Would that I had never seen her! The truth is, I must speak my sentiments; and, with regard to her, they are anything but those of approbation."

"Why, sir, you're not only blind, but utterly perverse and obstinate. Miss Campbell is the most approved beauty in Edinburgh at the present time; but she is an orphan, and has no fortune—there your antipathy lies! Money is your object! money, money!—that is manifest. Pray, could you not have got a blackamoor, with a camel's load or two of rupees, for a spouse, and so saved the expense of a journey to Britain?"

"I will tell you what, friend, I have a great mind to break your head, and so save the expense of a rope to hang you in."

Here the clothier seized his massy mahogany ell-wand; and his friend the doctor, having heard the feats of arms performed by that unlucky weapon, thought proper to decamp, which he did with a kind of forced laugh, half in wrath at the ridiculous exhibition the two had made.

That evening Mr. Burton got a note from Miss Campbell, which puzzled him a great deal. It ran thus:—

"My dear Uncle,—I am quite delighted with your friend Dr. Brown. I expected to have met an elderly gentleman, but was agreeably surprised at meeting with so much elegance, conjoined with youth. He is certainly the most engaging and courteous gentleman I have ever seen, and has already made me an offer, which I think it would be imprudent in me to reject. As I have much to say to you on this subject, I will come down and see you in the coach to-morrow.—Your ever affectionate niece, Eliza Campbell."

"So the nabob has been hoaxing me all this while," said the clothier to himself, chuckling. He then laughed at Miss Campbell's mistake about his friend's age, and slily remarked that money was all-powerful in modifying ages to suit each other. After considering the matter a little more seriously, he became suspicious that some mistake had occurred; for he knew it to be his friend the doctor's disposition always to speak his sentiments rather too freely, and in the present instance he seemed to be quite chagrined and out of humour whenever Miss Campbell was named. So the clothier remained involved in a puzzle until the next day, when his niece arrived; and still from her he could learn nothing but that all was as it should be. He asked who introduced Dr. Brown to her. It was the very friend to whom the clothier had written to perform that friendly office. He made her describe Dr. Brown's person and address, and as far as the clothier could see they corresponded to a very tittle. Very well, thinks the clothier to himself, as I am uncertain whether the crabbed loon will come to dinner to-day or not, I will say nothing about it, and then I will see how the two are affected when they meet.

Four o'clock came, so the clothier went home to his house and put on his black coat and silk stockings, and then he paced up and down his little snug parlour, which served as a drawing-room, with much impatience, going every five minutes up stairs to look out at the window.

"Who dines with my uncle to-day?" said Miss Campbell to her cousin, Ellen Burton; "I see you have an extra cover set, and he seems rather in the fidgets because his guest is not come."

"I do not know who it is," returned Miss Burton; "he merely said that he expected a stranger to dine with him to-day—some English bagman, I suppose. We have these people frequently with us; but I never regard them, always leaving them with my father to consult about markets and bargains as soon as dinner is over, and we will leave them the same way to-night, and go to Mrs. Innes's grand tea-party, you know."

"O, by all means."

With that the doctor entered, and was welcomed by a hearty and kindly shake of the hand; and leading him forward Burton said, "This is my daughter Ellen, sir, and her sister Jane." Of Miss Campbell he made no mention, conceiving that she and the doctor were well acquainted before. But either the doctor and she had not been acquainted before, or else the room was so dark that the doctor could not see distinctly (for he was very much out of breath, which mazes the eyesight a great deal), or the beauty of the young ladies had dazzled him, or some unaccountable circumstance had occurred, for the doctor did not recognize Miss Campbell, nor did the young lady take any notice of him. On the contrary, Jane Burton being only a little girl, and below the doctor's notice at that time of night, he took the other two for the clothier's daughters, and addressed them as such all the time of dinner.

The doctor was so polite and attentive to the young ladies, and appeared so highly delighted with them, that they were insensibly induced to stay longer at table than they intended; and on their going away he conducted them to the door, kissed both their hands, and said a number of highly flattering things to them. On again taking his seat, being in high spirits, he said, "Why, in the name of wonder, my dear friend, should you endeavour to put grist by your own mill, as the saying is? These daughters of yours are by far the most accomplished and agreeable young ladies whom I have seen since my return from India. The eldest is really a masterpiece, not only of nature's workmanship, but of all that grace and good breeding can bestow."

"I thank you kindly, sir; I was afraid they would be a little too fair of complexion for your taste. Pray, have you never met with that eldest one

before? for it struck me that you looked as you had been previously acquainted."

"How was it possible I could ever have seen her? It is quite well known, Mr. Burton, what my errand to Britain is at this time. I have never concealed it from you. It is to obtain a wife; and now to receive one out of your family and from your own hand would be my highest desire. Settlements are nothing between us; these shall be of your own making. Your eldest daughter—the tallest, I mean—is positively the most charming woman I ever saw. Bestow her upon me, and I am the happiest man in his majesty's dominions."

"You shall have her, doctor—you shall have her with all my heart; and I think I have a small document on hand to show that you can likewise have her consent for the asking, if indeed you have not obtained it already."

"I will double your stock in trade, sir, before I leave this country if you realize this promise to me. My jaunt from India beyond the Ganges is likely to be amply compensated. Why, the possession of such a jewel is worth ten voyages round the world, and meeting all the lines at Musselburgh. But I'll warrant I may expect some twitches of temper from her—that I may reckon upon as a family endowment."

"And will there be no equivalent on the other side? No outbreakings of violence, outrage, and abuse? At all events, the reflection on me and my family comes with a bad grace from such a firebrand as yourself."

"Stop, for heaven's sake, my good friend, stop; let us not mar so excellent a prospect, by sounding the jarring strings of our nature together. Why, sir, whenever a man comes within the bounds of your atmosphere, he treads on phosphorus—he breathes it, and is not for a moment certain that he may not be blown up in an electric flash. Why get into such a rage at a good-natured joke?"

"It was a very ill-natured joke; and I have yet to learn that you ever did a genuinely good-natured thing in your life. Even now you are all this while playing at hide-and-seek with me—playing at some back game, that I cannot comprehend, in order to make a fool of me. Do you wish me to tell you what I think of you, sir?"

"And pray what do I care what you think of me? Does it any way affect me what may be the opinion of such a being as you? *You* think of me!"

"There goes! There goes the old man, with all his infirmities on his head."

"Who is an old man, Mr. Burton? Who is an old man full of infirmities? Old!—to your teeth, sir; you are years older than myself."

"Do you know, sir, who you are speaking to, sir? or whose house you are in, sir?"

"Yes, I do, sir. I know very well whose house I am in, and whose house I shall soon be out of, too; and whose house I shall never enter again as long as I live. Do I not know all these, sir? What *you* think of me, forsooth! I have thought more of you than ever it behoved me to have done; and this is the reception I have met with in return."

"Now pardon me this once, Doctor, and I shall never get angry with you again. I'll bear all your infirmities with the patience of Job; but you must not leave my house in this humour."

"*My* infirmities, sir? What do you mean by my infirmities? And who the devil is to bear with yours, sir? I assure you it shall not be me! That I was once obliged to you, I confess, and that I have long thought on you with the affection of a brother, I likewise confess, but———"

"Hold there. Go no further at present until the furnace-heat of your temper be somewhat allayed. We are friends, and must be friends as long as we live, notwithstanding of our failings. We have all much to forgive one another in this life. But you took me short, when it was Miss Campbell only that I wanted to talk about."

"Miss Campbell whom you wanted to talk about! A singular subject truly so immediately after the cessation of hostilities. I tell you once for all, Mr. Burton, that I will have nothing to do with Miss Campbell—nothing to say to her; for she is absolutely my aversion."

"It is false, sir—every word of it is false; for you shall have to say to her and do with her both, and she is *not* your aversion. Nay, do not go to get into one of your boundless fits of rage again, for out of your own mouth will I condemn you; and if you deny your own words and mine, I will show you the lady's writ and signature to the fact."

"I was not even able to say a civil thing to the lady."

"You were. You said the most civil things to her that you could invent. You made an offer of your hand to her, and you made the same offer to me."

"I'll fight the man either with sword or pistols who would palm such an imposition on me."

The clothier made no answer to this save by handing over Miss Campbell's note to the astonished physician, who read as follows:—"'I am quite delighted with your friend Dr. Brown.' Hem! Thank you, Miss Eliza Campbell. So is not his friend Dr. Brown with you, I assure you. 'I expected to have met with an elderly gentleman, but was agreeably surprised ———' Oho! hem, hem! What is all this? The girl has some sense and discernment though; for, do you know, I am never taken for a man above thirty."

"That I think does not show much discernment either in them or in her."

"I beg pardon, sir; I only meant to say that the girl saw with the same eyes as the generality of mankind, which at least manifests some degree of common sense. But it is all very well; I see through the letter—a trap to catch a badger, I

suppose. As to the insinuation that I made her an offer, she has made it, or dreamed it, or conceived it, of herself, one way or other, for the deuce an offer I made to her of any sort whatever."

"Why, now, doctor, the whole of your behaviour on this occasion is to me a complete mystery; for the young lady who sat on your right hand to-day at table, is no other than the same Miss Campbell, my niece, whom you have been all along so undeservedly abusing."

"Are you telling the truth, Mr. Burton? Are you not dreaming? I see you are telling me the truth. Why then did you introduce them to me as your daughters?"

"I introduced my two daughters only, believing that you two were perfectly acquainted before."

"She has then been introduced to me in a mask. There is not a doubt of it. She has spoken to me under a disguise of false form and false features, yet I thought all the while that I recognized the voice. And was yon lovely, adorable creature, with the auburn hair and dark eyes, the seamew's neck, and the swan's bosom, the same who wrote that pretty card about me?"

"The same, I assure you."

"Give it me again that I may kiss it, and look at every elegant letter it contains. I have had flatterers of the sex, black and white, brown and yellow, but never before received flattery from such a superlative being as she is. Where are the ladies? Let us go to them and have tea, for I have an intense longing to look on the angel again."

Never was there a more impassioned lover than the doctor was with this fair cousin; he raved of her, and fumed with impatience, when he found she had gone to Mrs. Innes's party, and that he could not see her again that night. He lost no time, however, in writing out the schedule of a contract, a most liberal one, and to this scroll he put his name, desiring his friend to show Miss Campbell the writing preparatory to his visit the next day. The clothier did this, and found his lovely ward delighted with the match, who acknowledged that the annual sum settled on her was four times what she expected with such an agreeable husband; and although she begged for time and leisure to make some preparations, yet, at her kind uncle's request, she unhesitatingly put her name to the document by way of acquiescence; and thus was the agreement signed and settled, and wanted only the ratification of the parson to render it permanent. He then informed her that the doctor would wait on her next day to ask her formally, and then they might settle on such time for the marriage as suited both.

Next day the doctor arrived at an early hour, and found the young lady dressed like an eastern princess to receive him, and in the highest glee imaginable; but as he did not then know the success of his offer, he kept aloof from the subject till the arrival of his friend the clothier. The latter, perceiving his earnest impatience, took him into another apartment, and showed him the lady's signature and acceptance. Never was there a man so uplifted. The intelligence actually put him beside himself, for he clapped his hands, shouted—hurra! threw up his wig, and jumped over one of the chairs. His joy and hilarity during dinner were equally extravagant—there was no whim nor frolic which he did not practise.

Not being able to rest, by reason of the fervour of his passion, he arose shortly after dinner, and, taking his friend the clothier into the other room, requested of him to bring matters to a verbal explanation forthwith. He accordingly sent for Eliza, who looked rather amazed when she entered, and saw only these two together.

"Come away, my dear Eliza," said her uncle; "take a seat here, and do not look so agitated, seeing the business is already all but finished. My friend, Dr. Brown, has come down to-day for the purpose of having a ratification of your agreement from your own hand, and your own mouth."

"Very well, my dear uncle; though I see no occasion for hurrying the business, I am quite conformable to your will in that respect. Why did not Dr. Brown come to dinner? Where is he?"

I wish I had seen the group at this moment; or had Mr. David Wilkie seen it, and taken a picture from it, it would have been ten times better. The doctor's face of full-blown joy was changed into one of meagre consternation, nothing of the ruddy glow remaining, save on the tip of his nose. The internal ligaments that supported his jaws were loosened, and they fell down, as he gazed on the clothier; the latter stared at Eliza, and she at both alternately. It was a scene of utter bewilderment, and no one knew what to think of another. The clothier was the first to break silence.

"What ails you, my dear niece?" said he, "Are you quizzing? or are you dreaming? or have you fallen into a fit of lunacy? I say, *what* is the matter with you, child? Is not this my friend, Dr. Brown, whom I have known from his childhood!—the gentleman whom I sent for to be introduced to you, and the gentleman, too, to whom you have given yourself away, and signed the gift by an irrevocable deed?"

"What! To this old gentleman? Dear uncle, you must excuse me, that I am in a grievous error, and a quandary besides. Ha, ha, ha!—Hee, hee, hee! Oh, mercy on us! I shall expire with downright laughing."

"What do you mean by such insulting behaviour, madam? Have I come here to be flouted, to be cheated, to be baited by a pack of terriers, with an old foxhound at their head? But beware, madam, how you press the old badger too hard. I have your signature here to a very serious deed, signed before witnesses, and if you *do not* fulfil your engagement to me, I have you at my mercy; and I'll use the

power which the deed puts in my hands—use it to the utmost—make yourself certain of that."

"Pray, sir, do not get into such a rage, lest you terrify me out of my wits. I am but a poor timorous maiden, sir, and not used to so much obstreperousness; yet I have so much spirit in me, that I shall never be imposed upon by such effrontery—never!"

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed the clothier. "We shall all go in a flame together, and be consumed by collision. My dear niece, you know not what you are doing or saying. This is no person to be despised, but the celebrated Dr. Brown from India, chief of the medical staff of a whole presidency—your own kinsman—my friend of whom you approved in your note to me, and in conjunction with whom you have signed a contract of marriage. So none of your bantering and flagaries; for have him you must, and have him you shall. The deed cannot now be annulled but by mutual consent."

"Well, then, it shall never be further ratified by me. This may be *your* Dr. Brown, but he is not *mine;* and however worthy he may be, he is not the man of my choice."

"Is not this the gentleman of whom you wrote to me in such high terms of approval?"

"*That* the gentleman! Dear uncle, where would my seven senses have been, had that been he?"

"And is this not the lady, sir, whom you met in Edinburgh?"

"I know nothing at all about it. If this be not she, I like her worse than the other."

"There is some unfortunate mistake here. Pray, Dr. Brown, who was it that introduced you to the lady, with whom you met?"

"Your friend Mrs. Wright, to be sure; whom else could it have been?"

"And you did not see Mr. Anderson, then?"

"No; but I left your letter at his office, thinking there might be something of business."

"There it goes! Mrs. Wright has introduced you to a wrong Miss Campbell, and Mr. Anderson has introduced a wrong Dr. Brown to her. Plague on it, for you cannot now throw a stone in Edinburgh, but you are sure to hit either a Brown or a Campbell."

This was simply the case: the clothier wrote to his friend, Mrs. Wright, to find means of introducing the bearer, Dr. Brown, to their *mutual friend*, Miss Elizabeth Campbell. Mrs. Wright, having an elderly maiden sister of that name, mistook, in perfect simplicity of heart, the term mutual friend, and, without more ado, introduced the doctor to her sister. Now, the doctor knew perfectly well that the other letter, which he carried to Mr. Anderson, related likewise to some meeting with Miss Campbell, but not caring about any such thing, he merely popped the letter into the shop as he passed; and Mr. Anderson, knowing nothing about Dr. Brown's arrival from India, sent for the only unmarried Dr. Brown whom he knew, and introduced him to Mr. Burton's niece, as desired, and there the attachment proved spontaneous and reciprocal. Miss Campbell, finding now that she was in a bad predicament, having given her heart to one gentleman, and her written promise to another, threw herself on the old doctor's mercy, explained the mistake, and the state of her affections, and besought him to have pity on a poor orphan, whose choice might be wrong, but which she was incapable of altering. The worthy Esculapius of the East was deeply affected. He took both the young lady's hands in his, kissed first the one and then the other, and, invoking on her all earthly happiness, he not only returned her the bond, but along with it a cheque on his banker for a considerable sum, as a marriage-present.

Miss Campbell was shortly after married to a dashing student of medicine, and they now reside in a distant province, very poor, and not over happy; and Dr. Brown married the eldest daughter of his old benefactor, a simple, modest, and unassuming young creature, whom he carried off with him to the paradise of India, and placed at the head of a magnificent eastern establishment. I have seen several of her letters, in all of which she writes in the highest terms of her happiness and comforts.

THE FORDS OF CALLUM.

"Ye had better steek the door, Janet; I think there's a kind o' cauld sugh coming up the house the night."

"Gude forgie you for leeing, Wat; for the night is that muth an' breathless, I'm maist like to swairf, an' I'm hardly able to do a single turn. An' for you, ye are joost a' in ae thow, I see; an' hae muckle mair need that I suld clash a sowp cauld water on you than steek the door."

"It will be as weel to steek the door, Janet, my woman, an' let us take our chance o' swairfing. Ye ken the auld saying, 'at open doors the dogs come ben.' An' we little ken what may come in at that door the night."

Janet ran and shut the door, bolting it fast, and muttering to herself all the way, as she perceived a manifest alteration in her husband's looks and manner.

"Now gude forgie us, Walter! tell us what's the matter wi' ye? Hae ye seen aught? Hae ye heard aught? Or hae ye grown unweel on the hill that has made ye a wee squeamish?"

"Bring me a drink o' water, Janet. It's only a bit dwam; it will soon gang aff (*drinks*). Hech whow! what a warld this is that we leeve in! Have ye been guilty of ony great sin lately, Janet?"

"No that I hae mind o' just now. But what a question that is to speer at your wife?"

"War ye ever guilty of ony great backsliding or transgression?"

"Aih! gudeness forbid, Walter! But what has set you upon sic questions the night?"

"Because I'm feared, Janet, that there's some heavy judgment gaun to happen to us very soon. I hae had a singular warning the night."

"Aih whow! Oh, Wattie, ye gar a' my heart grew within me? What kind o' warning have ye had?"

"I canna tell ye. It is out o' my power to tell ye. An' gin I tell you, ye wadna believe me. Gang away to your bed, Janet, an' let us compose ourselves to rest in our Maker's name."

The lonely couple went to their bed, and commended themselves to the protection of heaven; but sleep was far from visiting their couch. Wat Douglas lay and groaned heavily, while his groans were audibly responded by his wife. At length he says to her, "When did ye hear from your daughter Annie, Janet?"

"No this lang while; no sin' Lockerbie tryste."

"Do ye think that Annie can hae been guilty of ony great sin in her days?"

"Aih! I hope our poor lassie has been better guidit. But she's a queer mysterious lassie, our Annie. There is something about her that I can never comprehend. I had some heavy, heavy dreams about her afore she was born. I think always there is something to happen to her."

"Ay, Janet, as sure as I am speaking to you, an' as sure as the starns are shining in heaven, there will something happen to her, an' that very soon. Sae ye say ye haena seen nor heard o' her sin' Lockerbie tryste?"

"Na, no sin' syne."

"What wad ye think, Janet, gin I had seen her the night?"

"Gin ye saw her weel, I should be very happy."

"Oh! Janet, I hae gotten a warning the night that I canna comprehend. But we'll hear mair about it soon. Tell me just ae thing, an' tell me truly. Is Annie—? But hush? What's that I hear? Lord be wi' us, there it is again!"

At that instant, and before he pronounced these last words, a quick tap was heard at the window, and a sweet and well-known voice called from without in a melancholy key: "Mither, are ye waukin?"

"Yes, dear, I'm waukin," cried the agitated mother; gude forgie ye, what has brought you here at this time o' night? The like o' this I kend never! I think it be true what folks say—Speak o' the deil an' he'll appear! I'll open the door this minent, Annie. Is there any body wi' ye?"

"Na, there's nae body wi' me; an' I wish there had been nane wi' me the night. Is Wat Douglas away to the Fords o' Callum?"

"Wat Douglas! Whaten a gate is that o' speakin about your father, Annie? Wat Douglas, as ye ca' him, is nane away to the Fords o' Callum, but lying snug in his bed here."

"Oh! lack-a-day! Then it is ower late now!" said the voice without; and as it said so, it seemed to pass away from the window on the breeze, so that the last words were scarcely audible.

"Dinna gang near it, Janet! Dinna gang near it," cried Wat Douglas, shuddering, and shrouding himself deeper in the bedclothes. For the sake o' your soul, bide where you are, an' keep the wa's o' the house atween you an' it!"

"The man's wudd! Will I no gang an' open the door to my ain bairn? Ay, that will I, though a' the ghaists o' the folk o' Sodom and Gomorrah were letten loose!" And so saying, away flew Janet to

the door with her clothes half on, while Wattie was calling all the while from under the clothes, "Ye dinna ken what ye're doing, Janet! Ye dinna ken what ye're doing!"

Janet opened the door, and went round and round the house calling her daughter's name; but there was none that answered or regarded. She once thought she heard a distant sound as of one wailing in the air, but it died away and she heard no more. She returned into her cot, breathless and dumb with astonishment; and after sitting a space, with crossed arms and her head hanging over them, she once more began speaking in a deep voice and half a whisper—"She's away! She's away! She's away! Can it hae been our daughter's wraith that spak to us through the window?"

"*Your* daughter say, Janet, for you hear I'm denied. But nevertheless, now when I think on it, it maun be a wraith, for it canna be aught else. I had sic an encounter wi't this night afore now, as mortal man o' flesh and blood never had wi' an unyirthly creature. But what passed atween us is a secret that maunna an' canna be revealed. But had I thought o't being a wraith, I wadna hae been sae feared."

"What is a wraith, Wattie? for I thought you had denied a' thae things."

"Ay, but seeing's believing, Janet. An' as for a wraith, I tak it to be a guardian angel that comes to gie warning o' something that's to happen to its ward. Now a guardian angel can never be a bad thing, Janet."

"But think o' the warning, Wattie; think o' the warning. What was it that the voice said about the Fords o' Callum?"

"That maun be considered, Janet. But the terrors o' this night had put that an' ilka thing else out o' my head. That maun be considered. The Fords o' Callum? Ay! That's the place where the spirit tried to take me to in spite o' my teeth. Wha *is* Annie, Janet?"

"Gude forgie us! heard ony body ever sickan a rhame as that! She's her father's daughter to be sure.——But is this a night to begin wi' sickan queer questions, Walter? If ye gat wit that ony body in the hale country were perishing or in jeopardy, wad it be necessar to settle a' about their connections and parentage afore you set out to save them?"

"That's very true, Janet. She's a lassie that is weel worthy o' looking after, though I had never seen her face afore; an' a message frae heaven shouldna be neglekit."

"I'm no sae clear about the message being frae heaven, Wattie. But a message we certainly have had; an' I think it is incumbent on us to set out immediately, an' see what is going on at the Fords o' Callum."

"I think the same. It is but a step of a mile or twae, an' my conscience coudna be at ease without ganging there. An' yet it is daft-like to be gaun away afore daylight to a particular spot to look for a body, an' that spot ten miles aff frae the place where the body is living."

"Na, na, it isna ten miles, Wat. It's na aboon nine miles and a half, if it be that."

It was not yet one o'clock, but it was a mid-summer night, still and beautiful, as well as the morning following; and when the couple reached the Fords o' Callum, the gray twilight began to shed its pale and eiry hues over that lonely upland; and ere they reached the ford by two hundred paces, they perceived something like a human form lying on a small green sward on the other side of the river or burn; for though called a river, or water, it is no bigger than an ordinary burn.

"What's yon lying yonder, Janet?"

"O the Lord in heaven kens what it is! My heart is beginning to fail me, Wattie. I canna gang ony farther. I think we shudna gang ony nearer till we get somebody wi' us."

"It wad be a shame to stop here or turn again after coming sae far. Lean on me, and let us venture forward and see what it is. It is like a woman; but she's maybe sleeping."

"Na, na! yon's nae sleeping posture. She's lying athraw. I canna gang! I canna gang! dinna drag me; for though I hae stooden ower the bed o' death mony a time, yet it is a fearsome thing to look upon death in the open field. An' there's maybe blood, too. Think ye I can look upon a corpse swathed in blood, in a wild place like this? No, no, I hae nae power to gang a step farther!"

Janet Douglas would neither advance nor remain by herself; but hung upon her husband and wept. Wat called aloud to see if the form would awake and move, but he called in vain; and just as the two were returning to seek assistance, they perceived a gentleman coming toward them, which was a happy sight. This was Mr. George Brown of Callum, who was at that time a bridegroom, and had set out so early on horseback to go into Nithsdale by the Queensberry road. They told him their dilemma, and pointed out the form lying on the other side of Duff's Kinnel. Mr. Brown was as much appalled as they; but the three ventured across to the form, in breathless terror and awful suspense; and there, indeed, they found the body of Annie Douglas, lying a pale corpse, and her bosom still warm. She appeared to have been dead some hours. Mr. Brown, who was excellently mounted, gave up his journey, and galloped back straight to Moffat, where he procured a Dr. Johnstone, then living in Moffat, said to have been a gentleman of great ability, and another young surgeon whose name I have forgot; and the three arrived at the spot in an inconceivably short time, the distance not being more than three miles. All endeavours to restore life proved vain and abortive; therefore their whole attention was next directed to ascertain the manner of her death.

But there they were puzzled—nonplussed beyond the power of calculation. Her clothes were torn; but there was not the smallest mark of violence on any part of her body. She was dressed in all her best attire; and it was manifest that she had come there on horseback, with more in company than one, for there were many marks of horses' feet about the spot, as if they had been held or fastened there for a space.

Her death made a great noise in that district for a few months, and a hundred conjectures were framed concerning it; probably all wide of the truth. But there were some circumstances attending it that astounded every one. Mr. Brown of Callum's mind was so much confused at the time, and his pity so much excited by the untimely death of the beautiful young woman, that he never thought of one thing which occurred to him afterwards as having been very singular, namely, that the old couple should have been sitting in that remote place watching the corpse of their daughter at a distance before daylight. But the worst consequence of all was this:—During the time that Mr. Brown was seeking the surgeons, Janet was so ill that she fainted several times, and fell into hysterics, while her husband supported and assisted her with apparent command of his feelings, and perfect presence of mind. But before they reached home with the corpse, the case was altered. Janet was quite recovered and collected, while Wat looked so ill that it was fearful to see him. He immediately betook himself to bed, from which he never arose again, but died a fortnight afterwards, having rarely ever spoken from that morning forward.

Of course he could not attend Annie's funeral; and there was no circumstance more puzzling than one that occurred there. Among the mourners there was one gentleman quite unknown to every one who was present. Indeed, from the beginning, he took upon himself, as it were, the office of chief mourner, carrying the head almost the whole way to the churchyard, so that all the people supposed the elegant stranger some near relation of the deceased, sent for, from a distance, to take the father's part, and conduct the last obsequies. When they came to the grave, he took his station at the head of the corpse, which he lowered into the grave with great decency and decorum, appearing to be deeply affected. When the interment was over, he gave the sexton a guinea and walked away. He was afterwards seen riding towards Dumfries, with a page in full mourning riding at a distance behind him. How much were all the good people of Johnston astonished when they heard that neither father nor mother of the deceased, nor one present at the funeral knew anything whatever of the gentleman;—who he was; where he came from; or what brought him there. I have heard it reported, on what authority I do not know, that this stranger was subsequently traced to have been the late Duke of Q——. And as this unaccountable incident is well known to have happened when the late Mr. George Brown of Callum was a bridegroom, it settles the time to have been about sixty-six years ago.

THE CAMERONIAN PREACHER'S TALE.

Sit near me, my children, and come nigh, all ye who are not of my kindred, though of my flock; for my days and hours are numbered; death is with me dealing, and I have a sad and a wonderful story to relate. I have preached and ye have profited; but what I am about to say is far better than man's preaching: it is one of those terrible sermons which God preaches to mankind, of blood unrighteously shed, and most wondrously avenged. The like has not happened in these our latter days. His presence is visible in it; and I reveal it that its burden may be removed from my soul, so that I may die in peace; and I disclose it, that you may lay it up in your hearts and tell it soberly to your children, that the warning memory of a dispensation so marvellous may live and not perish. Of the deed itself, some of you have heard a whispering; and some of you know the men of whom I am about to speak; but the mystery which covers them up as with a cloud I shall remove: listen therefore, my children, to a tale of truth, and may you profit by it!

On Dryfe Water, in Annandale, lived Walter Johnstone, a man open-hearted and kindly, but proud withal and warm tempered; and on the same water lived John Macmillan, a man of a nature grasping and sordid, and as proud and hot tempered as the other. They were strong men, and vain of their strength; lovers of pleasant company, well to live in the world, extensive dealers in corn and cattle; married too, and both of the same age—five and forty years. They often met, yet they were not friends; nor yet were they companions, for bargain-making and money-seeking narroweth the heart and shuts up generosity of soul. They were jealous, too, of one another's success in trade, and of the fame they had each acquired for feats of personal strength and agility, and skill with the sword—a weapon which all men carried, in my youth, who were above the condition of a peasant. Their mutual and growing dislike was inflamed by the whisperings of evil friends, and confirmed by the skilful manner in which they negotiated bargains over each other's heads. When they met, a short and surly greeting was exchanged, and those who knew their natures looked for a meeting between them, when the sword or some other dangerous weapon would settle for ever their claims for precedence in cunning and in strength.

They met at the fair of Longtown, and spoke, and no more—with them both it was a busy day, and mutual hatred subsided for a time, in the love of turning the penny and amassing gain. The market rose and fell, and fell and rose; and it was whispered that Macmillan, through the superior skill or good fortune of his rival, had missed some bargains which were very valuable, while some positive loss touched a nature extremely sensible of the importance of wealth. One was elated and the other depressed—but not more depressed than moody and incensed, and in this temper they were seen in the evening in the back room of a public inn, seated apart and silent, calculating losses and gains, drinking deeply, and exchanging dark looks of hatred and distrust. They had been observed, during the whole day, to watch each other's movements, and now when they were met face to face, the labours of the day over, and their natures inflamed by liquor as well as by hatred, their companions looked for personal strife between them, and wondered not a little when they saw Johnstone rise, mount his horse, and ride homewards, leaving his rival in Longtown. Soon afterwards Macmillan started up from a moody fit, drank off a large draught of brandy, threw down a half-guinea, nor waited for change—a thing uncommon with him; and men said, as his horse's feet struck fire from the pavement, that if he overtook Johnstone, there would be a living soul less in the land before sunrise.

Before sunrise next morning the horse of Walter Johnstone came with an empty saddle to his stable door. The bridle was trampled to pieces amongst its feet, and its saddle and sides were splashed over with blood as if a bleeding body had been carried across its back. The cry arose in the country, an instant search was made, and on the side of the public road was found a place where a deadly contest seemed to have happened. It was in a small green field, bordered by a wood, in the farm of Andrew Pattison. The sod was dinted deep with men's feet, and trodden down and trampled, and sprinkled over with blood as thickly as it had ever been with dew. Blood drops, too, were traced to some distance, but nothing more was discovered: the body could not be found, though every field was examined and every pool dragged. His money and bills, to the amount of several thousand pounds, were gone; so was his sword—indeed nothing of him could be found on earth save his blood, and for its spilling a strict account was yet to be sought.

Suspicion instantly and naturally fell on John Macmillan, who denied all knowledge of the deed. He had arrived at his own house in due course of

time, no marks of weapon or warfare were on him, he performed family worship as was his custom, and he sang the psalm as loudly and prayed as fervently as he was in the habit of doing. He was apprehended and tried, and saved by the contradictory testimony of the witnesses against him, into whose hearts the spirit of falsehood seemed to have entered in order to perplex and confound the judgment of men—or rather that man might have no hand in the punishment, but that God should bring it about in his own good time and way. "Revenge is mine, saith the Lord," which meaneth not because it is too sweet a morsel for man, as the scoffer said, but because it is too dangerous. A glance over this conflicting testimony will show how little was then known of this foul offence, and how that little was rendered doubtful and dark by the imperfections of human nature.

Two men of Longtown were examined. One said that he saw Macmillan insulting and menacing Johnstone, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword with a look dark and ominous; while the other swore that he was present at the time, but that it was Johnstone who insulted and menaced Macmillan, and laid his hand on the hilt of his sword and pointed to the road homewards. A very expert and searching examination could make no more of them; they were both respectable men with characters above suspicion. The next witnesses were of another stamp, and their testimony was circuitous and contradictory. One of them was a shepherd—a reluctant witness. His words were these: "I was frae hame on the night of the murder, in the thick of the wood, no just at the place which was bloody and trampled, but gaye and near hand it. I canna say I can just mind what I was doing; I had somebody to see I jalouse, but wha it was is naebody's business but my ain. There was maybe ane forbye myself in the wood, and maybe twa; there was ane at ony rate, and I am no sure but it was an auld acquaintance. I see nae use there can be in questioning me. I saw nought, and therefore can say nought. I canna but say that I heard something—the trampling of horses, and a rough voice saying, 'Draw and defend yourself.' Then followed the clashing of swords and half smothered sort of work, and then the sound of horses' feet was heard again, and that's a' I ken about it; only I thought the voice was Walter Johnstone's, and so thought Kate Pennie, who was with me and kens as meikle as me." The examination of Katherine Pennie, one of the Pennies of Pennieland, followed, and she declared that she had heard the evidence of Dick Purdie with surprise and anger. On that night she was not over the step of her father's door for more than five minutes, and that was to look at the sheep in the fauld; and she neither heard the clashing of swords nor the word of man or woman. And with respect to Dick Purdie, she scarcely knew him even by sight; and if all tales were true that were told of him, she would not venture into a lonely wood with him, under the cloud of night, for a gown of silk with pearls on each sleeve. The shepherd, when recalled, admitted that Kate Pennie might be right, "For after a'," said he, "it happened in the dark, when a man like me, no that gleg of the uptauk, might confound persons. Somebody was with me, I am gaye and sure, frae what took place—if it was nae Kate, I kenna wha it was, and it couldna weel be Kate either, for Kate's a douce quean, and besides is married." The judge dismissed the witnesses with some indignant words, and, turning to the prisoner, said, "John Macmillan, the prevarications of these witnesses have saved you; mark my words—saved you from man, but not from God. On the murderer, the Most High will lay his hot right hand, visibly and before men, that we may know that blood unjustly shed will be avenged. You are at liberty to depart." He left the bar and resumed his station and his pursuits as usual; nor did he appear sensible to the feeling of the country, which was strong against him.

A year passed over his head, other events happened, and the murder of Walter Johnstone began to be dismissed from men's minds. Macmillan went to the fair of Longtown, and when evening came he was seated in the little back-room which I mentioned before, and in company with two men of the names of Hunter and Hope. He sat late, drank deeply, but in the midst of the carousal a knock was heard at the door, and a voice called sharply, "John Macmillan." He started up, seemed alarmed, and exclaimed, "What in heaven's name can *he* want with me?" and opening the door hastily, went into the garden, for he seemed to dread another summons lest his companions should know the voice. As soon as he was gone, one said to the other, "If that was not the voice of Walter Johnstone, I never heard it in my life; he is either come back in the flesh or in the spirit, and in either way John Macmillan has good cause to dread him." They listened; they heard Macmillan speaking in great agitation: he was answered only by a low sound, yet he appeared to understand what was said, for his concluding words were, "Never! never! I shall rather submit to His judgment who cannot err." When he returned he was pale and shaking, and he sat down and seemed buried in thought. He spread his palms on his knees, shook his head often, then, starting up, said, "The judge was a fool and no prophet; to mortal man is not given the wisdom of God; so, neighbours, let us ride." They mounted their horses, and rode homewards into Scotland at a brisk pace.

The night was pleasant, neither light nor dark; there were few travellers out, and the way winded with the hills, and with the streams, passing through a pastoral and beautiful country. Macmillan rode close by the side of his companions, closer than was desirable or common, yet he did not speak, nor make

answer when he was spoken to, but looked keenly and earnestly before and behind him, as if he expected the coming of some one, and every tree and bush seemed to alarm and startle him. Day at last dawned, and with the growing light his alarm subsided, and he began to converse with his companions, and talk with a levity which surprised them more than his silence had done before. The sun was all but risen when they approached the farm of Andrew Pattison, and here and there the top of a high tree and the summit of a hill had caught light upon them. Hope looked to Hunter silently, when they came nigh the bloody spot where it was believed the murder had been committed. Macmillan sat looking resolutely before him, as if determined not to look upon it, but his horse stopped at once, trembled violently, and then sprung aside, hurling its rider headlong to the ground. All this passed in a moment; his companions sat astonished; the horse rushed forward, leaving him on the ground, from whence he never rose in life, for his neck was broken by the fall, and with a convulsive shiver or two he expired. Then did the prediction of the judge, the warning voice and summons of the preceding night, and the spot and the time, rush upon their recollection, and they firmly believed that a murderer and robber lay dead beside them. "His horse saw something," said Hope to Hunter; "I never saw such flashing eyes in a horse's head;"—"and *he* saw something too," replied Hunter, "for the glance that he gave to the bloody spot, when his horse started, was one of terror. I never saw such a look, and I wish never to see such another again."

When John Macmillan perished, matters stood thus with his memory:—It was not only loaded with the sin of blood and the sin of robbery, with the sin of making a faithful woman a widow, and her children fatherless, but with the grievous sin also of having driven a worthy family to ruin and beggary. The sum which was lost was large, the creditors were merciless; they fell upon the remaining substance of Johnstone, sweeping it wholly away, and his widow sought shelter in a miserable cottage among the Dryfesdale hills, where she supported her children by gathering and spinning wool. In a far different state and condition remained the family of John Macmillan. He died rich and unencumbered, leaving an evil name and an only child, a daughter, wedded to one whom many knew and esteemed, Joseph Howatson by name, a man sober and sedate; a member, too, of our own broken remnant of Cameronians.

Now, my dear children, the person who addresses you was then, as he is yet, God's preacher for the scattered kirk of Scotland, and his tent was pitched among the green hills of Annandale. The death of the transgressor appeared unto me the manifest judgment of God, and when my people gathered around me I rejoiced to see so great a multitude, and, standing in the midst of them, I preached in such wise that they were deeply moved. I took for my text these words, "Hath there been evil in the land and the Lord hath not known it!" I discoursed on the wisdom of Providence in guiding the affairs of men. How he permitted our evil passions to acquire the mastery over us, and urge us to deeds of darkness; allowing us to flourish for a season, that he might strike us in the midst of our splendour in a way so visible and awful that the wildest would cry out, "Behold the finger of God." I argued the matter home to the heart; I named no names, but I saw Joseph Howatson hide his face in his hands, for he felt and saw, from the eyes which were turned towards him, that I alluded to the judgment of God upon his relative.

Joseph Howatson went home heavy and sad of heart, and somewhat touched with anger at God's servant for having so pointedly and publicly alluded to his family misfortune, for he believed his father-in-law was a wise and a worthy man. His way home lay along the banks of a winding and beautiful stream, and just where it entered his own lands there was a rustic gate, over which he leaned for a little space, ruminating upon earlier days, on his wedded wife, on his children, and finally his thoughts settled on his father-in-law. He thought of his kindness to himself and to many others, on his fulfilment of all domestic duties, on his constant performance of family worship, and on his general reputation for honesty and fair dealing. He then dwelt on the circumstances of Johnstone's disappearance, on the singular summons his father-in-law received in Longtown, and the catastrophe which followed on the spot, and on the very day of the year that the murder was supposed to be committed. He was in sore perplexity, and said aloud, "Would to God that I knew the truth, but the doors of eternity, alas! are shut on the secret for ever." He looked up, and John Macmillan stood before him—stood with all the calmness and serenity and meditative air which a grave man wears when he walks out on a Sabbath eve.

"Joseph Howatson," said the apparition, "on no secret are the doors of eternity shut; of whom were you speaking?" "I was speaking," answered he, "of one who is cold and dead, and to whom you bear a strong resemblance." "I am he," said the shape; "I am John Macmillan." "God of heaven!" replied Joseph Howatson, "how can that be; did I not lay his head in the grave, see it closed over him; how, therefore, can it be? Heaven permits no such visitations." "I entreat you, my son," said the shape, "to believe what I say; the end of man is not when his body goes to dust; he exists in another state, and from that state am I permitted to come to you; waste not time, which is brief, with vain doubts, I am John Macmillan." "Father, father," said the young man, deeply agitated, "answer me, did you kill and rob Walter Johnstone?" "I did," said the spirit, "and for that

have I returned to earth; listen to me." The young man was so much overpowered by a revelation thus fearfully made, that he fell insensible on the ground, and when he recovered, the moon was shining, the dews of night were upon him, and he was alone.

Joseph Howatson imagined that he had dreamed a fearful dream; and conceiving that divine Providence had presented the truth to his fancy, he began to consider how he could secretly make reparation to the wife and children of Johnstone for the double crime of his relative. But on more mature reflection he was impressed with the belief that a spirit had appeared to him—the spirit of his father-in-law—and that his own alarm had hindered him from learning fully the secret of his visit to earth; he therefore resolved to go to the same place next Sabbath night, seek rather than avoid an interview, acquaint himself with the state of bliss or woe in which the spirit was placed, and learn if by acts of affection and restitution he could soften his sufferings or augment his happiness. He went accordingly to the little rustic gate by the side of the lonely stream; he walked up and down; hour passed after hour, but he heard nothing and saw nothing save the murmuring of the brook, and the hares running among the wild clover. He had resolved to return home, when something seemed to rise from the ground, as shapeless as a cloud at first, but moving with life. It assumed a form, and the appearance of John Macmillan was once more before him. The young man was nothing daunted, but looking on the spirit, said, "I thought you just, and upright, and devout, and incapable of murder and robbery." The spirit seemed to dilate as it made answer: "The death of Walter Johnstone sits lightly upon me. We had crossed each other's purposes, we had lessened each other's gains, we had vowed revenge, we met on fair terms, tied our horses to a gate, and fought fairly and long, and when I slew him, I but did what he sought to do to me. I threw him over his horse, carried him far into the country, sought out a deep quagmire on the north side of the Snipe Knowe, in Crake's Moss, and having secured his bills and other perishable property, with the purpose of returning all to his family, I buried him in the moss, leaving his gold in his purse, and laying his cloak and his sword above him.

"Now listen, Joseph Howatson. In my private desk you will find a little key tied with red twine; take it and go to the house of Janet Mathieson in Dumfries, and underneath the hearthstone in my sleeping-room you will get my strong-box; open it, it contains all the bills and bonds belonging to Walter Johnstone. Restore them to his widow. I would have restored them but for my untimely death. Inform her privily and covertly where she will find the body of her husband, so that she may bury him in the churchyard with his ancestors. Do these things, that I may have some assuagement of misery; neglect them, and you will become a world's wonder." The spirit vanished with these words, and was seen no more.

Joseph Howatson was sorely troubled. He had communed with a spirit, he was impressed with the belief that early death awaited him; he felt a sinking of soul and a misery of body, and he sent for me to help him with counsel, and comfort him in his unexampled sorrow. I loved him, and hastened to him; I found him weak and woe-begone, and the hand of God seemed to be sore upon him. He took me out to the banks of the little stream where the shape appeared to him, and having desired me to listen without interrupting him, told me how he had seen his father-in-law's spirit, and related the revelations which it had made, and the commands it had laid upon him. "And now," he said, "look upon me: I am young, and ten days ago I had a body strong, and a mind buoyant, and gray hairs and the honours of old age seemed to await me. But ere three days pass I shall be as the clod of the valley, for he who converses with a spirit, a spirit shall he soon become. I have written down the strange tale I have told you, and I put it into your hands; perform for me and for my wretched parent, the instructions which the grave yielded up its tenant to give, and may your days be long in the land, and may you grow gray-headed among your people." I listened to his words with wonder and with awe, and I promised to obey him in all his wishes with my best and most anxious judgment. We went home together; we spent the evening in prayer. Then he set his house in order, spoke to all his children cheerfully, and with a mild voice, and falling on the neck of his wife, said, "Sarah Macmillan, you were the choice of my young heart, and you have been a wife to me, kind, tender, and gentle." He looked at his children, and he looked at his wife, for his heart was too full for more words, and retired to his chamber. He was found next morning kneeling by his bedside, his hands held out as if repelling some approaching object, horror stamped on every feature, and cold and dead.

Then I felt full assurance of the truth of his communications; and as soon as the amazement which his untimely death occasioned had subsided, and his wife and little ones were somewhat comforted, I proceeded to fulfil his dying request. I found the small key tied with red twine, and I went to the house of Janet Mathieson in Dumfries, and I held up the key and said, "Woman, knowest thou that?" and when she saw it she said, "Full well I know it, it belonged to a jolly man and a douce, and mony a merry hour has he whiled away wi' my servant maidens and me." And when she saw me lift the hearthstone, open the box, and spread out the treasure which it contained, she held up her hands, "Eh! what o' gowd! what o' gowd! but half's mine, be ye saint or sinner; John Macmillan, douce man, aye said he had something there which he considered as not belonging to him but to a quiet friend; weel

I wot he meant me, for I have been a quiet friend to him and his." I told her I was commissioned by his daughter to remove the property, that I was the minister of that persecuted remnant of the true kirk called Cameronians, and she might therefore deliver it up without fear. "I ken weel enough wha ye are," said this worthless woman, "d'ye think I dinna ken a minister of the kirk? But touching this treasure, give me twenty gowden pieces, else I'se gar three stamps of my foot bring in them that will see me righted, and send you awa to the mountains bleating like a sheep shorn in winter." I gave the imperious woman twenty pieces of gold, and carried away the fatal box.

Now, when I got free of the ports of Dumfries, I mounted my little horse and rode away into the heart of the country, among the pastoral hills of Dryfesdale. I carried the box on the saddle before me, and its contents awakened a train of melancholy thoughts within me. There were the papers of Walter Johnstone, corresponding to the description which the spirit gave, and marked with his initials in red ink by the hand of the man who slew him. There were two gold watches and two purses of gold, all tied with red twine, and many bills and much money to which no marks were attached. As I rode along pondering on these things, and casting about in my own mind how and by what means I should make restitution, I was aware of a morass, broad and wide, which with all its quagmires glittered in the moonlight before me. I knew I had penetrated into the centre of Dryfesdale, but I was not well acquainted with the country; I therefore drew my bridle, and looked around to see if any house was nigh, where I could find shelter for the night. I saw a small house built of turf and thatched with heather, from the window of which a faint light glimmered. I rode up, alighted, and there I found a woman in widow's weeds, with three sweet children, spinning yarn from the wool which the shepherds shear, in spring, from the udders of the ewes. She welcomed me, spread bread and placed milk before me. I asked a blessing, and ate and drank, and was refreshed.

Now it happened that, as I sat with the solitary woman and her children, there came a man to the door, and with a loud yell of dismay burst it open and staggered forward crying, "There's a corse candle in Crake's Moss, and I'll be a dead man before the morning." "Preserve me! piper," said the widow, "ye're in a piteous taking; here is a holy man who will speak comfort to you, and tell you how all these are but delusions of the eye or exhalations of nature." "Delusions and exhalations, Dame Johnstone!" said the piper, "d'ye think I dinna ken a corse light from an elf candle, an elf candle from a will-o'-wisp, and a will-o'-wisp from all other lights of this wide world!" The name of the morass and the woman's name now flashed upon me, and I was struck with amazement and awe. I looked on the widow, and I looked on the wandering piper, and I said, "Let me look on those corse lights, for God creates nothing in vain; there is a wise purpose in all things, and a wise aim." And the piper said, "Na, na; I have nae wish to see ony mair on't, a dead light bodes the living nae gude; and I am sure if I gang near Crake's Moss it will lair me amang the hags and quags." And I said, "Foolish old man, you are equally safe everywhere; the hand of the Lord reaches round the earth, and strikes and protects according as it was foreordained, for nothing is hid from his eyes—come with me." And the piper looked strangely upon me and stirred not a foot; and I said, "I shall go by myself;" and the woman said, "Let me go with you, for I am sad of heart, and can look on such things without fear; for, alas! since I lost my own Walter Johnstone, pleasure is no longer pleasant: and I love to wander in lonesome places and by old churchyards." "Then," said the piper, "I darena bide my lane with the bairns; I'll go also; but O! let me strengthen my heart with ae spring on my pipes before I venture." "Play," I said, "Clavers and his Highlandmen; it is the tune to cheer ye and keep your heart up." "Your honour's no cannie," said the old man, "that's my favourite tune." So he played it and said, "Now I am fit to look on lights of good or evil." And we walked into the open air.

All Crake's Moss seemed on fire; not illumined with one steady and uninterrupted light, but kindled up by fits like the northern sky with its wandering streamers. On a little bank which rose in the centre of the morass, the supernatural splendour seemed chiefly to settle; and having continued to shine for several minutes, the whole faded and left but one faint gleam behind. I fell on my knees, held up my hands to heaven, and said, "This is of God; behold in that fearful light the finger of the Most High. Blood has been spilt, and can be no longer concealed; the point of the mariner's needle points less surely to the north than yon living flame points to the place where man's body has found a bloody grave. Follow me," and I walked down to the edge of the moss and gazed earnestly on the spot. I knew now that I looked on the long hidden resting place of Walter Johnstone, and considered that the hand of God was manifest in the way that I had been thus led blindfold into his widow's house. I reflected for a moment on these things; I wished to right the fatherless, yet spare the feelings of the innocent; the supernatural light partly showed me the way, and the words which I now heard whispered by my companions aided in directing the rest.

"I tell ye, Dame Johnstone," said the piper, "the man's no cannie; or what's waur, he may belong to the spiritual world himself, and do us a mischief. Saw ye ever mortal man riding wi' ae spur and carrying a silver headed cane for a whip, wi' sic a fleece of hair about his haffets and sic a wild ee in

his head; and then he kens a' things in the heavens aboon and the earth beneath. He kenned my favourite tune Clavers: I'se uphaud he's no in the body, but ane of the souls made perfect of the auld Covenanters whom Grahame or Grierson slew; we're daft to follow him." "Fool body," I heard the widow say, "I'll follow him; there's something about that man, be he in the spirit or in the flesh, which is pleasant and promising. O! could he but, by prayer or other means of lawful knowledge, tell me about my dear Walter Johnstone; thrice has he appeared to me in dream or vision with a sorrowful look, and weel ken I what that means." We had now reached the edge of the morass, and a dim and uncertain light continued to twinkle about the green knoll which rose in its middle. I turned suddenly round and said, "For a wise purpose am I come; to reveal murder, to speak consolation to the widow and the fatherless, and to soothe the perturbed spirits of those whose fierce passions ended in untimely death. Come with me; the hour is come, and I must not do my commission negligently." "I kenned it, I kenned it," said the piper, he's just one of the auld persecuted worthies risen from his red grave to right the injured, and he'll do't discreetly; follow him, Dame, follow him." "I shall follow," said the widow; "I have that strength given me this night which will bear me through all trials that mortal flesh can endure."

When we reached the little green hillock in the centre of the morass, I looked to the north and soon distinguished the place described by my friend Joseph Howatson, where the body of Walter Johnstone was deposited. The moon shone clear, the stars aided us with their light, and some turf-cutters having left their spades standing near, I ordered the piper to take a spade and dig where I placed my staff. "O dig carefully," said the widow, "do not be rude with mortal dust." We dug and came to a sword; the point was broken and the blade hacked. "It is the sword of my Walter Johnstone," said his widow; "I could swear to it among a thousand." "It is my father's sword," said a fine dark haired boy who had followed us unperceived, "It is my father's sword, and were he living who wrought this, he should na be lang in rueing it." "He is dead, my child," I said, "and beyond your reach, and vengeance is the Lord's." "O, sir," cried his widow, in a flood of tears, "ye ken all things; tell me, is this my husband or no?" "It is the body of Walter Johnstone," I answered, "slain by one who is passed to his account, and buried here by the hand that slew him, with his gold in his purse and his watch in his pocket." So saying we uncovered the body, lifted it up, laid it on the grass; the embalming nature of the morass had preserved it from decay, and mother and child, with tears and with cries, named his name and lamented over him. His gold watch and his money, his cloak and his dress, were untouched and entire, and we bore him to the cottage of his widow, where with clasped hands she sat at his feet and his children at his head till the day drew nigh the dawn. I then rose and said, "Woman, thy trials have been severe and manifold; a good wife, a good mother, and a good widow hast thou been, and thy reward will be where the blessed alone are admitted. It was revealed to me by a mysterious revelation that thy husband's body was where we found it; and I was commissioned by a voice, assuredly not of this world, to deliver thee this treasure, which is thy own, that thy children may be educated, and that bread and raiment may be thine." And I delivered her husband's wealth into her hands, refused gold which she offered, and mounting my horse, rode over the hills and saw her no more. But I soon heard of her, for there arose a strange sound in the land, that a good spirit had appeared to the widow of Walter Johnstone, had disclosed where her husband's murdered body lay, had enriched her with all his lost wealth, had prayed by her side till the blessed dawn of day, and then vanished with the morning light. I closed my lips on the secret till now; and I reveal it to you, my children, that you may know there is a God who ruleth this world by wise and invisible means, and punisheth the wicked, and cheereth the humble of heart and the lowly-minded.

Such was the last sermon of the good John Farley, a man whom I knew and loved. I think I see him now, with his long white hair and his look mild, eloquent, and sagacious. He was a giver of good counsel, a sayer of wise sayings, with wit at will, learning in abundance, and a gift in sarcasm which the wildest dreaded.

THE HUNT OF EILDON;

BEING SOME FRAGMENTS OF AN ANCIENT ROMANCE.

CHAPTER I.

"I HOPE the king will not hunt to day," said Gale, as he sat down on the top of the South Eildon, and stretched out his lazy limbs in the sun. "If he keep within doors to-day with his yelping beagles, I shall have one day's peace and ease; and my lambs shall have one day's peace and ease; and poor Trimmy shall have one day's peace and ease too. Come hither to me, Trimmy, and tell me what is the reason that you will not hunt with the king's two snow-white beagles?"

Trimmy came near, laid her paw on her master's knee, and looked him in the face; but she could not tell him what was the reason that she would not hunt with the king's two beagles, Mooly and Scratch.

"I say, tell me, my good Trimmy, what you ail at these beautiful hounds?—you wont to be the best follower of a track in all the Merse and Leader; but now, whenever you hear the sound of the horn, and the opening swell of the hounds, you take your tail between your legs and set off for home, as there were something on the hill that was neither good nor cannie. You are a very sensible beast, Trimmy, but you have some strange fancies and prejudices that I cannot comprehend."

Trimmy cocked her ears, and looked towards the Abbey, then at her master, and then at the Abbey again.

"Ah! I fear you hear them coming that you are cocking your ears at that rate. Then if that be the case, good morning to you, Trimmy."

It was neither the king nor his snow-white beagles that Trimmy winded, but poor Croudy, Gale's neighbour shepherd, who was coming sauntering up the brae, with his black lumpish dog at his foot, that was fully as stupid as himself, and withal as good-natured. Croudy was never lifting his eyes from the ground, but moving on as if he had been enumerating all the little yellow flowers that grew on the hill. Yet it was not for want of thought that Croudy was walking in that singular position, with his body bent forward, and the one ear turned down towards the ground and the other up. No, no! for Croudy was trying to think all that he could; and all that he could do he could make nothing of it. Croudy had seen and heard wonderful things! "Bless me and my horn!" said he, as he sat down on a stone to rest himself, and try if he could bring his thoughts to any rallying point. It was impossible—they were like a hive of bees when the queen is taken from their head.

He took out the little crooked ewe-horn that he kept as a charm; he had got it from his mother, and it had descended to him from many generations: he turned it round in the one hand, and then round in the other hand—he put it upon his finger and twirled it. "Bless me an' my horn!" said he again. Then leaning forward upon his staff, he looked aslant at the ground, and began to moralize. "It is a growing world—ay—the gerse grows; the lambs eat it—they grow; ay—we eat them—we grow; there it goes!—men, women, dogs, bairns, a' eat—a' grow; the yird eats up a'—it grows—what comes o' it?—Hoh! I'm fixed now!—I'm at the end o' my tether. I might gang up the hill to Gale, an' tell him what I hae seen an' what I hae heard; but I hae four great fauts to that chiel. In the first place, he's a fool—good that! In the second place, he's a scholar, an' speaks English—bad! In the third place, he likes the women—warst ava!—and fourthly and lastly, he misca's a' the words, and ca's the streamers the Roara Boriawlis—ha! ha! ha!—Wha wad converse wi' a man, or wha *can* converse wi' a man, that ca's the streamers the Roara Boriawlis? Fools hae aye something about them no like ither fok! Now, gin I war to gang to sic a man as that, an' tell him that I heard a dog speakin', and another dog answering it, what wad he say! He wad speak English; sae ane wad get nae sense out o' him. If I war to gang to the Master o' Seaton, and tak my aith, what wad he say? Clap me up i' the prison for a daft man an' a warlock. I couldna bide that. Then again, if we lose our king—an' him the last o' the race. Let me see if I can calculate what wad be the consequence? The English—Tut! the English! wha cares for them? But let me see now—should the truth be tauld or no tauld! That's the question. What's truth? Ay, there comes the crank! Nae man can tell that—for what's truth to ane is a lee to another. Mumps, ye're very hard on thae fleas the day.—Truth!—For instance; gin my master war to come up the brae to me an' say, 'Croudy, that dog's useless,' that wadna

be truth to me. But gin I war to say to him, 'Master, I heard a dog speak, an' it said sae an' sae; an' there was another dog answered it, an' it said sae an' sae,' that wad be truth to me; but then it wadna be truth to him. Truth's just as it is ta'en. Now, if a thing may be outher truth or no truth, then a' things are just the same—No—that disna haud neither. Mumps, ye're no gaun to leave a sample o' thae fleas the day, man. Look up, like a farrant beast—have ye nae pity on your master, nor ony thought about him ava, an' him in sic a plisky? I wadna be just sae like a stump an' I war you, man——Bless me an' my horn! here's the Boriawlis comin' on me—here's the northern light."

"Good-morrow to you, Croudy."

"Humph!"

"You seem to be very thoughtful and heavy-hearted to-day, honest Croudy. I fear pretty Pery has given you a bad reception last night."

"Humph!—women!—women!"

"I hope she did not mention the kilnlogie, Croudy? That was a sad business! some men are ill to know!"

"See, whaten white scares are yon, Gale, aboon the Cowdyknowes an' Gladswood linn? Look ye, they spread an' tail away a' the gate to the Lammer-Law. What ca' ye yon, Gale?"

"Some exhalation of the morning."

"What?—Bless me an' my horn! that's warst ava!—I thought it wad be some Boriawlis, Gale—some day Boriawlis; but I didna think o' aught sae high as this—ha! ha! ha! ha!"

Croudy went his way laughing along the side of the hill, speaking to Mumps one while, moralizing about truth and the language of dogs and fairies another, and always between taking a hearty laugh at Gale. "Come away, Mumps," said he; "I can crack some wi' you, though ye're rather slow i' the uptake; but I can crack nane wi' a man that ca's the streamers a Roara Boriawlis, an' a white clud an exaltation o' the morning—Na, na, that will never do."

Croudy sauntered away down into the Bourgeon to be out of sight, and Gale went lightsomely away to the top of the North-east Eildon; and there, on one of the angles of the old Roman Camp, laid him down to enjoy the glorious prospect; and, sure, of all the lovely prospects in our isle, this is the most lovely. What must it have been in those days when all the ruins of monastery, tower, and citadel, which still make the traveller to stand in wonder and admiration, were then in their full splendour! Traveller, would you see Scotland in all its wild and majestic grandeur? sail along its western firths from south to north. Would you see that grandeur mellowed by degrees into softness? look from the top of Ben Lomond. But would you see an amphitheatre of *perfect beauty*, where nothing is wanting to enrich the scene? seat yourself on the spot where Gale now lay, at the angle of the Roman Camp, on the top of the North-east Eildon.

Short time did he enjoy the prospect and the quiet in which he delighted. First the heads of two noblemen appeared on the hill beneath him, then came a roe by him at full speed. Trimmy would fain have hunted her, but as the shepherd deemed that the business was some way connected with the royal sport, he restrained her. The two noblemen some time thereafter sounded a bugle, and then in a moment the king and his attendants left the Abbey at full speed; and how beautiful was their winding ascent up the hill! The king had betted with the Earl of Hume and Lord Belhaven, seven steers, seven palfreys, seven deer-greyhounds, and seven gold rings, that his two snow-white hounds, Mooly and Scratch, would kill a roe-deer started on any part of the Eildon Hills, and leave the Abbey walk with him after she was started. After the bet was fairly taken, the king said to the two noblemen, "You are welcome to your loss, my lords. Do you know that I could bet the half of my realm on the heads of these two hounds?"

The two lords held their peace, but they were determined to win if they could, and they did not blow the horn, as agreed on, immediately when the roe started, but sauntered about, to put off time, and suffer the trail to cool. The two hounds were brought up, and loosed at the spot; they scarcely showed any symptoms of having discovered the scent. The king shook his head; and Hume, who loved the joke dearly, jeered the king about his wager, which his majesty only answered by speaking to one of the hounds that stood next to him. "Ah! Mooly, Mooly, if you deceive me, it is the first time; but I have another matter to think on than you this morning, Mooly." Mooly fawned on her royal master; jumped up at the stirrup, and took his foot playfully in her mouth, while Keryl, the king's steed, laid back his ears, and snapped at her, in a half-angry, half-playful mood. This done, Mooly turned her long nose to the wind; scented this way and that way, and then scampering carelessly over the brow of the hill, she opened in a tone so loud and so sprightly that it made all the Eildons sound in chorus to the music. Scratch joined with her elegant treble, and away they went like two wild swans, sounding over the hill.

"Trimmy! Trimmy! my poor Trimmy!" cried Gale, vexed and astonished; "Trimmy, haloo! hie, hunt the deer, Trimmy! Here, here, here!"

No; Trimmy would never look over her shoulder, but away she ran with all her might home to Eildon Hall, and hid herself in its darkest nook. "The plague be in the beast," said Gale to himself, "if ever I saw anything like that! There is surely something about these two hounds that is scarcely right."

Round and round the hills they went side by side, and still the riders kept close up with them. The trail seemed to be warm, and the hounds keen, but yet no deer was to be discovered. They stretched

their course to the westward, round Cauldshields Hill, back over Bothendean Moor, and again betook them to the Eildons; still no deer was to be seen! The two hounds made a rapid stretch down towards Melrose; the riders spurred in the same direction. The dogs in a moment turning short, went out between the two eastern hills, distancing all the riders, whom they left straggling up the steep after them as they could, and when these came over the height there was a fine roe-deer lying newly slain, scarce two bowshots from the Eildon tree, and the two snow-white hounds panting and rolling themselves on the grass beside her. The king claimed his wager, but Hume objected, unless his majesty could prove that it was the same deer that they had started at the same place in the morning. The king had the greatest number of voices in his favour, but the earl stood to his point. "Is it true, my liege lord," said an ancient knight to the king, "that these two beautiful hounds have never yet been unleashed without killing their prey?"

"Never," returned the king.

"And is it equally true," continued the old knight, "that to this day they have never been seen kill either roe, deer, or any other creature?"

"That is a most extraordinary circumstance," said the king; "pause until I recollect—No; I do not know that any eye hath ever yet seen them take their prey."

"I heard it averred last night," said the old man, "that if they are kept sight of for a whole day the deer is never seen, nor do they ever catch anything; and that the moment they get out of sight, there the deer is found slain, nobody knows how. I took note of it, and I have seen it this day verified. Pray, is this a fact, my liege?"

"I never before thought of it, or noted it," said the king; "but as far as my memory serves me, I confess that it has uniformly been as you say."

"Will your majesty suffer me to examine these two hounds?" said the old man. "Methinks there is something very odd about them. Sure there was never any animal on earth had eyes or feet such as they have."

The two beagles kept aloof, and pretended to be winding some game round the top of the hill.

"They will not come now," said the king; "you shall see them by and by."

"If consistent with your majesty's pleasure," continued the aged knight, "where—how—or when did you get these two hounds?"

"I got them in a most extraordinary way, to be sure!" replied the king, in a thoughtful and hesitating mood.

"Your majesty does not then choose to say how, or where, or from whom it was that you had them?" said the old knight.

The king shook his head.

"I will only simply ask this," continued he; "and I hope there is no offence:—Is it true that you got these hounds at the very same time that the beautiful Ellen and Clara of Rosline were carried off by the fairies?"

The king started—fixed his eyes upon the ground—raised his hands, and seemed gasping for breath. All the lords were momentarily in the same posture; the query acted on them all like an electric shock. The old man seemed to enjoy mightily the effect produced by his insinuations. He drew still nearer to the king.

"What is it that troubles your majesty?" said he. "What reflections have my simple questions raised in your mind? Your majesty, I am sure, can have no unpleasant reflections on that score!"

"Would to the Virgin that it were even so!" said the king.

"How is it possible," continued the officious old man, "that anything relating to two dogs can give your majesty trouble? Pray tell us all about them. Who was it you got them from?"

"I do not know, and if I did ——"

"Would you know him again if you saw him?"

The king looked at the old man and held his peace.

"Did you buy them or borrow them?" continued he.

"Neither!" was the answer.

"What then did you give in exchange for them!"

"Only a small token."

"And pray, if your majesty pleases, what might that token be?"

"Who dares to ask that?" said the king, with apparent trouble of mind.

"Would you know your pledge again if you saw it?" said the old man, sarcastically.

"Who are you, sir?" said the king, proudly, "that dares to question your sovereign in such a manner?"

"Who am I?" said the old man. "That is a good jest! That is such a question to ask at one who has scarcely ever been from your side since you were first laid in your cradle!"

"I know the face," said the king, "but all this time I cannot remember who you are. My Lord of Hume, do you know who the reverend old gentleman is?" And in saying this, his majesty turned a little aside with the earl.

"Do I know who he is?" said Hume. "Yes, by Saint Lawrence I do—I know him as well as I do your majesty. Let me see. It is very singular that I cannot recollect his name. I have seen the face a thousand times. Is he not some abbot, or confessor, or——No—Curse me, but I believe he is the devil!"

The earl said this in perfect jocularity, because he could not remember the old man's name; but when he looked at the king, he perceived that his eyes were fixed on him in astonishment. The earl's, as by sympathy, likewise settled by degrees into as much seriousness as they were masters of, and there

the two stood for a considerable time, gazing at one another, like two statues.

"I was only saying so in jest, my liege," said Hume; "I did not once think that the old gentleman was the devil. Why are you thoughtful?"

"Because, now when I think of it, he hinted at some things which I am certain no being on earth knew of, save myself and another, who cannot possibly divulge them."

They both turned slowly about at the same instant, curious to take another look of this mysterious old man; but when fairly turned round they did not see him.

"What has become of the old man," said the king, "that spoke to me just now?"

"Here, sire!" said one.

"Here!" said another.

"Here!" said a third; all turning at the same time to the spot where the old man and his horse stood, but neither of them were there.

"How is this?" said the king, "that you have let him go from among you without noting it?"

"He must have melted into air, he and his horse both," said they; "else he could not otherwise have left us without being observed."

The king blessed himself in the name of the Holy Virgin, and all the chief saints in the calendar. The Earl of Hume swore by the greater part of them, and cursed himself that he had not taken a better look at the devil when he was so near him, as no one could tell if ever he would have such a chance again. Douglas said he hoped there was little doubt of that.

CHAPTER II.

The hunt was now over, and Gale's lambs were all scattered abroad; he threw off his coat and tried to gather them, but he soon found that, without the assistance of Trimmy, it was impossible; so he was obliged to go home and endeavour to persuade her again out to the hill, by telling her that Mooly and Scratch had both left it. Trimmy then came joyfully, and performed in half an hour what her master could not have effected before night.

When he had gotten them all collected, and settled at their food, he went away in the evening to seek for his friend Croudy, to have some amusement with him. He found him lying in a little hollow, conversing with himself, and occasionally with Mumps, who paid very little attention to what he said. He now and then testified his sense of the intended honour, by giving two or three soft indolent strokes with his tail upon the ground, but withal neither lifted his head nor opened his eyes. Gale addressed his friend Croudy in a jocular and rallying manner, who took no notice of it, but continued to converse with Mumps.

"Ye're nae great gallaunt after a' now, Mumps. Gin I had been you, man, an' had seen sic twa fine beasts as Mooly an' Scratch come to our hills, I wad hae run away to them, an' fiddled about them, an' smelt their noses, an' kissed them, an' cockit up my tail on my rigging wi' the best o' them; but instead o' that, to tak the pet an' rin away far outbye, an' there sit turnin up your nose an' bow-wowing as ye war a burial-boding!—hoo, man, it is very bairnly-like o' ye! Humph! fools do aye as they are bidden! Ye're nae fool, Mumps, for ye seldom do as ye're bidden."

"Tell me, Croudy," said Gale, "does Mumps really run away in a panic when he perceives the king's hounds?"

"*Panic when he perceives the king's hounds!* Are ye gaun to keep on at bletherin' English? Tell me, ye see—for if ye be, I'm gaun to clatter nane to ye."

"Dear Croudy, I have often told you that there is not such a thing as English and Scotch languages; the one is merely a modification of the other—a refinement as it were"——

"Ay, an *exaltation* like—ation! ation! I'm sure nae Scot that isna a fool would ever let that sound *ation* come out o' his mouth. Mumps, what say ye tilt?"

"But Croudy, I have news to tell you that will delight you very much, only ere I begin, tell me seriously, Does your dog really run off when he sees or hears the king's two white hounds?"

"Really he does: is that ony wonder? D'ye think Mumps sic a fool as no to ken a witch by a brute beast—a changed creature frae a real creature—a spirit frae a substance?"

"What do you mean to insinuate, Croudy?"

"*Sinuate!* What's that?"

"I mean, what would you infer when you talk of witches and changed creatures? I have some strange doubts about these dogs myself."

"Can you keep a secret?"

"Yes, if it is worth keeping."

"At ony rate, swear that if ever you do tell it, it is not to be told in English. Nane o' your *awlis's* an' *ositys* an' *ations* in it. Gale, I hae the maist wonderfu' story to tell ye that ever happened sin' Nimrod first gaed out to the hunting wi' a bull-dog an' a pouchfu' of stanes. Ye see, yesterday at morn when the hunt began I clamb up into the Eildon tree, an' hid mysel' amang the very thickest o' its leaves, where I could see everything but naething could see me. I saw the twa white hounds a' the gate, but nae appearance of a deer; an' aye they came nearer an' nearer to me, till at last I saw a bonny braw young lady a' clad i' white about a hunder paces frae me, an' she was aye looking back an' rinning as gin she wantit to be at the Eildon tree. When she saw the hounds comin' on hard behind her she cried out; but they soon o'ertook her, threw her down, an' tore her, an' worried her; an' I heard her makin' a noise as gin she had been laughin' ae

while an' singin' another, an' O I thought her sang was sweet. Weel, this scene, sae contrair to a' nature, didna end here, for I heard the tae dog sayin' to the tither in plain language, 'Wha's this has been the deer to-day?' And it answered again an' said, 'Lady Marrion of Coomsley, ye may see by her goud rings; she is the twenty-third, and our task will soon be dune.'

"'Can ye tell me, sister, if the wicked deed will be done? Will the king die to-night?'

'The poison's distill'd, and the monk is won,
And to-night I fear it will be done.
Hush!—hush!—we are heard an' seen;
Wae to the ears, and wae to the een!'

"An' wi' that they rowed themsels on the bonny corpse, and when I lookit again there was a fine, plump, bausined roe-deer lying, an' the blude streamin' frae her side."

"Now, Croudy, of all the tales I ever heard that is the most improbable and unnatural! But it is too singular and out of the common course of nature for you to have framed it, and besides, I never knew you to tell a manifest lie. Are you certain that you did not dream it?"

"How could I dream on the top of a tree? Ye may either believe it or no as you like—it's a' true."

"I was sure there was something more than ordinary about these dogs, but what to make of your story I know not. There is something in the whole business so revolting to human nature, a man cannot think of it! It seems too that there is a plot against the life of the king. What shall we do in this? The fairies have again been seen at the Eildon tree, that is certain, and it is said some more young people are missing."

"They'll soon hae us a' thegither. I like that way o' turnin' fok into deers an' raes, and worrying them, warst ava. Mumps, lad, how wad ye like to be turned into a deer and worried? Aigh, man, ye *wad* like it ill! I think I see how ye wad lay yoursel out for fear. Ha, ha! I wad like to see ye get a bit hunt, man, if I thought ye wad win away wi' the life; I wad like to see ye streek yoursel for aince."

"I wonder, Croudy, after seeing such a sight as you have just now described, that you can descend from that to speak such nonsense."

"Tongues maun wag, an' when they gang it's no for naething. It's a queer thing speaking! Mumps, ye can speak nane, man; it's no for want of a tongue, I'm sure."

"Let us consider what's to be done. The king should be warned."

"I dinna see what's to hinder you to speak, Mumps, as weel as ony white beagle i' the country."

"I have it. I will go home directly and tell pretty Pery—she will apprise the abbot, and we shall have the two hounds, Mooly and Scratch, burned at the stake to-morrow."

"You tell Pery? No; that will never do, for you will speak English. That tale winna tell in English; for the twa witches, or fairies, or changed fok, or whatever they may be, didna speak that language themselves; sin' the thing is to be tauld I'll rather tell Pery myself, if it is the same thing to you."

This Pery was a young volatile maiden at Eildon Hall, who was over head and ears in love with Gale. She would have given the whole world for him; and in order to teaze him somewhat she had taken a whim of pretending to be in love with Croudy. Croudy hated all the women, and more particularly Pery, who had been the plague of his life; but of late he had heard some exaggerated accounts of the kind sentiments of her heart respecting him, which had wonderfully altered Croudy, although he still kept up as well as he could the pretence of disliking the sex. He went to Pery that evening as she was gathering in some clothes from the bushes, and desired her, with a most important face, to meet him at the Moss Thorn in half an hour, for he had something to tell her that would surprise her.

"Indeed and that I will with all my heart, Croudy," said she; "how glad I am that I have got you this length! I can guess what your secret will be."

"Ye can do nae sic thing," said Croudy, "nor nae woman that ever was born."

"I'll wager three kisses with you, Croudy, at the old Moss Thorn, that I do," returned she.

Croudy hung his head to one side, and chuckled, and crowed, and laid on the ground with his staff, and always now and then cast a sly look-out at the wick of his eye to Pery.

"It's a queer creature a woman," said Croudy—"very bonny creature, though!"

"Well, Croudy, I'll meet you at the Moss Thorn," said Pery, "and pay you your wager too, provided you have either spirit to ask or accept of it when offered."

Croudy went away laughing till his eyes blinded with tears, and laying on the ground with his stick. "I watna what I'll do now," said he to himself, "little impudent thing that she is! she's eneugh to pit a body mad! Mumps, O man ye're an unfarrant beast! Three kisses at the Moss Thorn! I wish I had this meeting by! Mumps, I never saw sic an unfeasible creature as you, man, when ane thinks about a bonny woman. A woman! what is a woman! Let me see—'tis no easy to ken; but I ken this, that a ewe lamb is a far nicer, bonnier, sweeter, innocenter little creature than a toop lamb. Oh! I wish it war night, for I'm no weel ava! Mumps, ye're a perfect blockhead, man!"

Precisely while this was going on at Eildon Hall, there were two ladies met hurriedly on the Abbey Walk. No one knew who they were, or whence they came, but they were lovely beyond expression, although their eyes manifested a kind of wild instability. Their robes were white as snow, and they had that light, elegant, sylph-like appearance that when they leaned forward to the evening air, one

could hardly help suspecting that they would skim away in it like twin doves.

"Sister," said the one, "haste and tell me what we are to do?"

"There is much to do to-night," said the other. "That clown who saw us and heard us speak will blab the news, and then think what the consequences may be! He must be silenced, and that instantly."

"And tell me," said the first, "is the plot against the king's life to be put in execution to-night?"

"I fear it is," answered the other; "and the abbot, his own kinsman, is in it."

"Alas! sister, what shall we do? Give me Philany's rod, and trust the clown to me. But do you make all possible haste and find your way into the banquet hall, and be sure to remain there in spite of all opposition."

The two sisters parted; and she who got the wand from the other repaired straight to the Moss Thorn, where honest Croudy and his dog Mumps were lying at a little distance from each other, the one very busy biting for fleas that he supposed had made a lodgment among his rough matted hair, and the other conversing with himself about the properties of women, fairies, and witches. All of a sudden he beheld this beautiful angelic creature coming towards him, which made his heart thrill within him.

"Saint Mary be my guide!" exclaimed Croudy to himself, "saw ever onybody the like o' yon? I declare Pery has dressed hersel like a princess to come an' speak to me! An' to think o' me kissing a creature like yon! I maun do it too, or else I'll never hear the end o't. Och! what will I do? I'll lie down an' pretend to be sleeping."

Croudy drew his plaid up over his face, stretched out his limbs, and snored as in a profound sleep. The fair lady came up, gave him three strokes with her wand, and uttered certain words at every stroke; and lo! the whole mortal frame of Croudy was in five seconds changed into that of a huge bristly boar! The transformation was brought about so suddenly, and Mumps was so much engaged, that he never once noticed in the slightest degree till all was over and the lady had withdrawn. Let any man judge of the honest colly's astonishment when, instead of his master, he beheld the boar standing hanging his ears and shaking his head at him. He betook himself to immediate flight, and ran towards the house faster than ever he ran in his life, yelping all the way for perfect fright. Croudy was very little better himself. At first he supposed that he was in a dream, and stood a long time considering of it, in hopes the phantasy would go off; but on seeing the consternation of Mumps, he looked first to the one side and then to the other, and perceiving his great bristly sides and limbs he was seized with indescribable terror, and fled at full speed. It is well known what a ridiculous figure a hog makes at any time when frightened, and exerting itself to escape from the supposed danger; there is not anything so much calculated to make one laugh—his stupid apprehension of some approaching mischief, the way that he fixes his head and listens, gives a grunt like the crack of a musket, and breaks away again. Every one who has witnessed such a scene will acknowledge that it is a masterpiece of the ludicrous. Consider, then, what it would be to see one in such a fright as this poor beast was, and trying to escape from himself, running grunting over hill and dale, hanging out his tongue with fatigue, and always carrying the object of his terror along with him. It was an ineffectual exertion of mind to escape from matter; for though Croudy's form and nature were changed, he still retained the small and crude particles of the reasoning principle which he had before. All feelings else were, however, for the present swallowed up in utter dismay, and he ran on without any definitive aim, further than a kind of propensity to run to the end of the world. He did not run a great way for all that, for he lost his breath in a very short time; but even in that short time he run himself into a most imminent danger.

Squire Fisher of Dernaway Tower had a large herd of cows. They were all standing in the loan, as the milking green is called in that country, and the maidens were engaged in milking them, singing the while in full chorus (and a sweet and enlivening chorus it was, for the evening was mild and serene), when down comes this unearthly boar into the loan, all fatigued as he was, gaping and running on without stop or stay. The kine soon perceived that there was something superhuman about the creature—for even the most dull of animals have much quicker perceptions than mankind in these matters—and in one moment they broke all to the gate as they had been mad, overturning the milk, maidens, and altogether. The boar ran on; so did the kine, cocking their heads and roaring in terror, as if every one of them had been bewitched, or possessed by some evil spirit. It was a most dismal scene! The girls went home with the rueful tidings that a mad boar had come into the loan and bitten the whole herd, which was all run off mad, along with the furious and dreadful animal. The dogs were instantly closed in for fear of further danger to the country, and all the men of the village armed themselves, and sallied out to surround and destroy this outrageous monster.

It chanced, however, that the boar in his progress ran into a large field of strong standing corn, which so impeded his course that he fell down breathless, and quite exhausted; and thus he lay stretched at full length panting in a furrow, while all the men of the country were running round and round him, every one with a sword, spear, or fork ready to run into his body.

Croudy, or the boar, as it is now more proper to designate him, got here some time to reflect. He found that he was transformed by witchcraft or enchantment; and as he had never looked up from under his plaid during the moments of his trans-

formation, he conceived it to have been the beautiful and wicked Pery that had wrought this woeful change upon him, therefore he had no hopes of regaining his former shape save in her returning pity and compassion; and he had strong hopes that she would ere long relent, as he had never wilfully done her any ill. Pery knew nothing about the matter, but actually went up with a heart as light as a feather to have some sport with Croudy at the Old Thorn; and when she found that he was not there she laughed and went home again, saying to herself that she knew he durst not stand such an encounter.

The poor boar arose from his furrow in the midst of the field of corn as soon as it was daylight next morning, and with a heavy and forlorn heart went away back to the old Moss Thorn, in hopes that the cruel Pery would seek him there and undo the enchantment. When he came, he discovered honest Mumps lying on the very spot where he had last seen his master in his natural shape. He had sought it again overnight, notwithstanding the horrible fright that he had got, for he knew not where else to find his master; and stupid as he was, yet, like all the rest of his species, he lived only in his master's eye. He was somewhat alarmed when he saw the boar coming slowly toward him, and began first to look over the one shoulder and then over the other, as if meditating an escape; but seeing that it came grunting in such a peaceable and friendly manner, Mumps ventured to await the issue, and by the time the monster approached within twenty paces of him this faithful animal went cowering away to meet him, prostrated himself at the boar's feet, and showed every symptom of obedience and affection. The boar in return patted him with his cloven hoof and stroked him with his bristly cheek. Matters were soon made up; thenceforward they were inseparable.

The boar lay all that day about the Moss Thorn, and Mumps lay in his bosom, but no pitying damsel, witch, or fairy came near him. He grew extremely hungry in the evening, and was deeply distressed what to do for food, for he pitied Mumps more than himself. At length he tried to plough up the earth with his nose, as he remembered of having seen swine do before, but at that he made small progress, doing it very awkwardly, and with great pain to his face. Moreover, for all his exertion he found nothing to eat save one or two moss-corns and a ground walnut, with which he was obliged to content himself; and for his canine friend there was nothing at all.

Next morning he saw his neighbour servants seeking for him and calling his name, but he could make them no answer save by long and mournful sounds between a grunt and groan. He drew near to several of them, but they regarded him in no other light than as a boar belonging to some one in the neighbourhood straying in the fields. His case was most deplorable; but as he still conceived there was one who knew his situation well, he determined to seek her. He went down to Eildon Hall with the faithful Mumps walking close by his side—tried to work his way into the laundry, but being repulsed he waited with patience about the doors for an opportunity to present himself before Pery. She came out at length, and went away singing to the well. The boar followed, uttering the most melancholy sounds that ever issued from the chest of distressed animal. Pery could not help noticing him a little. "What strange animal can this be?" said she to herself; but perceiving that Mumps too was following her, her attention was soon directed solely to him.

"Alas, poor Mumps," said she, "you are famishing. What can be become of your master!"

The boar laid his ungraceful foot softly on that of Pery, looked ruefully in her face, and uttered a most melancholy sound; as much as to say, "You know well what is become of him! Have you no pity nor remorse in your heart?"

It was impossible Pery could comprehend this. She judged, like others, that the animal had strayed from home, and was complaining to her for food. She looked at him, and thought him a very docile and valuable swine, and one that would soon be ready for the knife. He was astonished at her apparent indifference, as well as moved with grief and vengeance, seeing the abject state to which she had reduced him; and in his heart he cursed the whole sex, deeming them all imps of Satan, witches, and enchantresses, each one. He followed her back to the house.

"Come in, Mumps," said she, "and you shall have your breakfast for the sake of him you belonged to, whatever is become of him, poor fellow!"

The boar ran forward, and kneeled at her feet moaning, on which she kicked him, and drove him away, saying, "What does the vile beast want with me? Mumps, come you in and get some meat, honest brute."

Mumps would not come in, but when the boar was expelled, turned back with him, looking very sullen. She brought him out a bicker of cold parritch mixed with milk, but he would not taste them until the boar had first taken his share; after which they went and lay down in the yard together, the dog in the boar's bosom. Thus did they continue for many days. At length the master of Eildon had the boar cried at the church-door, and at the cross of Melrose, and as no one appeared to claim him, he put him up for slaughter.

CHAPTER III.

But to return from this necessary digression.—The king and his nobles had a banquet in the Abbey that night on which Croudy was changed. The king appeared thoughtful and absent during the whole of

the evening; and at mass, it was observed that he was more fervent in his devotions than he was wont to be. The words of the old mysterious stranger—his sudden disappearance—the rumour of fairies and witchcrafts that were abroad, together with another vision which he had seen, but not yet disclosed, preyed upon his mind, as it was little wonder they should, and made him apprehend that every step he took was on enchanted ground. The hound Mooly had slipped into the banquet-hall at the time of vespers, and neither soothing, threatening, nor the lash, would drive her thence. She clung to the king's foot until he took pity on her, and said, "Cease, and let the poor animal stay, since she insists on it. I will not have her maltreated for the fault of those who have the charge of her, and should have put her better up." So Mooly got leave to remain, and kept her station the whole night without moving.

The glass circulated until a late hour. At length the king said, "My lords, I crave a cup full to the brim, which I mean to dedicate to the health of a lady, whom I think I saw yesterday morning; the mentioning of whose name will a little astonish you."

"My royal son and sire," said the abbot, "for your majesty is both, in the general acceptation of the terms, shall it not be of your far-famed Malmsey that you will drink this beloved toast?"

"If you so please," said his majesty.

"Ralpho," said the abbot, "here is the key. You alone know where the portion of old Malmsey is to be found among his majesty's stores here deposited; bring one bottle only to his majesty, and pour it carefully yourself."

Ralpho obeyed; poured out the wine till the cup was full, and turned the remainder into a sewer. The king then arose, and lifting his cup on high—"My lords," said he, "I give you the fairest, the loveliest, and the most angelic maid that ever Scotland bred. I give you Ellen of Rosline."

Every one started at the name till the wine was spilled all around the table. Astonishment was in every look, for the king had said he saw her yesterday at morn. "To the bottom," cried the king.

Every one drank off his cup with avidity, anxious to hear the explanation. The king kept the position in which he stood until he saw every cup drained, and then brought his slowly and gracefully to his lips, with the intention of emptying it at one draught. But the moment that it reached them, Mooly sprung up, snatched the cup and wine out of his hand, and threw them on the floor.

"Strike the animal dead," cried one.

"Kick her out of the hall," said another.

"Take her out and let her be hung up," cried a third.

Mooly cowered at her royal master's feet, as if begging pardon, or begging to remain.

"Let her alone," said the king; "let us see what the beast means, and if she persists in the outrage."

He filled his cup of the wine before him, and brought it slowly to his head in the same manner as he did before. He even took it away and brought it back several times, in order to see if she would be provoked to do the like again. But no! Mooly appeared perfectly satisfied, and suffered her master to drink it off piece-meal. A certain consternation reigned in the royal apartment for some time; sharp arguments followed; and, in the meantime, Angus and the abbot were heard whispering apart, and the one said, "It must be accomplished this night, or abandoned for ever."

The nobles again took their seats, and the king appeared as formerly to be growing thoughtful and dejected.

"Pray cheer up your heart and be merry, my liege," said Douglas, "and let not the casual frolic of a pampered animal tend to cast down your majesty's spirits. Your majesty has not yet drank the extraordinary toast you proposed."

"But that I shall do presently," said the king.

"Ay," said the abbot, "and your majesty shall do it too in the wine of which I have heard your majesty so much approve. Fetch another bottle, Ralpho."

Ralpho brought it. "I will pour for myself," said the king; and taking the bottle, he poured about one-half of it into his cup; again named the name of Ellen of Rosline with rapturous enthusiasm, and again as he put the cup to his lips, Mooly sprung up, snatched the cup from his hand, and dashed it on the floor more furiously than before, and then cowered at her master's feet as if begging not to be struck.

"There is something more than ordinary in this," said the king, "and I will have it investigated instantly."

"There is nothing in it at all," said the abbot. "Pardon me, sire; but it is a fault in your majesty, for which I have grieved, and often done penance myself. You are, and have always been a visionary, and nothing will ever wean you from it. You make idols of these two animals; they have sometime been taught a number of pranks, and for one of these would you augur aught against the monastery, your nobles, or your majesty's own peace of mind?"

"Are you certain that is the genuine old Malmsey wine, Ralpho?" said the king.

"I am certain, sire, it is the wine that was shown to me as such."

The king poured out the remainder that was in the bottle. "Drink thou that, Ralpho," said he, "and tell me if it be really and truly the genuine Malmsey."

Ralpho thanked his majesty, bowed, and drank off the cup without hesitation.

"Is it genuine, Ralpho?"

"I don't know, your majesty; I think it tastes a little of the earth."

The circle laughed at Ralpho's remark; and the

conversation began again to grow general, when, some time thereafter, Ralpho, who was bustling about, sat down in a languid and sickly posture on one of the window seats. They looked at him, and saw that his face was becoming black.

"What is the matter, Ralpho?" said one.

"I do not know what is the matter with me," returned he; "I think I feel as if that wine were not like to agree with my stomach."

He fell into immediate convulsions, and in ten minutes he was lying a swollen and disfigured corpse.

Douglas was the first to cry out *treason*. He bolted the door, and stood inside with his sword drawn, vowing that he would search the soul of every traitor in the room. Angus's great power made the other lords to stand in awe of him; although it was obvious to them all, that he was at least as likely to have a hand in this as any other. Hume charged him boldly to his face with it, and made proffer to abide by the proof; but he pretended to receive the charge only with scorn and derision, as one which no reasonable man could suppose. The king was greatly affected, and, upon the whole, showed rather more apprehension on account of his personal safety, than was perhaps becoming in a sovereign. He cried out that "they were all of them traitors! and that he would rather be at the head of a band of moss-troopers, than be thus condemned to have such a set about him whom he could not trust."

After some expostulation he acquitted the Earl of Angus, more, it was thought, through fear, than conviction of his innocence; but from an inference, the most natural in the world, he fixed the blame on the abbot.

"My liege," said the reverend father, "I know no more how this has happened than the child that is unborn. There can be no doubt but that, instigated by some of your majesty's enemies, the wretch Ralpho has mixed the poison himself, and has met with the fate he justly deserved."

"No!" replied the king. "If that had been the case, he would not have been so ready in participating of the draught. I will not believe but that there is a combination among you to take my life."

Every one protested his innocence more strenuously than another.

The abbot was seized; and said, in his justification, "That he would show his majesty the set of wine from which he had ordered Ralpho to bring it, and he was willing to drink a share of any bottle of it that they chose;" which he did.

But this did not convince the king. He sent off privately a messenger to assemble the Border chiefs, and bring them to his rescue—took his two favourite hounds with him into his chamber, placed a strong guard, counted his beads, and retired to rest.

Every means were tried next day by the nobles to dispel his majesty's fears, and regain his confidence; and as nothing decisive could be produced against any one, they succeeded in some degree. New perplexities, however, continued to waylay him, for he was throughout his whole life the prey of witches and evil spirits; and though he wreaked due vengeance on many, they still continued to harass him the more.

After high mass he had retired to his chamber to meditate, when the nobleman in waiting came in, and said that a stranger wanted to speak with him on some urgent business. He was introduced, and any one may judge of the king's astonishment, when he saw that it was the identical old man, who had spoken to him on the mountain, and vanished, the day before. The king's lip grew pale, and quivered as the stranger made his obeisance.

"Thou herald of danger, treason, and confusion, what seekest thou again with me?" said the king.

"I come, my liege," said he, "to seek redress for the injured, and justice on the offenders. Your two favourite hounds came last night to the houses of two widows in Newstead, and have carried off their two children from their bosoms, which they have doubtlessly devoured, as no traces of them can be found."

"Thou art a liar!" said the king, "and an inventor of lies, if not the father of them; for these two dogs were locked up with me in my chamber last night, and a guard placed on the door, so that what you aver is impossible."

"I declare to your majesty," said the stranger, "by the truth of that right hand, that I myself saw the two hounds at liberty this morning at daylight. I saw them come along the Monk's Meadow, carrying something across on their necks."

"It is easy to prove the falsehood of all that thou hast said," replied the king; "and thy malicious intent shall not go unpunished."

He then called in the guards, and bade them declare before that audacious stranger, if his two white hounds, Mooly and Scratch, were not in his chamber all the night. The guards were mute, and looked one to another.

"Why are you ashamed to declare the truth!" said the king to them. "Say, were the two hounds in my chamber all night, or were they not?"

The men answered "that the hounds were certainly out. How it came they knew not, but that they were let in in the morning."

"There is a conspiracy among you again," said the king; "if not to deprive your king of life, to deprive that life of every kind of quiet and social comfort."

"I demand justice," said the stranger, "in the names of two weeping and distracted mothers! In the name of all that is right and held dear among men, I demand that these two obnoxious and devouring animals be hung upon a tree, or burned alive before the sun go down. Then shall the men of Scotland see that their sovereign respects their

feelings and privileges, even though they run counter to his own pleasures."

"One of these dogs saved my life last night," said the king; "and it is very hard indeed that I should be compelled to do this. I will have better testimony; and if I find that these children have actually been devoured (as most unlikely it is), the depredators shall be punished."

The old man bowed, and was preparing to reply, when the knight in waiting entered hastily, and told the king that there was a woman in the outer court, crying bitterly for justice, and who was very urgent to speak with him. The king ordered that she should be admitted, and in a moment she stood before him, pale, shrivelled, haggard, and wild, and altogether such a figure as one scarcely can see, or could see, without the impression that she was scarce earthly. Her appearance was that of a lady of quality, of great age; she had large ear-rings, a tremendous ruff, a head-dress of a thousand intricate flutings, projecting before and tapering upward behind, cork-heeled shoes, a low hoop, and a waist of length and stiffness not to be described.

"Revenge! revenge! my lord, O king!" cried she. "I crave justice of your majesty—justice, and nothing more. You have two hounds, that came into my house early this morning, and have devoured, or taken away my only daughter, my sole stay and hope in this world, and nothing is left but a part of her garments. These dogs have some power deputed to them that is not of thy giving, therefore grant me that I may see vengeance done upon them, and their bodies burned at a stake before the going down of the sun."

"That is a true and worthy gentlewoman, my liege," said the old stranger; "and you may take her word for whatever she advances."

The ancient dame turned about, stared on the stranger with wild astonishment, dropped a low courtesy, and then said, "I crave your pardon, my lord and master. I noted not that you were so nigh. I hope your errand here coincides with mine."

"It does," said he; "there are more sufferers than one; and by the head that bows to thee!—I swear by none greater—we shall have justice if it be in the land!"

"This is a combination," said the king; "I pay no regard to it. Bring witnesses to establish your charges, and you shall have justice done."

They went forth to bring their proof, and behold they had them all in the outer court. In the meantime the king sent for some men of the place to come, and made inquiry of them who the old dame was, and what was the character that she bore. They informed him that she was a noted witch, and kept the whole country in terror and turmoil, and that she had indeed an only daughter, who was an impious and malevolent minx, devoted to every species of wickedness.

"The wrinkled beldame shall be burned at the stake," said the king. "It is proper that the land should be cleansed of these disturbers of its peace; as for that old stranger, I have my own surmises concerning him, and we shall find a way to deal with his subtilty."

He then sent for a reverend old friar of the name of Rubely, who was well versed in all the minutiæ of diablery and exorcism, whose skill had often been beneficial to the king in the trying and intricate parts of his duty that related to these matters, and with him he conferred on this important subject. Father Rubely desired the king to defer the further examination of these people for a very little while; and, in the meantime, he brought in a basin of holy water, consecrated seven times, and set apart for sacred uses, after which the examination went on, and a curious one it was. The old witch lady deposed, "That as she was lying pondering on her bed, and wide awake, about the dawn of the morning, she heard a curious and uncommon noise somewhere about the house: that rising, she went out silently to discover what it could be, and to her utter astonishment, beheld the king's two hounds, Mooly and Scratch, spring from her daughter's casement, and in a short space a beautiful roe-deer followed them and bounded away to the Eildons: that she hasted to her daughter's apartment, and found that her darling was gone." The stories of the other two were exactly similar to one another, only that the one blamed one hound, and the other the other. It was as follows: "I was lying awake in the morning very early, with my son in my arms, when one of the king's hounds came into my house. I saw it, and wist not how it had got there. A short time after I heard it making a strange scraping and noise in the other end of the house, on which I arose to turn it out; but on going to the place from whence the sound seemed to come, I found nothing. I searched all the house, and called the hound by her name, but still could find nothing; and at last I lighted a candle and sought all the house over again without being able to discover any traces of her. I went back to return to my bed, wondering greatly what had become of the animal; but having opened the door before to let her make her escape, I conceived that she had stolen off without my having perceived it. At that very instant, however, I beheld her coming softly out of the bed where I had left my child, and in a moment she was out at the door and away. I ran to the bed with the light in my hand, but my dear child was gone, and no part, not even a palm of his hand, remaining!"

Ques. "Was there any blood in the bed, or any symptoms of the child having been devoured?"

A. "No; I could discover none."

Q. "Did the hound appear to have anything carrying in her mouth, or otherwise, when she escaped from the house?"

A. "No; I did not notice that she had anything."

Q. "Was there anything else in the house at the time; any other appearance that you could not account for?"

A. "Yes; there was something like a leveret followed her out at the door, but I paid no regard to it."

Q. "Was the child baptized in a Christian church?" (No answer.)

A. "Were you yourself ever baptized in a Christian church?" (No answer.)

Q. "Why do you not answer to these things?"

A. "Because I see no connection that they have with the matter in question."

"None in the least," said the old stranger, who still kept by their side.

When the king heard that the answers of the two women were so exactly similar, though the one was examined before the other was brought in, he said, "This is some infernal combination; they are all of them witches, and their friend there is some warlock or wizard, and they shall all be burned at the stake together before the going down of the sun."

"It is a judgment worthy of such a monarch," said the stranger.

"Father Rubely," said the king, "you who know all the men in this part of my dominions, do you know anything of this old man, who refuseth to give account of himself?"

"I have often seen the face," said Rubely, "but I cannot tell at present from whence he is; but have patience, my lord, O king, and let us not destroy the reclaimable with those of whom there is no hope." Then going near to the first woman who had lost her son, he said to her, "It is better to do well late than never—are you content to be baptized even now?"

The woman bowed consent. He put the same question to the other, who bowed likewise. The old man stood close by their side, and appeared to be in great trouble and wrath. Rubely brought his goblet of consecrated water, and, as he passed, he threw a portion of it on the wrinkled face of the old man, pronouncing, at the same time, the sacred words of baptism. The whole form and visage of the creature was changed in a moment to that of a furious fiend: He uttered a yell that made all the Abbey shake to its foundations, and forthwith darted away into the air, wrapt in flame; and, as he ascended, he heaved his right hand, and shook his fiery locks at his inquisitors. The old withered beldame yelped forth hysteric gigglings, something between laughing and shrieks, the king fell on his knees, clasped the rood and kissed it, the two women trembled, and even old Rubely counted his beads, and stood for a short space in mute astonishment. He next proposed trying the same experiment with the old witch lady, but she resisted it so furiously, with cursing and blasphemy, that they abandoned her to her fate, and had her burned at St. Miles's Cross before the going down of the sun. It was said by some that the old stranger appeared among the crowd to witness her latter end; and that she stretched out her hands towards him, with loud supplications, but he only flouted and mocked at her, and seemed to enjoy the sport with great zest. When Father Rubely heard of this, he said that it would happen so to every one in the hour of their extremity, who sold themselves to be slaves of sin.

The other two women confessed their sins, and received absolution. They acknowledged that they had been acquainted with the stranger for a long season; that he had often pressed them to sign and seal, which they had always declined, but that nevertheless he had such an influence over them, that he in a manner led them as he pleased; that at first they took him for a venerable apostle, but at length discovered that he was a powerful sorcerer, and could turn people into the shapes of such beasts as he pleased, but that they never knew he was the devil till then.

Friar Rubely assured them, that it was only such as slighted church ordinances over whom he was permitted to exert that power, and in this the king passionately acquiesced. They confessed further, that they were still greatly afraid of him, for that he could turn himself into any shape or form he pleased; that he had often tempted them in the form of a beautiful young man; and there was nothing more common with him than to tempt men in the form of a lovely and bewitching woman, by which means he had of late got many of them into his clutches. When the king heard that, he counted his beads with redoubled fervency, and again kissed the rood, for it reminded him of a lovely vision he had seen of late, as well as some things of a former day. The women added, that the stranger had of late complained grievously of two mongrel spirits, who had opposed and counteracted him in every movement; and that they had done it so effectually, that, for every weak Christian that he had overcome and devoured, they had found means to destroy one of his servants, or emissaries, so that his power in the land remained much upon a par as in former times, although his means and exertions had both been increased sevenfold.[1]

A consultation of holy men was next called, and measures adopted for the recovery of the two children. There it was resolved, that prayers should be offered up for them in seven times seven holy chapels and cells at the same instant of time, and the like number of masses said, with all due solemnity; and that then it would be out of the power of all the spirits of the infernal regions—all of them that were permitted to roam the earth, or any of their agents, to detain the children longer, into whatever shape or form they might change them. But for these solemnities some delay was necessary.

[1] From several parts of this traditionary tale it would appear, that it is a floating fragment of some ancient allegorical romance, the drift of which it is not easy to comprehend.

CHAPTER IV.

Great was the consumpt of victuals at the Abbey during the stay of the royal visitor!—the parsimonious brethren were confounded, and judged that the country would to a certainty be eaten up, and a dearth of all the necessaries of life ensue on the Border. When they beheld the immense droves of bullocks—the loads of wild hogs and fallow-deer that arrived daily from the royal forests of Ettrick and the mountains of the Lowes, together with the flocks of fat black-headed wedders—they pressed their hands upon their lank sides, looked at their spare forms, and at one another; but not daring to make any verbal remarks, they only shook their heads, and turned their eyes up to heaven!

Victuals were again wearing short. Gudgel, the fat caterer for that immense establishment, was out riding from morn till even in search of fat things; he delighted in the very sight of a well-fed sleek animal; it was health to his stomach and marrow to his bones. It was observed, that, whenever he came in sight of one, he stroked down his immense protuberance of paunch with both hands, and smacked his lips. He had been out the whole day, and was very hungry; and when hungry, he enjoyed the sight of a fat animal most. Gudgel certainly fed by the eye as well as the mouth; for it was noted, that when he was very hungry, he would have given the yeomen any price for a well-fed beast.

He had been out the whole day—had procured but little stuff, and that not of the first metal—but, on his way home, he heard of a fine well-fed boar at Eildon Hall; so he turned from the road, and alighted to take a look of him. In a little triangular inclosure, at one corner of the yard, there he beheld the notable boar lying at his ease, with Mumps in his bosom. Of the dog he took no notice, but the sight of the boar exhilarated him; he drew in a great mouthful of breath, closed his lips, puffed out his cheeks, and made his two hands descend with a semicircular sweep slowly down over the buttons of his doublet. It is impossible to tell how much the sight of such a carcase delighted Gudgel!—Immoderately fat himself, his eye feasted on everything that was so; he could not even pass by a corpulent man, nor a pampered overgrown matron, without fixing a keen glance upon them, as if calculating exactly, or to a nearness, how much they would weigh.

"O gracious heaven! what a fine hog! Goodman Fletcher, could you think of putting such a delicious morsel as that by your masters? For shame, goodman, not to let me know before this time of such a prize as this!—The very thing!—No words: the hog is mine. Name your price—good security, Goodman Fletcher—a king and a priest—I am so glad I have found him—I'll have him slaughtered, and cut neatly up, as I shall direct, before I leave the house."

A piece of sad news this for the poor boar! (Croudy the shepherd, that once was.) When Gudgel pronounced the last sentence, the animal sprung to his feet, gave a great snuff, and grunted out a moan that would have pierced any heart but Gudgel's. "St. Elijah!" said he, "what a fine animal!" and gave him a lash with his whip as he rose. Mumps snarled, and tried to bite the voluptuary in return for the unprovoked attack on his master.

Precisely about the same time that Gudgel alighted at Eildon Hall, the two lovely and mysterious sisters met at their accustomed place in the Abbey Walk, for it chanced to be the few minutes of their appearance in mortal frame. Their eyes had still the wild unearthly dash of sublimity in them; and human gaze could not scan to which state of existence they pertained, but their mien was more beautiful and serene than when they last met.

"I give you joy, dear sister," said the one, "of our happy release! Our adversary is baffled and driven from his usurped habitation—our woeful work of annihilation will henceforth cease, for the evil principle shall not, as we dreaded, prevail in this little world of man, in which we have received for a time a willing charge. Say what more is to be done before we leave these green hills and the Eildon tree."

"Much is yet to be done, my beloved Ellen," answered the other. "As I was this day traversing the air in the form of a wild swan, I saw the Borderers coming down in full array, with a chieftain of most undaunted might at their head. We must find means to warn the haughty Douglas, else they will cut his whole retinue to pieces; and the protector of the faithful must not fall into the hands of such men as these."

The two lovely sisters, as she spoke this, held each other by the hand; their angelic forms were bent gently forward, and their faces toward the ground; but as they lifted these with a soft movement towards heaven, a tear was glistening in each eye. Whether these had their source from the fountain of human feelings, or from one more sublimed and pure, no man can determine.

"And then what is to become of the two little changelings?" said the last speaker. "All the spells of priests and friars will avail nought without our aid.—And the wild roe-deer?—And the boar of Eildon? He, I suppose, may take his fate—he is not worthy our care further. A selfish grovelling thing, that had much more of the brute than the man (as he should be) at first—without one principle of the heart that is worthy of preservation."

"You are ever inclined to be severe," said the other. "If you but saw the guise in which he is lying with his faithful dog, I think your heart would be moved to pity."

"If I thought there was one spark of the heavenly principle of gratitude in his heart, even to his dog," said she, "I would again renovate his frame to that image which he degraded; but I do not believe it. —Mere selfishness, because he cannot live without his dog."

"Here is Philany's rod," answered the other, "go, and reconnoitre for yourself, and as you feel so act."

She took the golden wand, and went away toward Eildon Hall; but her motion over the fields was like a thing sailing on the wind. The other glided away into the beechen grove, for there were voices heard approaching.

"Let us proceed to business, Goodman Fletcher," said Gudgel. "I insist on seeing that fine animal properly slaughtered, blooded, and cut up, before I go away. I have a man who will do it in the nicest style you ever beheld." The boar looked pitifully to Gudgel, and moaned so loud that Mumps fell a howling. "And I'll tell you what we'll do," continued Gudgel; "we'll have his kidneys roasted on a brander laid on the coals, and a steak cut from the inside of the shoulder. How delicious they will be! Pooh! I wish they were ready just now—but we'll not be long; and we'll have a bottle of your March beer to accompany them. Eh? Your charge may well afford that goodman—eh?"

The boar made a most determined resistance; and it was not till after he was quite spent, and more hands had been procured, that he was dragged at last forcibly to the slaughter-house, and laid upon the killing-stool, with ropes tied round his legs; these they were afraid were scarcely strong enough, and, at the request of the butcher, Pery lent her garters to strengthen the tie. Never was there a poor beast in such circumstances! He screamed so incessantly that he even made matters worse. His very heart was like to break when he saw Pery lend her garters to assist in binding him. Mumps was very sorry too; he whined and whimpered, and kissed his braying friend.

The noise became so rending to the ears, that all who were present retired for a little, until the monster should be silenced. The butcher came up with his bleeding-knife, in shape like an Andrea Ferrara, and fully half as long—felt for the boar's jugular vein, and then tried the edge and point of his knife against his nail—"He has a hide like the sole of a shoe," said the butcher; "I must take care and sort him neatly." And so saying he went round the corner of the house to give his knife a whet on the grinding-stone.

At that very instant the beautiful angelic nymph with the golden rod came into the court-yard at Eildon Hall, and hearing the outrageous cries in the slaughter-house, she looked in as she was passing, that being the outermost house in the square. There she beheld the woeful plight of the poor boar, and could not help smiling; but when she saw honest Mumps standing wagging his tail, with his cheek pressed to that of the struggling, panting victim, and always now and then gently kissing him, her heart was melted with pity. The dog cast the most beseeching look at her as she approached, which when she saw her resolution was fixed. She gave the monster three strokes with her wand, at each of which he uttered a loud squeak; but when these were done, and some mystic words of powerful charm uttered, in half a quarter of a minute there lay—no bristly boar—but the identical Croudy the shepherd! in the same garb as when transformed at the Moss Thorn; only that his hands and feet were bound with straw ropes, strengthened and secured by the cruel Pery's red garters.

"Bless me an' my horn!" said Croudy, as he raised up his head from the spokes of the killing-stool; "I believe I'm turned mysel again!—I wad like to ken wha the bonny queen is that has done this; but I'm sair mista'en gin I didna see the queen o' the fairies jink by the corner. I wonder gin the bloody hash will persist in killing me now. I'm feared Gudgel winna can pit aff wantin' his pork steaks. May Saint Anthony be my shield, gin I didna think I fand my ears birstling on a brander!"

The butcher came back, singing to himself the following verse, to the tune of "Tibby Fowler," which augured not well for Croudy:—

"Beef steaks and bacon hams
I can eat as lang's I'm able;
Cutlets, chops, or mutton pies,
Pork's the king of a' the table."

As he sung this he was still examining the edge of his knife, so that he came close to his intended victim, without once observing the change that had taken place.

"Gude e'en t'ye, neighbour," said Croudy.

The butcher made an involuntary convulsive spring, as if a thunderbolt had struck him and knocked him away about six yards at one stroke. There he stood and stared at what he now saw lying bound with the ropes and garters, and the dog still standing by. The knife fell out of his hand—his jaws fell down on his breast, and his eyes rolled in their sockets.—"Mercy, heaven!" cried the butcher, as loud as he could roar, and ran through the yard, never letting one bellow abide another.

The servants met him, asking what was the matter—"Was he cut? Had he sticked or wounded himself?"

He regarded none of their questions; but dashing them aside, ran on, uttering the same passionate ejaculation with all the power that the extreme of horror could give to such a voice. Gudgel beheld him from a window, and meeting him in the entry to the house, he knocked him down. "I'll make you stop, you scoundrel," said he, "and tell me what all this affray means."

"Oh, sir! the boar—the boar!" exclaimed the

butcher, as he raised himself with one arm from the ground, and defended his head with the other.

"The boar, you blockhead!" said Gudgel—"what of the boar? Is he not like to turn well out?"

"He turns out to be the devil, sir—gang an' see, gang an' see," said the butcher.

Gudgel gave him another rap with his stick, swearing that they would not get their brandered kidneys, and pork steak from the inside of the shoulder, in any reasonable time, by the madness and absurdity of that fellow, and waddled away to the slaughter-house as fast as his posts of legs would carry him. When he came there, and found a booby of a clown lying bound on the killing-stool, instead of his highly esteemed hog, he was utterly confounded, and wist not what to say, or how to express himself. He was in a monstrous rage, but he knew not on whom to vent it, his greasy wits being so completely bemired, that they were incapable of moving, turning, or comprehending anything further than a grievous sensation of a want not likely to be supplied by the delicious roasted kidneys, and pork steak from the inside of the shoulder. He turned twice round, puffing and gasping for breath, and always apparently looking for something he supposed he had lost, but as yet never uttering a distinct word.

The rest of the people were soon all around him—the goodman, Pery, Gale, and the whole household of Eildon Hall were there, all standing gaping with dismay, and only detained from precipitate flight by the presence of one another. The defrauded Gudgel first found expression; "Where is my hog, you scoundrel?" cried he, in a tone of rage and despair.

"Ye see a' that's to the fore o' him," said Croudy.

"I say, where is my hog, you abominable caitiff? You miserable wretch! you ugly whelp of a beast! tell me what you have made of my precious hog?"

"Me made o' him!" said Croudy. "I made naething o' him; but some ane, ye see, has made a man o' him. It was nae swine, but me. I tell ye, that ye see here a' that's to the fore o' him."

"Oh! oh!" groaned Gudgel, and he stroked down his immense flanks three or four times, every one time harder than the last. "Pooh! so then I am cheated, and betrayed, and deceived; and I shall have nothing to eat! nothing to eat! nothing to eat! Goodman Fletcher, you shall answer for this; and you, friend beast, or swine, or warlock, or whatever you may be, shall not 'scape for nought;" and so saying, he began to belabour Croudy with his staff, who cried out lustily, and it was remarked somewhat in the same style and tenor, too, as he exhibited lately in a different capacity.

The rest of the people restrained the disappointed glutton from putting an end to the poor clown, and notwithstanding that appearances were strangely against him, yet, so well were they accustomed to Croudy's innocent and stupid face, that they loosed him with trembling hands, Pery being as active in the work as any, untying her red garters. "I know the very knots," said she. "No one can tie them but myself."

"By the rood, my woman! gin I were but up, I'll *knot* you weel enouch," said Croudy, and if he had not been withheld by main force, he would have torn out her hair and eyes. He, however, accused her of being a witch, and took witnesses on it, and said he would make oath that she had changed him into a boar on such an evening at the Moss Thorn.

Pery only laughed at the accusation, but all the rest saw it in a different light. They all saw plainly that Croudy had been metamorphosed for a time by some power of witchcraft or enchantment; they remembered how Mumps had still continued to recognize and acknowledge him in that degraded state; and hearing, as they did, his bold accusal of Pery, they all judged that it would stand very hard with her.

When Gudgel had learned all this, he seized the first opportunity of taking Pery aside, and proposed to her, for the sake of her own preservation, instantly to change the clown again; "And, as it is all one to you," said he, "suppose you make him a little fatter; if you do so, I shall keep your secret; if you do not, you may stand by the consequences."

Pery bade him "look to himself—keep the secret, or not keep it, as he chose; there were some others, who should be nameless, that were as well worth changing as Croudy."

Gudgel's peril appeared to him now so obvious, and the consequences so horrible, that his whole frame became paralyzed from head to foot. In proportion to his delight in killing and eating the fat things of the earth, did his mind revolt at being killed and eaten himself; and when he thought of what he had just witnessed, he little wist how soon it might be his fate. He rode away from Eildon Hall a great deal more hungry and more miserable than he came. The tale, however, soon spread with many aggravations, and the ill-starred Pery was taken up for a witch, examined, and committed to prison in order to stand her trial, and in the meantime the evidences against her were collected.

CHAPTER V.

As the beautiful fairy-dame, or guardian spirit, or whatever she was, had predicted, so it came to pass. The Borderers, alarmed at the danger of the king, came down a thousand strong, thinking to surprise Douglas, and take their monarch out of his hands by force; and they would have effected it with ease, had not the earl received some secret intelligence of

their design. No one ever knew whence he had this intelligence, nor could he comprehend or explain it himself, but it had the effect of defeating the bold and heroic attempt. They found him fully prepared; a desperate battle ensued; 120 men were left dead on the field—and then things remained precisely in the same state as they had been before.

The court left Melrose shortly after. The king felt as if he stood on uncertain ground—a sort of mystery always hung around him, which he never could develope; but ere he went, he presided at the trial of the maiden Pery, who stood indicted, as the *Choronikkle of Mailros* bears, for being, "Ane ranke wytche and enchaunteresse, and leigged hand and kneife with the devil."

A secret examination of the parties first took place, and the proof was so strong against the hapless Pery, that all hopes of escape vanished. There was Croudy ready to make oath to the truth of all that he had advanced with regard to his transmutation, and there were others who had seen her coming down from the Moss Thorn at the very time that Croudy appeared to have been changed, just before he made his dashing entry into the loan among the cows; and even old Father Rubely had, after minute investigation, discovered the witch-mark, both on her neck and thumb-nail. The king would gladly have saved her, when he beheld her youth and beauty, but he had sworn to rid the country of witches, and no excuse could be found. All the people of the country were sorry on account of Pery, but all believed her guilty, and avoided her, except Gale, who, having had the courage to visit her, tried her with the repetition of prayers and creeds, and found that she not only said them without hesitation, but with great devotional warmth; therefore he became convinced that she was not a witch. She told him her tale with such simplicity that he could not disbelieve it, and withal confessed that her inquisitors had very nearly convinced herself that she was a witch, and that she was on the point of making a confession that had not the slightest foundation in truth. The shepherd was more enlightened than the worthy clergyman, and accounted for this phenomenon in a truly philosophical way. Pery assented, for whatever Gale said sounded to her heart as the sweetest and most sensible thing that ever was said. She loved him to distraction, and adversity had subtilized, not abated the flame. Gale found his heart interested; he pitied her, and pity is allied to love. How to account for the transformation of Croudy both were completely at a loss; but they agreed that it was the age of witchery, and no one could say what might happen! Gale was never from the poor culprit's side. He condoled with her, wept over her, and even took her in his arms, and impressed a tender kiss on her pale lips. It was the happiest moment of Pery's existence! She declared that since she was pure in his eyes, she would not only suffer without repining, but with delight.

As a last resource, Gale sought out Croudy, and tried to work upon him to give a different evidence at the last and final trial, but for all that he could say, Croudy remained obstinately bent on her destruction.

"It's needless for ye to waste your wind clatterin' English, man," said Croudy, "for foul fa' my gab gin I say ony sic word. She didna only change me intil an ill-faurd he-sow, but guidit me shamefully ill a' the time I was a gussie—kickit me wi' her fit, an' yerkit me wi' a rung till I squeeled, and then leuch at me. An' warst ava, gae the butcher her gairtens to bind me, that he might get me bled, an' plottit, an' made into beef-steaks—deil be on her gin I be nae about wi' her now!"

Gale, hoping that he would relent if he saw her woeful plight, besought him to go and see her; but this he absolutely refused, for fear lest she should "turn him into some daft-like beast," as he expressed it. "Let her tak it," said he, "she weel deserves a' that she's gaun to get—the sooner she gets a fry the better. Od, there's naebody sure o' himsel a minute that's near her—I never gang ower the door but I think I'll come in a gussie or a cuddy-ass. How wad ye like to gang plowin up the gittars for worms and dockan-roots wi' your nose, as I did!"

It was in vain that Gale assured him of her innocence, and told him how religious she was, and how well she loved him. Croudy remained obstinate.

"I wadna gie a boddle," said he, "for a woman's religion, nor for her love neither—mere traps for moudiworts. They may gar a fool like you trow that ae thing's twa, an' his lug half a bannock. Gin I wad rue an' save her life, it wadna be lang till I saw her carrying you out like a taed in the erntings, an' throwing ye ower the ause-midden."

Gale asked if he would save her, if she would pledge herself to marry him, and love him for ever!

"Me marry a witch!" said Croudy. "A bonny hand she would make o' me, sooth! Whenever I displeased her, turn me into a beast. But ilka woman has that power," added he with a grin, "an' I fancy few o' them mislippen it. The first kind thought I ever had toward a woman made a beast o' me—an' it will do the same wi' every man as weel as me, gin he wist it. As she has made her bed, she may lie down. I shall fling a sprot to the lowe."

Gale was obliged to give him up, but in the deepest bitterness of soul he gave him his malison, which, he assured him, would not fall to the ground. Pery was tried, and condemned to be strangled and burned at the stake on the following day; and Croudy, instead of relenting, was so much afraid of himself, that he was all impatience until the cruel scene should be acted. His behaviour had, however, been witnessed and detested by some of whom he was not aware; for that very evening, as he was on his way home, he beheld a nymph coming to meet him, whom he took for Pery, dressed in her Sunday

clothes, for one of the mysterious maids had taken her form. He was terrified out of his wits when he beheld her at liberty, and falling flat on his face, he besought her, with a loud voice, to have mercy on him.

"Such as you have bestowed," said she; and giving him three strokes with her wand, he was changed into a strong brindled cat, in which form he remains to this day; and the place of his abode is no secret to the relater of this tale. He hath power one certain night in the year to resume his natural shape, and all the functions of humanity; and that night he dedicates to the relation of the adventures of each preceding year. Many a secret and unsuspected amour, and many a strange domestic scene, hath he witnessed, in his capacity of mouser, through so many generations; and a part of these are now in the hands of a gentleman of this country, who intends making a good use of them.

Poor Pery, having thus fallen a victim to the superstition of the times, she wist not how, was pitied and shunned by all except Gale, whom nothing could tear from her side; and all the last day and night that were destined for her to live, they were clasped in each other's arms. While they were thus conversing in the most tender and affectionate way, Pery told her lover a dream that she had seen the night before. She dreamed, she said, that they were changed into two beautiful birds, and had escaped away into a wild and delightful mountain, where they lived in undecaying happiness and felicity, and fed on the purple blooms of the heath.

"O that some pitying power—some guardian angel over the just and the good, would but do this for us!" said Gale, "and release my dearest Pery from this ignominious death!" and as he said this, he clasped his beloved maiden closer and closer in his arms.

Next morning, before the rising of the sun, two young ladies, beautiful as cherubs, came to the jailer, and asked admittance to the prisoner, by order of the king. The jailer took off his bonnet, bowed his gray head, and opened to them. The two lovers were locked in each other's arms, in a way so endearing, and at the same time so modest, that the two sisters stood for a considerable time bending over them in delightful amazement.

"There is a delicacy and a pathos in this love," said the one, "into which the joys of sense have shed no ingredient. As their innocence of life hath been, so shall it remain;" and kneeling down, she gave three gentle strokes with her small golden rod, touching both with it at a time. The two lovers trembled, and seemed to be in slight convulsions; and in a short time they fluttered round the floor two beautiful moorfowl, light of heart, and elated with joy. The two lovely and mysterious visitors then took them up, wrapt them in their snowy veils, and departed, each of them carrying one; and coming to Saint Michael's Cross, they there dismissed them from their palms, after addressing them severally as follows:—

"Hie thee away, my bonny moor-hen!
Keep to the south of the Skelf-hill Pen;
Blithe be thy heart, and soft thy bed,
Amang the blooms of the heather so red.
When the weird is sped that I must dree,
I'll come and dwell in the wild with thee.
Keep thee afar from the fowler's ken—
Hie thee away, my bonny moor-hen."

"Cock of the mountain, and king of the moor,
A maiden's bennison be thy dower;
For gentle and kind hath been thy life,
Free from malice, and free from strife.
Light be thy heart on the mountain gray,
And loud thy note at the break of day.
When five times fifty years are gone,
I'll seek thee again 'mong the heath alone,
And change thy form, if that age shall prove
An age that virtue and truth can love.
True be thy love, and far thy reign,
On the Border dale, till I see thee again."

When the jailer related what had happened, it may well be conceived what consternation prevailed over the whole country. The two moor-fowl were soon discovered on a wild hill in Teviotdale, where they have remained ever since, until the other year, that Wauchope shot the hen. He suspected what he had done, and was extremely sorry, but kept the secret to himself. On viewing the beauty of the bird, however, he said to himself—"I believe I have liked women as well as any man, but not so well as to eat them; however, I'll play a trick upon some, and see its effect. Accordingly he sent the moor-hen to a friend of his in Edinburgh, at whose table she was divided among a circle of friends, and eaten, on the 20th of October, 1817, and that was the final end of poor Pery, the Maid of Eildon. The effect on these gentlemen has been prodigious—the whole structure of their minds and feelings has undergone a complete change, and that grievously to the worse; and even their outward forms, on a near inspection, appear to be altered considerably This change is so notorious as to have become proverbial all over the New Town of Edinburgh. When any one is in a querulous or peevish humour, they say,—"He has got a wing of Wauchope's moor-hen."

The cock is still alive, and well known to all the sportsmen on the Border, his habitation being on the side of Caret Rigg, which no moor-fowl dares to approach. As the five times fifty years are very nearly expired, it is hoped no gentleman will be so thoughtless as wantonly to destroy this wonderful and mysterious bird, and we may then live to have the history of the hunting, the fowling, fishing, and pastoral employments of that district, with all the changes that have taken place for the last two hundred and fifty years, by an eye-witness of them.

The king returned towards Edinburgh on the 14th of September, and on his way had twelve witches condemned and burned at the cross of Leader, after

which act of duty his conscience became a good deal lightened, and his heart cheered in the ways of goodness; he hoped likewise to be rid of the spells of those emissaries of Satan that had beleaguered him all his life.

After they had passed the Esk, his two favourite white hounds were missing; the huntsmen judged them to be following some track, and waited till night, calling them always now and then aloud by their names. They were however lost, and did not return, nor could they ever be found, although called at every cross in the kingdom, and high rewards offered.

On that very eve Ellen and Clara of Rosline returned to their native halls, after having been lost for seven weeks. They came to the verge of the tall cliff towards the east, from whence they had a view of the stately towers of Rosline, then in their pride of baronial strength. The sun had shed his last ray from the summit of the distant Ochils; the Esk murmured in obscurity far below their feet; its peaceful bendings here and there appeared through the profusion of woodland foliage, uniting the brightness of crystal with the hues of the raven. All the linns and woody banks of the river re-echoed the notes of the feathered choir. To have looked on such a scene, one might have conceived that he dwelt in a world where there was neither sin nor sorrow; but, alas! the imperfections of our nature cling to us; they wind themselves round the fibres of the conscious heart, so that no draught of pure and untainted delight can ever allay its immortal yearnings. How different would such a scene appear to perfect and sinless creatures, whose destiny did not subject them to the terrors of death, and the hideous recesses of the grave! Were it possible for us to conceive that two such beings indeed looked on it, we might form some idea of their feelings, and even these faint ideas would lend a triple grandeur and beauty to such an evening, and indeed to every varied scene of nature on which our eyes chanced to rest.

"Sister," said Clara, "we are again in sight of our native home, and the walks of our days of innocence; say, are our earthly forms and affections to be resumed, or are our bonds with humanity to be broken for ever? You have now witnessed the king of Scotland's private life—all his moods, passions, and affections—are you content to be his queen, and sovereign of the realm?"

"Sooner would I be a worm that crawls among these weeds, than subject myself to the embraces, humours, and caprices of such a thing. A king is a block, and his queen a puppet—happiness, truth, and purity of heart are there unknown. Mention some other tie to nature, or let us bid it adieu for ever without a sigh."

"We have a widowed mother, beautiful, affectionate, and kind."

"That is the only bond with mortality which I find it difficult to break, for it is a wicked and licentious world—snares were laid for us on every side—our innocence was no shield—and, sister, do not you yet tremble to think of the whirlpool of conflicting passions and follies from which we were so timeously borne away?

The lovely Clara bowed assent; and away they went hand in hand once more to visit and embrace their earthly parent. They found her in the arms of a rude and imperious pirate, to whom she had subjected herself and her wide domains. They found themselves step-daughters in the halls that of right belonged to them, and instead of fond love and affection, regarded with jealousy and hate. Short and sorrowful was their stay; they embraced their mother once again; bade her farewell with looks of sorrow, and walking out to the fairy ring in the verge of the wood, vanished from the world for ever. It is said, that once in every seven years their forms are still to be seen hovering nigh to the ruins of Rosline. Many are the wild and incomprehensible traditions that remain of them over the country, and there are likewise some romantic scraps of song, besides the verses that are preserved in the foregoing chapter, which are supposed to relate to them. Many have heard the following verses chanted to a tune resembling a dirge:—

"Lang may our king look,
An' sair mot he rue;
For the twin flowers o' Rosline
His hand shall never pu'.
Lie thy lane, step-dame,
An' liefu' be thy lair;
For the bonny flowers o' Rosline
Are gane for evermair."

. . . . . .

"O tell nae the news in the kitchen,
An' tell nae the news in the ha',
An' tell nae the news in the hee hee tower
Amang our fair ladies a'—
How damp were the dews o' the gloamin',
How wet were her hose and her shoon;
Or wha met wi' fair Lady Rosline
By the ee light o' the moon!"

. . . . . .

"Douglas has lost his bassinet,
The king his hawk and milk-white hound;
And merry Maxwell has taen the bent,
And it's hey! and it's ho! for the English ground!"

. . . . . .

"When seven lang years were come an' gane;
By yon auld castle wa',
There she beheld twa bonny maids
A playing at the ba';
But wha shall speak to these fair maids,
Aneath the waning moon?
O, they maun dree a waesome weird,
That never will be doone!"

. . . . . .

ROMAN.

BLACKIE & SON, GLASGOW, EDINBURGH & LONDON.

THE ADVENTURES OF BASIL LEE.

I HAVE for these twenty years been convinced of the truth of the proverb that a fool can best teach a wise man wit, and that it is in fact on the egregious misconduct of the thoughtless and foolish part of mankind that the wise and prudent calculate for their success, and from these that they take their lessons of perseverance and good management. On this principle the following sheets are indited; and that others may be warned from the rock on which I have split, I shall conceal nothing, but relate uniformly the simple truth, though manifestly to my disadvantage. I have not written my life as a model to be copied, but as one to be avoided; and may those who laugh at my inconsistencies learn from them to steer a different course.

There is one great evil under the sun, from which, if youth is not warned, their success in life will be frustrated, and their old age be without comfort and without respect. From it my misfortunes are all to be traced, and from it I am suffering at this day. I look back on the days that are past, and am grieved. I can now see all my incongruities, and wonder at my negligence in not being able to correct them.

The evil that I complain of by which all my views in life have been frustrated, and by which thousands as well as myself have suffered without attributing their disappointments to it, is neither more nor less than *instability of mind*—that impatience so notorious in every young and aspiring breast, which impels the possessor to fly from one study to another, and from one calling to another, without the chance of succeeding in any. This propensity to change so inherent in young and volatile minds, I have often seen encouraged by parents, who would as frequently apply the sage remark, that "when one trade failed they could, when they pleased, take up another." It is the worst principle on which any man can act, and I will prove it to all the world, first from reason and afterwards from experience.

The mind of man, survey it from what point of view you please, bears a strong resemblance to a stream of water. I hate similes in general, but the fitness of this pleases me so much at first sight that I must follow it out. The river when it first issues from its parent spring is a trifling insignificant rill, and easily dammed or turned aside either to the right hand or the left; but still as it advances it gathers strength and power, and, unless by means the most elaborate, becomes irresistible. When it approaches the latter end of its course it becomes steady and still, and at last moves heavily and laggingly along, till it mixes with the boundless ocean. The stream is human life, and the ocean is eternity; but the similarity betwixt these is so apparent that the most simple can be at no loss to trace it.

If this stream in any part of its course is divided into two, each of these come far short of having half the strength and force of the original current, and if parted again they still lose in endless gradation. The consequence of this is, that the oftener a stream is divided it becomes the more easily subdivided again and again. A shoal or any trivial impediment that never could once have withstood its accumulated force, stops its diminished currents, and turns them whithersoever chance may direct—a smaller obstacle does it the next time, until the noble river ends in becoming a stagnant lake or a cumberer of the adjacent grounds. So will it prove with man if the energies of his soul are enfeebled by a variety of unconnected pursuits.

Again, let it be noted that it is of little moment into what channel you turn this stream at first, provided you can confine it to that channel alone, for it will continue to deepen and bank itself in by degrees, until that channel appear to the eyes of all the world as its natural course. So it is with the human mind, even in a more extensive degree; for if its course is bent towards *any one* object, it is ten to one that it obtains it. This plausible theory I hope to prove by a history of my life.

I was third son to a respectable farmer in the upper parts of Berwickshire, who occupied an extensive tract of land, partly arable and partly pasture. At the parish school I received such an education as was generally bestowed on the sons of farmers in those days. I could read the Shorter Catechism and even the Bible with great fluency, though with a broad and uncouth pronunciation. I could write a fair and legible hand, and cast up accounts tolerably well, having gone through Cocker's Arithmetic as far as the rule of three; but when I came into vulgar fractions, the trick of dividing a single number into so many minute parts quite disgusted me. I judged that thereby I was confusing myself with a multiplicity of figures of which there was no end, so I gave it up.

At fourteen years of age I was, by my own choice, bound apprentice to a joiner in the neighbourhood, with whom I was obliged to serve out my time, much against my will; for I deemed myself master of the craft and much superior to my teacher before half my time was expired. After I had struggled through

it I went home. My father hinted to me that I ought to take the wages my late master offered me to continue with him, until something better should be found, as they were the wages he gave to others. But this I slighted with high disdain, declaring that I would go to London or America before I accepted less than double the sum proposed, and that, at any rate, was I never to learn anything better than making a plough or a cart-wheel?

No master could be found who would come up to my conditions, while the ease and indulgence that I experienced about my father's house made me heartily wish that no one might ever be found; and this sentiment made me contrive some strong and unanswerable objections to every proposal of the kind, until the prospect of getting me advantageously engaged as a journeyman died somewhat away. That it might not too abruptly be renewed, I proposed to my father to hold one of his ploughs, a task to which I assured him I was completely adequate, and gave him some wise hints of keeping forward the work of the farm by the influence which my presence would have upon the servants. My father, who was a good-natured worthy man, acquiesced, and I fell to work, and certainly for some weeks wrought with unusual vigilance. I had one principal motive for staying at home which my father did not advert to—I was in love with Jessy, one of the servant-maids, a little blooming conceited gipsy, out of whose sight I could not be happy. I quarrelled with her daily, and agreed with her again, begging her pardon before night. I looked, simpered, and sighed, but all these delightful signals of love she received with seeming disdain. I was jealous of her beyond all bounds, and if I saw her smile upon any other young man or talking apart with one, my bosom burned with rage and revenge. I haunted her as if I had been her shadow; and though I did not know of anything that I wanted with her, yet I neither could be happy out of her presence nor contented when in it.

Though I believe my performance as a ploughman was of a very inferior species, I remember I soon became superciliously vain of it, which provoked my neighbour ploughmen to treat me with very little deference. I was not slack in telling them that it arose all from envy at seeing themselves so much outdone by me in a business which they had practised all their lives, but had never understood. There was no standing this from a novice, for the Border hinds are an independent and high-spirited race of men, and matters went on any way but cordially between us. My partial father came over to my side, which made the breach still the wider; and at length they told him to my face that they would no longer work along with me, for besides not keeping up my part, and leaving them all the drudgery, I took it upon me to direct them, while at the same time I knew no more of farm labour than a cat.

I said it was impossible for me to work any longer with such boors; that I wrought nearly as much as them all put together, but that they wanted to be idle, and wished not for any such pattern. "Poor shilly shally shurf!" exclaimed one of them in great indignation, "you haud a pleugh! ye maun eat a bowe o' meal an' lick a peck o' ashes first! Deil hae't e'er I saw ye gude for yet but rinnin' anipiltin' after the bits o' wenches." Knowing who was present, I threw off my coat in order to give the scoundrel a thrashing; but my father ordered him to hold his peace and go about his business, and taking hold of me he led me *by force* into the house, and there was no more of the matter.

Thus was I taken from the plough tail and sent to herd one of the parcels of sheep—the one that contained the smallest number and required the least attendance of any on the farm. I entered upon this celebrated classical employment with raptures of delight. Never had a mortal such a charming prospect of true felicity! I rejoiced in the opportunity that it would afford me of reading so many delightful books, learning so many fine songs and tunes, of which I was passionately fond, and above all, of taking Jessy below my plaid. Everything in the shepherd's life was bewitching, but this crowned them all. And that I might not want plenty of opportunities, I was resolved to be so careful that I could not possibly get home to above one meal in the twenty-four hours, and of course as she was housemaid she would be obliged to carry all my meat to me.

Such was the delicious picture I had sketched out to myself of the enjoyments of the pastoral life. But alas! every pleasure in this imperfect state of things has its concomitant evil attending it; and the shepherd's life did not at all come up to my expectations. I put all the above refined experiments in practice. I read a number of curious books, sung songs to the rocks and echoes, blew on the german-flute so violently that my heart palpitated with exertion, and for once or twice took Jessy below the plaid. But it seems this had been a freedom of which the little minx did not approve; for thenceforward a ragamuffin of a boy was sent with my meat, which so altered the shepherd's views that the nature of his flock was changed with them, and he got home for his victuals as well as any other shepherd in the country.

Moreover, by indulging in all these luxuries of fancy and imagination—these dreams of love and soft delight—I neglected my sheep, who injudiciously scattered themselves over a great extent of country, and got mixed among other flocks, from which I had no means of separating them. They were soon involved in inextricable confusion, while at the same time I was driven quite desperate; and though not naturally of a bad temper, I often lost myself so far as to get quite enraged at the innocent creatures, and used them very ill because forsooth they went wrong, which it was my business to have prevented, and for which, certainly, they were blameless.

There was another thing that mortified me a great deal; I found that much depended on my dog, and that all my exertions without his assistance availed not a straw in keeping my flock right. I was in fact much more dependent on him than he was upon me, and of that circumstance the knowing brute appeared to be fully aware. He was a very sagacious animal, but as proud as Lucifer, and would not take an ill word off my hand. Whenever he was in the least degree irritated or affronted, he never chose to understand what I wished him to do; and if he did aught at all, it was the contrary of what I wanted. I knew this to be mere affectation on his part, and done to answer some selfish end, or for the still worse motive of provoking his master; so I cursed and swore, and threw stones at him, which he took good care should never hit him, and out of the reach of all other offensive weapons he prudently kept whenever he saw me in bad humour. In return for this treatment he took his tail between his legs and trotted his way home, without once deigning to look over his shoulder either to listen to my flattering promises of kindness and good bits, or my most violent threatenings of retaliation. There was I left by the provoking rascal almost duly every day, as helpless a creature as could be conceived. I shouted, haloo'd, and threw my hat at the lambs, till I often could shout and run no longer; yet all my efforts could never prevent them from straying off at one corner or another. I soon found that the nature of the colly is quite the opposite of that of a pointer or spaniel, and to be well served by him you must treat him as a friend: he will do nothing by force, but from kindness and affection he will do anything. I was compelled to treat mine with proper deference and respect, and when I did so I never had cause to rue it.

There was another evil that attended me; I was obliged to rise much too early in the morning. This did not suit my habits at all, and far less my inclination, for I felt that I was not half satisfied with sleep. The consequence of this was, that, whenever I lay down to rest myself during the day, I sank into the most profound slumbers imaginable, often not awaking for three or four hours, when I generally found all my flock in utter confusion. I had not the skill to gather and separate them, like a shepherd accustomed to the business; and these long sleeps in the fields imbittered almost every day of my life. Neither did I relish the wet clothes, that I was obliged to bear about on my body from morning until night, in rainy weather; it was highly uncomfortable, and a dark mist was the devil and all! I wondered how any man could keep his flocks together in a mist, or know where they were; for there were some days that, from beginning to end, I never knew where I was myself. Then there was the vile custom of smearing them with tar all over the bodies: how I did hate that intolerable operation! Next, I was exposed to cold, to snow and rain, and all manner of hardships. In short, before the first half year had expired, I had fairly come to the conclusion, that the life of a shepherd, instead of being the most delightful and romantic, was the most dull and wretched state of existence; and I longed for a fair pretence to throw up my charge, and the plaid and crook for ever.

That pretence was not long wanting. Out of deference to my father, the neighbouring shepherds had patiently borne with my inexperience and neglect, and had often brought my scattered flocks back to me, in hopes that after a little experience I would grow better. But seeing that I grew still the more negligent, they combined in a body, and came to my father; and, making an old man named Willie Beatie their spokesman, they represented me in such a light as I never shall forget; and there was something which the old crabbed body said that day, that I found afterwards to be too true. "Ye'll get nae luck o' that callant, sir," said he, "gin ye dinna haud his neb better to the grunstane. I wat weel, I hae naething to say ferrar nor what concerns the sheep; but, I trow, gin ye dinna tie him till a job that he canna get quat o', he'll flee frae ae falderal till anither a' the days o' his life; he'll be a plague amang the women too; an' a' thegether ye'll mak but little mence o' him."

My father did not much relish this piece of information, and that he gave the old man to know; but Crusty was not to be snubbed in that way, for his observations grew still more and more severe on my character. "Ey, troth, gudeman, ye may just tak it as weel or as ill as ye like; I carena the black afore my nail about it; a' that I said I'll stand to: I hae naething to do wi' nae honest man's bairn, only I ken this—gin I had sic a chap for a son, I wad either bind him to a sea captain, or gie him a penny in his pouch, and strip him aff to the Indians; he'll get plenty o' women there as black as slaes; an' that will be better than to hae him rinnin jinking after fok's dochters here, an' bringin' disgrace baith to you an' ither fok—gin *he* dinna soon come afore the kirk, I hae tint my skill. But I hae nought to say to that—only, gin ye had to gather his sheep for him, as often as I hae done for this half year bygane, ye wadna be pleased at him mair nor me. When I see a young chap lying slubberin' an' sleepin' a' the day in a heather bush, I can guess what he has been about a' the night."

In the appeal made by the shepherds, my father was obliged to acquiesce, and another lad was hired to my flock. It proved a great relief to me, and I now remained idle about my father's house. I played incessantly on the fiddle, to the great annoyance of the family, and soon became a considerable adept. Certainly my strains were not the sweetest in the world, for I paid no regard to sharps or flats; but I had a good bow-hand and held on with vigour, taking care never to stick a tune because I went wrong in it. I soon attained a high character as a

musician, and heard some very flattering encomiums on my skill from country neighbours, who even went so far as to aver that "I needed not to be afraid to gang through a tune wi' auld Neil Gow himsel."

I soon observed that my parents were growing uneasy on my account, and dissatisfied that I should be thus trifling away the best of my time: I was terrified for the axe and long saw again, and began to cast about for some creditable business to which I might betake myself. At length it was decided that I should set up as a grocer in the town of Kelso, which quite delighted me; and at the next term I began business.

My father's circumstances being well known, I had plenty of credit; neither was I slack in accommodating others in the same way, so that my customers multiplied exceedingly. My luxuries melted from my shop like the snow from the mountains, and new cargoes poured in like the northern blasts that supply these; but, in spite of my inclinations, and a natural aversion that I had to spirits of every description, I soon began to get dissipated. I was fond of music and song, which often gathered idle people about me, whose company, though I wished to decline, yet I could not resist; and by degrees I was led on till I took my glass as freely as any of them; so that, oftentimes, when I came into the shop at night to wind up my affairs for the day, and to balance my books, I was so drunk that I knew not one thing from another.

I committed a number of small mistakes in these degrees of elevation, which had nearly cost me a deal of trouble. I had once nearly lost a family of good customers, by selling them a quarter of a pound of cut tobacco instead of tea. I likewise furnished an honest man with a quantity of snuff, instead of Jesuit barks. He drank it for the removal of some impediment about the stomach; but it had quite a different effect from that desired. To give people a dose of saltpetre instead of glauber salts was a frequent mistake with me, as I never could know the one from the other; and I had twice to pay damages on that score. But the thing that frightened me worst of all was the giving a glass of vitriol to a Highlander over the counter, instead of whisky. He drank it off, and went away without any remark, save that "she was te cood;" but, when he left the shop, I observed that his lips were primmed close together, and the tears were streaming over his cheeks. On examining the bottle I discovered my mistake, and had no doubt that the man would die instantly. I learned that he was driving Highland cattle, and was seen with them about a mile beyond the town; but I thought he could not live, and expected every day to be apprehended for poisoning him. Day came after day, and no word arrived of the dead Highland drover; till, at length, about a month after, I was thunderstruck at seeing the same old man enter the shop, and again ask me to sell him "a glassfu' of te whisky." I could not believe my eyes; but he removed all my doubts, by adding, "an' it pe your vill, let her have te same tat she got fan she vas here pefore." I said I feared I had none of that now, but that some alleged it was not quite the thing. "Hech, man, she shoorly vas te cood!" replied he, "for hit no pe little tat mak auld Tonald pegh (pant), an py cot she vas mhait and trink to hersel for two wheeks."

What a tremendous stomach the old fellow must have had! but I was so overjoyed at seeing him again, that I gave him two or three glasses of the best spirits I had, for which I refused to take any payment. He took off his bonnet, bowed his gray matted head, and thanked me; promising at the same time, "always to pe my chustomer fan he came tat vay."

I continued in business only twenty months, and, by the assistance of a steady old man, had kept my books perfectly regular; but at this time I committed a great blunder, by suffering a bill granted by me to a rival house to be protested, and still to lie over, on account of some temporary disappointment. Such a neglect is ruin to a man in business. He had better make any sacrifice. This I know, that it knocked my business on the head, which, with a little more attention, could not have failed of doing well. My credit was ruined, and every debt that I owed was demanded up at once. Though I had stock, I had neither command of money nor securities; and being void of patience, and disgusted with the duns that came on me at every hour of the day, and the threats of prosecutions, I lost heart. Most unadvisedly, I locked up the doors of my shop, and gave my books and keys over to my father, absconding at the same time, till I saw how matters turned out. I was excessively cast down and dispirited at this time; and I remember of being greatly mortified at hearing what passed between two Kelso girls, whom I overtook on my way to Edinburgh. "Wha's that impudent chap!" said the one. "He's a broken merchant i' our town," replied the other. "What right has a creature like him to come an' keek intil foks' faces that gate!" said the first. I felt myself terribly degraded, and was glad to get out of hearing; but their words did not go out of my head for a month.

My father craved time; which was granted. As soon as he had looked over the state of my affairs, he took the debts all upon himself, and gave security for the whole at six and twelve months. He sold off the stock by public roup; and, though some of the goods were sold at a disadvantage, when all was settled there was a reversion to me of £160, over and above the sum that he had advanced to me at first. Though he was pleased to find things terminate so well, he was grieved at my having given up a business that promised to turn out to such advantage, and expostulated with me in a very serious manner—a thing which he had never done before.

I remember every word of one sentence that he said to me that day; it was very nearly as follows: "Ye're still but a young man yet, son, an' experience may noozle some wit intil ye; for it's o'er plain ye hae muckle need o't. I fear I may say to you as the good auld man Jacob said to his son Reuben, 'that ye are unstable as water, and shall not excel. He that abideth not by the works of his hands, nor is satisfied with the lot that falleth unto him, shall lift up his voice by the way-side, and no man shall regard him; because he regarded not the voice of him that begat him, nor listened to the words of her that gave him birth.' Son, I hae likit a' my bairns weel; but I had the maist hope o' you. My heart was prooder o' ye aften than I loot on; but gin it be the Lord's will to poonish me for that, I maun e'en submit. I canna be lang wi' ye now. I maun soon leave ye, an' gang to my lang hame; but there's nought will bring my gray hairs sae soon to the grave, as to see the imprudence o' my bairns: an' O I wad like weel to see you settled i' some creditable way; i' some way that ye might enjoy peace and quiet i' this life, an' hae time to prepare for a better. The days o' pleasure an' mirth will soon be o'er wi' ye; an' when ye come to my time o' day, there will be mony actions that ye'll rue, an' this last will be ane amang the lave. Is it not a strange thing that you, who are sae clever at every thing, can yet succeed in naething?"

I resolved to do better, but I was Jack of all trades, and master of none. I had now a small sum of my own, which I never had before, and having never yet cost my father much money, the choice was still left to myself what I would try next. When a young man gets his own choice, he is very apt to fix on the profession that his father followed, especially if he has been fortunate in it, and so it was with me at this time. When, as I conceived, I had learned to calculate matters aright, I fixed on the life of a farmer, and determined to be industrious, virtuous, and sober. I even resolved to marry a wife—a rich one, and be the first man in the country; and, as far as I can judge from my own experience, in every man's views of life that forms a principal part. My father approved of my plan, but at the same time gave me many charges never again to think of changing that honest and creditable profession for any other: "for I gie ye my word, son," said he, "that a rowin' stane never gathers ony fog, and ane had better late thrive than never do weel." I promised steadiness, and really meant to keep my word, and I do not think that ever any person had higher hopes of happiness than I had at that time. I was about to enter on that course of life which all men covet, from the highest to the lowest. For what do the merchant and manufacturer toil, but for a competence to enable them to retire to a farm in the country? For what do the soldier and the professional man risk their health and life in foreign climes, but for the means to enable them to retire to a farm in their native country? And into this happy and envied state I was about to enter in the flower of my age, and in the prime of life. I laid out all my plans in my farm-house; they were perhaps a little too luxurious, but altogether they formed an Eden of delight. I calculated on my crops so much an acre, on my cattle so much a head; the produce was immense! quite sufficient for the expenditure of a gentleman. I was so uplifted in my own mind at my unexampled good fortune, that my words and actions were quite eccentric. I hurried from one place to another, as if every moment had been of the utmost importance; when on foot I ran, and when on horseback I galloped. I am sure the cautious and prudent part of the community must have laughed at me, but I perceived it not, and thought that every one admired me for my cleverness. The farmers thereabouts are rather a well-bred class of people, and none of them ever tried either to mortify or reprehend me, but suffered me to take my own way. From the rugged freedom of the peasantry, however, I got some severe rebuffs. I was one day riding into Dunse in fine style, having set off at the gallop, without being well aware of it: "Hallo! stop!" cried a brown-looking peasant, with a spade over his shoulder; and I wheeled round my horse in the middle of his career. "What's wrang wi' ye, lad? Are ye a' weel eneuch at hame?" "To be sure we are, you dog; what do you mean?" said I. "O, gin ye be a' weel, that's eneuch. I thought ye war outher riding for the doctor or the houdy" (midwife), said the horny-knuckled rascal, and chop'd on his way, gaping as he went.

At another time, I was hiring a lad at a fair in Greenlaw, but parted with him about some trifle. Thinking afterward that I was in the wrong, I called to him as he passed, intending to give him all that he asked, but not knowing his name, I accosted him thus: "Hallo! you fellow with the white stockings, come hither." He looked aside to me with the greatest contempt. "An' wha the deil was't made you a gentleman, an' me a fellow?" said he; "the kail-wife o' Kelso, I fancy: or was't the salts an' senny leaf?" Another time at a wedding, I chanced to dance a good deal with a pretty country maiden, named May Glendinning, and kept her sitting on my knee, being resolved, if possible, to set her home at night. Her sweetheart was grievously chagrined at this, but could not help it. "What's come o' May, Geordie?" inquired one; "I think ye hae tint May a' thegither the night." "I canna get her keepit a minute," said Geordie, "for that stickit shopkeeper."

A loud roar of laughter ensued, at which I was highly incensed, and resolved to be revenged on the clown. I kept May the whole night, and after many entreaties, prevailed on her to suffer me to accompany her home. We went into her father's byre, and sat down on some clean hay to court. I said a great many kind things to her, not one of which was

true, and always between hands endeavoured to prejudice her against Geordie. I said he was a low ill-bred rascal, and no match for such a lovely and lady-looking maid as she, and many bitter things I uttered against him; among others, I vowed, that if I saw such a dog as he touch but the palm of her hand, I would kick him. That moment I was rudely seized by the collar. "Come on, then, maister shopkeeper," said a rough voice, in the dark, at my side; "here's Geordie at your service, an' I think he can hardly deserve his breakfast better frae you than ye do frae him." I seized him in the same manner, and in that violent way we led one another out. Burning for revenge, I meant to have given him a merciless drubbing. On getting fairly ont we struggled hard, but, as bad luck would have it, I fell undermost, and that just in the vile quagmire at the root of the dunghill. There the wretch held me down until the wheezing liquid abomination actually met above my breast; then, giving me two or three blows on the face, he left me with a loud laugh of scorn, saying, as he struggled through the mud, "It's no ilka chapman that maun try to lick the butter aff Geordie Bailley's bread." The dog was of the race of the gypsies. I went home in a miserable plight.

Having expended the greatest part of the money that my father advanced to me in stocking my farm and furnishing my house, I saw that I would soon want money, and determined on having a wife with a fortune instantly. Accordingly, I set out a-wooing to one Miss Jane Armstrong, the daughter of a wealthy and respectable farmer. I proved a very awkward lover, and though nothing ever pleased me so much as courting the servant girls, when courting a woman that I really esteemed I felt as if performing a very disagreeable task. I did not know what to say, for it was a new kind of courting that I neither understood nor relished; it was too systematic and ceremonious for me. However, I thought that on getting her for my wife, all that kind of flummery would be over, and I persisted in my suit, till at length matters came to be understood between us, and nothing remained to do but to name the day. I rather esteemed than loved Miss Armstrong, and went about the whole business rather as a matter of duty than in consequence of a fond attachment.

About this time I chanced to be over in Teviotdale on some business, where I met with a Miss Currie, with whom I was quite captivated. She was handsome, lively, and full of frolic and humour, and I never was so charmed with any lady in my life. I visited her every week, and still became more and more enamoured of her. She treated me so kindly, and with so little reserve, that for three months I never went to see Jane Armstrong but once. The Armstrongs took this heinously amiss, and, all at once, without giving me any notice, the lady was married to a cousin of her own, a baker in Coldstream. I was not even invited to the wedding.

I felt this as a great weight taken off my shoulders, and plied my suit to Magdalene Currie, but to my mortification I soon afterwards learned, that the reason why she received me with so much ease was because she did not care a farthing about me, having all the while been engaged to another, to whom she was joined in wedlock a short time after. I looked exceedingly sheepish, and did not know what to do. I could no more set out my head among the ladies, so I went home and courted my own housekeeper.

This was a delightful amusement, but it was a most imprudent and dear-bought one. From the time I began to toy with this girl, I found that I was no more master of my own house; she did what she pleased, and the rest of the servants followed her example. If a man wishes for either honour, credit, or success in life, let him keep among females of his own rank—above it if he will, but not lower.

I was, moreover, always of an ostentatious and liberal turn of mind; I kept a good table, and plenty of French brandy in my house, which at that time cost only 1*s.* 6*d.* per Scots pint. My neighbours discovered this, and though I never invited any of them, for in truth I did not want them, yet there was seldom a day passed that I did not receive a visit from some of them. One came to hear such and such a tune, which he wanted to learn; another, a song of mine that he could not get out of his mind; and a third, merely to get a crack, and a glass of brandy and water with me. Though I always left my farming, and joined them with reluctance, yet, after drinking a glass or two with them, these ill humours all vanished, and I drank on, sung and played my best tunes, and we never failed to part in great glee, and the most intimate friends in the world. This proved a great source of uneasiness to me, as well as expense, which I could ill afford. Though it grieved me, yet I could not put an end to it, and the same scenes of noise and riot occurred once or twice, if not six times every week. The servants joined in the same laxity and mirth, and, leaving the door half open, they danced to my tunes in the kitchen. This drew my elevated friends away from me to join them, after which, a scene of wrestling and screaming ensued, and, in spite of all that I could do, I lost the command of my house and family.

My familiarity with my lovely housekeeper still continued, and for a whole year I was like a man going about with his eyes tied up, who might have seen well enough could he have suffered himself to look. Suppose such a man, though he were sensible that he was going astray, yet would not think of taking away the bandage, and looking about him to see again where the right path lay, but, thinking it capital sport, would continue the frolic and run on—it is not easy to conceive such a fool, but exactly such a one was I.

I soon had some pregnant proofs that the days of my housekeeping were drawing to a conclusion.

The failure of my crops and the insurmountable indolence of my servants without doors, not to mention the extended prospect within, all announced to me, that of my hopeful household there must necessarily be a dispersion. I judged it a far easier and more convenient mode of breaking up the concern, for me to go and leave them, than to be making my delightful housekeeper, and all her irregular, lazy, and impudent associates, pack up their baggage and leave me. I perceived before me a system of crying, whining, and obloquy, not to mention church anathemas, that I could in no wise enconnter; so, as the war was then raging in America, I determined on going there in person, to assist some of the people in killing their neighbours. I did not care much which of the parties I joined, provided I got to a place where I should never see nor hear more of my drunken neighbours, profligate servants, lame horses, blighted crops, and unprofitable housekeeper.

I acquainted my brother with my resolution, and notwithstanding of his warmest remonstrances, I persisted in it. So he was obliged to take my farm, for fear I should give it to some other, and as he considered it a good bargain, he gave me a fair valuation of all my farm-stocking. We settled everything ourselves, and that as privately as possible. I applied at the war-office, and there being then a great demand for young men of spirit to go out to America, I found no difficulty in purchasing an ensign's commission in a regiment then lying in Lower Canada. In the course of a few days I turned my back on my native place, and my face towards the western world, in search of something. I did not know what it was, but it was that which I could not find at home. Had I reflected aright, I would have found it was prudence; but I would not suffer myself to reflect, for my conduct at that time was not calculated, on a retrospection, to afford much consolation; but I hoped, in a life of danger and anxiety, to experience that sort of pleasure which is the result of hope and variety.

On my route to America, I joined, at Cork, a Lieutenant Colin Frazer, who was conducting out two companies of recruits to join our transatlantic army, and of course I was a subordinate officer to him. I never liked him from the beginning; he was too selfish and conceited of himself, and pretended to be so much of a gentleman (though he had never before been from the banks of Loch Ness in the Highlands), that it was impossible to know how to speak to him. I could not speak English otherwise than in the broadest Border dialect, while he delivered himself in a broken Highland jargon, at which I could never contain my gravity. With all this, we were obliged to be constantly together at mess, as well as other times, and from the moment that we first met, my nature seemed, even to myself, to have undergone a complete change. Perhaps the idea of being now a soldier contributed greatly to this, but, from being a good-natured, careless, roving, thoughtless fellow, I became all at once proud, positive, and obstreperous, and, in keeping up these dignified pretensions, I daresay was as absurd as in the conducting of my mercantile and farming transactions. Still, I cannot help thinking it was this haughty overbearing Highland devil that stirred up these unnatural propensities in my breast. We never looked one another openly and frankly in the face when we conversed together, or, if we did, it was with a kind of sneer; and our custom was to sit opposite one another, with averted eyes, and cut and snub one another all that we could, still pretending to be in good humour, yet all the while full of bitterness and gall.

This state of affairs was soon brought to a climax by my spirit of gallantry. Among the few females who were in the ship, there was one Clifford Mackay, a most beautiful young lady, from the Highlands. The moment that I saw her, I was seized with a strong curiosity to know all about her, and what her motives were for going out to America; and my curiosity was mixed with the romantic passion of love. I saw that she and Frazer were acquainted, and indeed he appeared to be her only acquaintance on board; but he behaved to her with such reserve, and kept at such a distance from her in public, that I was altogether astonished how he could behave in such a manner to so sweet a creature, and marked him down in my mind as a cold-hearted, insensible vagabond of a fellow. This apparent neglect endeared the lady still more to me, and interested my heart so much in her, that I could scarcely ever keep from her company. There was no little kind office that lay in my power that I did not proffer, no attention that I did not pay; at which Frazer would often sneer in the most insulting way. "'Pon my wort, Miss Mackay, put you'll pe ketting exhellent attentions," he would say; or at other times, "Shurely you'll pe unter fery much kreat oblighations to the worthy and callant ensign." I was so imprudent one day, in an ill humour, as to repeat one of these sayings, in his own tone and dialect, in mockery. He gave his mouth a twist, curled up his nose, and turned round on his heel, saying at the same time, "You'll pe answering for this py and py, my brave fellow." "O, that I will, I daresay," said I, as saucily as might be. In the meantime I plied the beautiful Clifford with every endearment that the most ardent love could suggest, until her heart was melted, and she told me her whole story, and a most interesting story it was: unluckily for me, there happened not one word of it to be true, an inference which I would have been the last man in the world to have drawn. I proffered myself her friend and protector, in the most noble and disinterested manner; and though my offers were not frankly accepted, still they were by degrees admitted, until at last they terminated as all these generous and benevolent protections of the fair sex do. I was blessed beyond measure in the society of this ador-

able creature; and as Frazer now kept a shy distance from both of us, I had as much of her delightful company as I chose. I really felt exceedingly happy with her, and began to value myself highly on my personal accomplishments, that had thus gained me the affections of such a lady in so short a time.

She was going to live with her brother, a man of great consequence in Upper Canada, and under the care of Frazer, who was an acquaintance of her father's. I engaged to see her safely there, if he failed in the charge he had undertaken, or to assist him in it as far as lay in my power; and on reaching her brother's house, why, marriage was a thing to happen of course; but on that subject we did not talk much. As we neared to the shores of America, she still spoke less and less of her brother, who at one time was her sole discourse; and after coming to anchor in the St. Lawrence, she never more mentioned his name, unless in answer to some question that I chanced to ask concerning him; and when our baggage was removed from the ship into boats, I observed that Frazer took no notice whatever of either her or her effects. I thought I likewise perceived a kind of despondency in my charmer's looks that quite overcame me, and I resolved to dedicate my life to her. I never durst look forward to the future, or calculate with myself what were to be the consequences of this amour; but these came upon me much sooner than I could have presumed.

We sailed for three days up the river, after quitting the vessel. Clifford, Frazer, and I were in the same boat, and also an Irish and an English gentleman. Our noble lieutenant spoke next to nothing, but upon the whole did not behave uncivilly. We came at length to a village on the north side of the river, where we were obliged to land, and wait some days for the arrival of other troops and some waggons. Being now got fairly to land, and in a place where retirement was easy to be obtained, which hitherto had been impossible, Frazer had resolved to let me know what I was about. Accordingly, the next morning after our arrival, I was waited upon by the Irish gentleman who came with us, who presented me with a challenge from the lieutenant. I never was so confounded in my life, and wist not what to do or say; but read the note over and over, I do not recollect how oft. Macrae, the Irishman, noticed my dilemma, which I daresay amused him, and then calmly inquired what answer he was to return to his friend. "The man's out of his judgment," said I. "I do not see," said he, "how you can draw that inference from anything that has passed on the present occasion. Certainly he could not do otherwise than demand satisfaction of you for the gross manner in which you have insulted him, by seducing his ward and friend; and that avowedly, it being a transaction that was neither hid from the ship's crew, nor from the men he is destined to command." "The devil run away with him and his ward both," said I. Macrae burst out a-laughing, and remarked that this was no answer at all to send to a gentleman: that as he had the greatest respect for his friend, he would not hear a repetition of such ribaldry; and that, after what he had seen and heard of my behaviour, he judged it more meet that I should be beaten like a dog before the men, and hooted from the king's service in disgrace. In my confusion of ideas it had never occurred to me, that I was now obliged to fight a duel with any one who liked, or be disgraced for ever. So plucking up a momentary courage, I wrote a note in answer, accepting his challenge as soon as I could procure a friend to be my second. The English gentleman, Mr. Dow, who had accompanied us from Britain, being lodged in the same house with me, I applied to him for advice, and stated the matter exactly to him. He saw it was an ugly job, and he feared there was no alternative but fighting the gentleman, unless I chose to make every concession and be disgraced. "As to either the grace or disgrace of the matter," said I, "I do not mind that a pin; but as I suspect the gentleman has been very shabbily used by me, I will rather make any concession he chooses to name, than fight with one I have wronged. I do not approve of fighting duels. My religious principles do not admit of it." He smiled and shook his head. "I believe," said he, "you are a very honest good fellow, but you are a simple man, and know nothing of the world. You must leave the matter entirely to me. I suspect you must fight him, but, as he is the challenger, you have the right of choosing your weapons. I will however wait upon him, and shall bring you off if I can." "For God's sake do," said I; "I will rather make any acknowledgment he likes, than kill the honest brave fellow, and have his blood on my head, after having offended him by hurting him in the tenderest part." "O that will never do," said he; "never talk of concessions just in the outset of life; leave the matter wholly to me, and behave yourself like a man and a Scotsman, whatever be the issue." I promised that I would; and away he went to wait on Frazer, my insulted lieutenant. How I did curse his hot Highland blood to myself, and wished him an hundred times at the bottom of Loch Ness, or on the top of the highest of his native hills, never to come down again till the day of judgment. I then cursed my own imprudence; but amid all my raving and execrations, I attached no blame to the lovely and gentle Clifford Mackay. The preference that she had given to me over Colin Frazer, her Highland friend, acted like a hidden charm in her behalf.

I now began to consult seriously with myself what weapons I should make choice of. I could in nowise bow my mind to pistols, for I found I could not stand and be shot at. I accounted myself as good a marksman as any in Britain, but that I reckoned of no avail. What did I care for killing the man! I had no wish to kill him, further than by so doing I might prevent him from killing me at the next

fire, and on that ground I would have aimed as sickerly as possible. I would not have minded so much, had I been sure of being shot dead at once; but to get a ball lodged inside of me, and have my nerves racked and teased by bungling American surgeons trying to extract it, was the thing that I was determined on no consideration to submit to. I would not have a doctor twisting and mangling my entrails, in search of a crabbed pistol bullet, for no man's caprice, nor woman's either; so I determined not to fight with pistols.

I tried to discuss the merits of the small sword; but it was a vile insidious weapon, and worse than the other, if worse could be; a thing that came with a jerk by the wrist, as swift as lightning, and out through one's body in a moment. The blue holes they made through one were very unseemly, and not to be cured. There was something, upon the whole, very melancholy in the view of the issue of a duel with small swords; so I resolved to decline fighting with them.

The broadsword? Why, it was a noble weapon; but to trust myself under the broadsword of an enraged Highlander would be a piece of as desperate temerity as braving the bolt of heaven. Besides, I had never learned to fence. Still, however, a man had it in his power to defend himself against that weapon, and there was a great deal in that—he might use some very strenuous exertions for that purpose; and if nothing else would do, an honourable retreat was in his power. Upon the whole, though I did not approve of trusting myself under such a weapon, in such hands, yet I rather leaned to that than any other; or, on second thoughts, I judged that it would be as good, and as genteel, to make choice of the swords that we wore, which were neither broad nor small ones, but something between the two, and not remarkable for their sharpness.

Mr. Dow returned, and in the most calm and friendly way, informed me that he found it a very disagreeable business, much more so than he thought meet to disclose to me, till he saw what would be the issue. I asked if nothing but my life would satisfy the fellow. He answered, that he would not be satisfied with any concessions that a gentleman could make—that if I kneeled before all the men, and confessed that I had wronged him, and begged his pardon, he would be satisfied, but with nothing less. "Why," says I, "since you think the gentleman is so grossly wronged, I do not see why I should not do this." "By the Lord, sir," said he with great fervour, "if you do that, you are lost for ever. Consider, that in so doing, you not only confess your error, but confess that you are a coward; and the next thing that you must do is to hide your head from every human acquaintance. I have considered the case as my own, and conceive that there is no other method of procedure, but to give the gentleman the satisfaction he desires, and on that ground I have appointed the hour and the place of meeting. It is to be in a lane of the adjoining wood, at seven o'clock in the evening; the choice of the weapons is left to you."

"Why should it not be just now?" said I. "The sooner any disagreeable business is over the better; and as for the weapons, to give him every advantage, since I have been the aggressor, I'll give him the weapon for which his country is so much famed. We will decide it with our swords. Does he think that men are mice?"

Dow gave me a slap on the shoulder, and, with a great oath, swore that that was said like a man; "and I'll go and tell your opponent that," added he, "which I trust will stun him." I had now taken my resolution, and went away with him to the place quite courageously, though all the while I scarcely knew what I was doing, such a tremor had taken hold of me. Dow's looks cleared up. He went away and warned Frazer and his second of my mortal impatience for the combat, and then we two walked in the grove awaiting their arrival; and, after all, they were not in any great hurry. When they arrived, our seconds insisted on our shaking hands. To this I had no objections in the world, but I saw that Frazer would rather have shunned it; he held out his in the most proud disdainful way, while I with great bluntness took hold of it, and gave it a hearty squeeze and a shake. "Captain, man," says I, and I fear the tear was standing in my eye; "Captain, man, I little thought it would ever come to this with us!" "You did not, did you?" replied he; "and fat te deol did you pe taking her to pe?" and with that he flung my hand from him.

"Well, well, captain, here's for you, then," says I, drawing out my sword and brandishing it in the air. "Pooh! pooh! te deol!" ejaculated he, and turning away his face, twisting his nose as if something had offended it, he drew his sword, and, stretching out his arm, put its edge to mine, with such marks of disdain as never were before witnessed by any living creature. I struck with all my might, thinking to hit him a dreadful smash on the head or shoulder, and cleave him to the teeth, if not to the heart, but he warded the blow with the greatest indifference, and attacked me in return. I had now to defend myself with my utmost puissance, which I did instinctively, by keeping my arm at full stretch, crossing my sword before me, and making it ply up and down with the swiftness of lightning, and a most excellent mode of defence it is—one that I would recommend to any man placed in such circumstances as I then was. So effectual did it prove, that Frazer, with all his science, could not touch me. He still followed up his advantage, and pressed hard upon me, as he well might, for I had now no leisure again to strike at him, I was so strenuously intent on defending myself, and had so much ado with it. He came closer and closer on me, and in the meantime I fled backwards, backwards, till at length one of my heels coming in contact with the

stump of a tree, I fell flat on my back. He rushed forward to disarm me; but, in my trepidation and confusion, I had no idea of anything except resistance, and even in that awkward position I struck at him again. It seems that a Highlandman does not know so well how to ward a stroke that comes upwards on him, as one that comes down, for with that stroke I wounded him both in the belly and the wrist. This so incensed him, that, placing his one foot on my sword arm, near the shoulder, and the other on my belly, he put his sword's point to my mouth. I roared out, but the savage that instant struck me in at the mouth, and pinned my head to the ground. I had never fought since I was at the school, and wrought merely as it were by random, or rather instinct. I had no conception remaining with me, but the boyish one of retaliation as long as that was in my power, so, making a desperate effort, with a half-arm stab I wounded him in behind, sticking my sword directly in a part of his body which I do not choose to name. This made him spring forward and fall, and the whole of this catastrophe, from the time that I fell on my back, was transacted in two seconds, and before our friends had time to interfere; indeed I am never sure to this day but that they both viewed it as a piece of excellent sport. However, they now laid hold of us, and raised us up. I was choked with blood, but did not feel very much pain. All that I particularly remember was, that I was very angry with Frazer, and wanted to get at him to kill him, and, instead of being afraid of him, I would then have given all that I had in the world to have had the chance of fighting him with pistols. He was as much incensed, for, when Dow supported me away towards the river, he was lying groaning and swearing in broken English. "Tat she shoult pe mhortally killed," I heard him say, "py such a crhaven of a lowlands bhaist! such a treg of te chenerations of mans! phoor mhiserable crheature! tat she should pe putting her pike into te pehinds of te shentlemans! hoh, hoh! pooh, pooh, pooh!"

There was no surgeon in the village save a farrier, that bled American horses, men, and women, alternately, as occasion required, and he being first engaged by my adversary, there was no one to dress my wound, but Mr. Dow and the unfortunate Clifford, who, poor soul, when she saw me all bathed in blood, and learned what had been the cause of it, burst into tears, and wept till I thought her heart would break. One of my jaw-teeth was broken out, but otherwise the wound turned out to be of little consequence, the sword having gone merely through my cheek in a slanting direction, and out below the lap of the ear. It incommoded me very little, but it was otherwise with poor Colin Frazer, who was pronounced by all that saw him to be mortally wounded, though he himself affected to hold it light.

The other body of recruits and the baggage-carts at length arriving, we continued our march, Frazer causing himself to be carried in a litter at the head of the troop, until we arrived at Quebec. Here he had the advice of regular surgeons, who advised him not to proceed, but no cognizance was taken of the affair, further than the examination of witnesses, whose depositions were taken down and signed. The head-quarters of the regiment which we were destined to join lying still a great way up the country, at a place called St. Maurice, the command of the body of recruits devolved on me. The men that joined us last, at the village of Port Salmon, were mostly Irishmen, and commanded by a very young man, named Ensign Odogherty. He was a youth according to my own heart, full of frolic and good humour, drank, sung, and told marvellous stories without end, and I never was so much amused by any human being. The other Irishman, Macrea, remained at Quebec, but Dow still went on with us. I found he meant to join the army as a gentleman volunteer.

One night, when we were enjoying ourselves over a glass at a petty village, Dow chanced to mention my duel. I requested him not to proceed with the subject, for it was one that I did not wish ever to hear mentioned again as long as I lived. Odogherty, however, having merely learned that such an event had occurred, without hearing any of the particulars, insisted on hearing them from end to end, and Dow, nothing reluctant, recited them with the most minute punctuality. Odogherty's eyes gleamed with delight, and when the other came to the conclusion, he rose in silence, holding his sides, and keeping in his breath till he reached a little flock-bed, where, throwing himself down, he continued in a roar of laughter for a quarter of an hour, save that he sometimes lay quiet for about the space of a minute to gather his breath.

When he had again composed himself, a long silence ensued. After a storm comes a calm, they say, but it is as true that after a calm comes a storm. Little did I ween what a storm this calm was brewing for me, but found it soon to my experience.

"Now, my dear friend," said Dow, "that you are past any danger from your wound, and I hope from all ill consequences of this rough and disagreeable affair, pray, may I ask if you know who this young lady is, or of what extraction or respectability, for whom you have ventured your life and honour, and whom you have thus attached to yourself!"

"I know that very well," replied I. "My Clifford is a young lady of as high respectability as any in the shire of Inverness, though her father is not rich—but that is a common occurrence with Highland gentlemen, especially those that are generous and best beloved; besides, she is one of a numerous family, and named after an English countess, who is her godmother. Her father is Neil Mackay, Esq., of the town of Inverness, and she has a brother in Upper Canada, who holds the highest commission but one under government in all that country. It

is to him that I am conducting her, and I hope to do it in safety."

"Not with safety to yourself, I should think," rejoined he. "You should surely, my dear sir, re-consider this matter, else you will certainly have more duels to fight than one. Do you conceive it such a light thing to seduce a young lady of quality? Or how could you set up your face to her brother, a man of such rank, after the way that you have publicly lived with his sister?"

Never had such an idea as this entered my head—the thing most apparent, one would think, of any in the world. But, as I said before, I never durst trust myself to reflect on the consequences of this amour; these had all to come on me in course. I could not answer Mr. Dow a word, but sat gaping, and staring him in the face for a good while. At length I exclaimed, with a deep sigh, "What the devil shall I do?"

"Why," said Odogherty, "I think the way that you should take is plain enough behind you, to look forward I mean. The young creature is ruined to all purposes and intents, and will never be a woman of credit at all at all, unless you marry her. On my conscience I would marry her this instant—that I would, and make her an honest woman to herself."

I looked at Dow, but he remained silent. I then said, that I thought our young friend's advice had a great deal of reason in it, and to marry her was the best way, if not the only thing that I could do. Dow said, that at all events I might ask her, and hear what she said, and we would then consult what was best to be done afterwards.

I posted away into the little miserable room where she sat, resolved to marry her that night or next morning. I found her sitting barefooted, and without her gown, which she was busily employed in mending. "My dear Clifford," said I, "why patch up that tawdry gown? If your money is run short, why not apply to me for some wherewith to replace these clothes that are wearing out? You know my purse is always at your service." She thanked me in the most affectionate terms, and said, that she feared she would be obliged to apply to me by and bye, but as yet she had no need of any supply, my kindness and attention to her having superseded any such necessity.

"I am come, my dear young friend," said I, "at this moment, on an errand the most kind and honourable to you. We are now entering on the territory in which your relation holds a high command, and it is necessary, before we come to his presence, or even into the country over which he holds control, both for your honour and my own safety and advancement, that we be joined in the bands of wedlock. I therefore propose that we be married instantly, either to-night or to-morrow morning."

"You will surely, at all events, ask my consent before you put your scheme in practice," returned she.

"Yes, most certainly," said I; "but after what has passed between us, I can have no doubt of the affections and consent of my lovely Clifford."

"You will however find yourself widely mistaken," replied she.

"Is it possible!" said I; "is it in nature or reason, that as circumstances now stand with us, you can refuse to give me your hand in marriage? Does my adored Clifford, for whom I have risked my life, my honour, my all, then not love me?"

"God knows whether I love you or not!" exclaimed she; "I think of that you can have little doubt. But as to marrying you, that is a different matter, and I protest to you once for all, that nothing in the world shall ever induce me to comply with that."

"And is this indeed my answer?" said I.

"It is," said she, "and the only one you shall ever get from me to that question. I therefore request you never again to mention it."

I went back to my two companions hanging my head, and told them the success of my message, but neither of them would believe me. I then returned to Clifford, and taking her by the hand, led her into the room beside them, barefooted and half dressed as she was, and placing her on the wicker chair at the side of the fire, I stood up at her side in a bowing posture, and expressed myself as follows:—

"My beloved, beautiful, and adorable Clifford, ever since we two met, you have been all to me that I could desire, kind, affectionate, and true. I have consulted my two friends, and before them, as witnesses of my sincerity, I proffer you my hand in wedlock, and to make you mine for ever. And here, upon my knees, I beg and implore that you will not reject my suit."

"Rise up, and behave like yourself," said she, with a demeanour I never before saw her assume; "you do not know what you ask. Once for all, before these gentlemen, as witnesses of *my* sincerity, I hereby declare that no power on earth shall either induce or compel me to accept of your proposal; and, as I told you before, that is the only answer you shall ever get from me. Suffer me therefore to depart." And with that she hastened out of the room.

"By St. Patrick!" cried Odogherty, "the girl has gone out of her senses, to be sure she has. On my conscience! if she has not dropped the reasoning faculty, she has picked up a worse, and by the powers! I will prove it, that I will."

"On my soul, I believe the creature has some honour after all!" exclaimed Dow, leaning his brow upon his hand.

"What do you mean, sir, by such an expression?" said I; "whom do you term creature, or whose honour do you call in question?"

"Hush!" said he; "no foolish heat. I beg your pardon. I am sure you cannot suppose that I mean to give you any offence. In the next place, I must

inform you, that this lovely and adorable lady of quality, for whom you have ventured your life, and whom you have just now, on your knees, in vain implored to become your wife, is neither less nor more than a common street-walking girl from the town of Inverness."

My head sunk down, till my face was below the level of the lamp, so as to be shaded in darkness. I bit my lip, and wrote upon the table with my finger.

"It is indeed true," said he; "I know all about it, and knew from the beginning; but I durst not inform you at that time, for fear of your honour as a soldier, which I saw stood in great jeopardy. Her father, indeed, is a Neil Mackay of the city of Inverness; but, instead of being a gentleman, he is a mean wretched cooper, a poor insignificant being, who cares neither for himself nor his offspring. Her mother was indeed a woman of some character, but she dying of a broken heart long ago, poor Clifford was thrown on the wide world while yet a child, and seduced from the path of rectitude before she reached her fifteenth year. Lieutenant Colin Frazer, your friend, being at Inverness on the recruiting service, chanced to fall in with her; and seeing her so beautiful and elegant of form, and besides possessed of some natural good qualities, he decked her out like a lady in the robes in which you first saw her, and brought her with him as a toy, wherewith to amuse himself in his long journey."

I could not lift up my face, for I found that it burned to the bone; but there I sat, hanging my head, and writing on the table with my finger. Odogherty had by this time betaken himself to his old amusement, of lying on the flock-bed, and holding his sides in a convulsion of laughter. Dow seemed half to enjoy the joke, and half to pity me. So, thinking the best thing I could do was to take myself off, I ran away to my bed without opening my lips.

Poor Clifford bathed and dressed my wound as usual, but we exchanged not a word all the while. She imagined that I was very angry and sullen, because I could not get her for my wife, and that I took it heinously amiss; and when she had done dressing my cheek she impressed a kiss upon it, and I felt one or two warm tears drop on my face very near my own eye. Duped as I was, I found my heart melted within me, with some feelings about it that whispered to me, she must be forgiven. If ever I had merit in anything that I did in my life, it was in my tenderness to this poor unfortunate girl. I could not for the soul of me that night have mentioned Neil Mackay, Esq., of the city of Inverness, nor yet his excellency the deputy-governor of Upper Canada. I declare, that I never more mentioned the names of these two august personages in her hearing. I deemed that she had thrown herself entirely on my mercy, and I thought it was cruel to abuse my power.

Nevertheless I spent a very restless night. If I recollect rightly, I never closed an eye, so dissatisfied was I with my conduct. Here was I come out a desperate adventurer, going to join a gallant regiment commanded by a brave and reputable officer, with pay that would barely keep me from starving; yet I behoved to make my appearance at head-quarters with a fine lady in my keeping, and that same fine lady a common town girl, picked up on the streets of Inverness, the daughter of a scandalous drunken cooper. My blood being heated, and my nerves irritated by the brandy I had drunk the night before, I felt very much inclined to hang myself up by the neck. In this feverish and disgraced state, I formed the resolution, before day, of deserting over to the Americans; but as I could not think of leaving the forlorn Clifford behind me, I disclosed to her my whole design. She tried to dissuade me, but I remained obstinate, till at length she flatly told me that she would not accompany me, nor any man, in so dishonourable and disgraceful an enterprise; and that if I persisted in going away, she would instantly give intelligence of my flight, and have me retaken and punished.

"You ungrateful wretch!" said I; "do you know what you are saying? Dare you take it upon you to dictate to me, and hold me under control as if I were a child?"

"No," replied she; "I never dictate to you; but I see you are dissatisfied with something, and unwell; and were you to take this rash step, I know you would repent it as long as you lived. I am not so far enslaved to you but that I still remain the mistress of my own will; and I shall never assent to any measure so fraught with danger as well as disgrace."

I was going to be exceedingly angry, and mention the cooper and the deputy-governor to her, and I do not know what all; but she dreading that some violent outbreak was forthcoming, stopped me short by a proposal, that I would at least take eight and forty hours to consider of it; and if I remained of the same mind then, she would not only accompany me, but devise some means of escape safer than could be decided on all at once. I felt extremely mortified at being thus outdone, both in reason and honour, by a wench; however, I could not refuse my acquiescence in this scheme; and I confess, I am aware, that to this poor girl I owed at that time my escape from utter infamy, and perhaps a disgraceful end.

On reaching St. Maurice, we were all joined to General Frazer's regiment, save seventeen men, who were sent with Mr. Dow to supply a deficiency in a company of Colonel St. Leger's regiment; and the very day after our arrival, we set out on a forced march to oppose the Americans that were approaching to Montreal. Here I was obliged to leave Clifford behind, who, with other retainers of the camp, a much more motley train than I had any

notion of, were to come up afterwards with the baggage. Before taking my leave of her, I gave her a new gray frock trimmed with blue ribbons, handsome laced boots, a bonnet and veil, and was not a little proud to see how well she became them, and that there was in fact no lady either in the camp or country that looked half so beautiful. Every officer who chanced to pass by her was sure to turn and look after her, and many stood still and gazed at her in astonishment. There is something in the face of a Highland lady, more majestic and dignified than that in any other of the inhabitants of the British islands; and this poor unfortunate girl possessed it in a very eminent degree. No one could see her without thinking that nature had meant her to occupy some other sphere than the mean one in which she now moved.

I do not intend to describe this campaign; for I hate the very thoughts of it; but I cannot resist giving here an account of the first action that I was in. It took place at the foot of Lake Champlain, immediately above Fort St. John. The Americans were encamped in some force on the height of a narrow fortified ridge of hills, from which it was necessary to displace them. We marched out to the attack early on a morning. The air was calm and still. In going up the slanting ground, our commander wisely led us by a route which was completely sheltered by a rising eminence from the effects of their cannon. I soon perceived that, on reaching the summit of this ridge, we would be exposed to a fire which, I had no doubt, would kill us every man, while our enemies might fire in safety from behind their trenches. What would I have given to have been on some other service; or, by some means, have avoided going up that hill! I am not sure but that I looked for some opportunity of skulking, but I looked in vain; and it was not even possible for me to fall down among the dead, for as yet no one had fallen. I was in the front rank on the left wing, and very near the outermost corner. Just before we came to the verge of the ridge, I looked on each side to see how my comrades looked, and how they seemed affected. I thought they were all, to a man, terribly affrighted, and expected a clean chase down the hill. As soon as we set our heads over the verge, we began a sharp fire, which was returned by a destructive one from their works, and our men fell thick. The two men next to me, on my right hand, both fell at the same time, and I made ready for flight. A bullet struck up a divot of earth exactly between my feet. I gave a great jump in the air, and escaped unhurt. "The devil's in the men!" thought I. "are they not going to run yet?" The reverse was the case; for the word *quick march* being given, we rushed rapidly forward into a kind of level ground between two ridges. Here we halted, still keeping up a brisk fire, and I scarcely saw one of our men fall. It was the best-conducted manœuvre of any I ever saw; but this I discovered from after conversation and reflection, for at that time I had not the least knowledge of what I was doing. We were by this time completely covered with smoke, and being hurried from the ridge into the hollow, the shot of the Americans now passed cleanly and innocently over our heads, while at the same time we could still perceive them bustling on the verge between us and the sky; and I believe our shot took effect in no ordinary degree. Their fire then began to slacken, for they had taken shelter behind their trenches. We now received orders to scale the last steep, and force their trenches at the point of the bayonet. We had a company of pikemen on each flank, but no horse, and the Americans had a small body of horse, about sixty on each wing. As we went up the hill, I heard an old grim sergeant, who was near me, saying, "This is utter madness! we are all sold to a man." The murmur ran along, "We are sold—we are sold—to a certainty we are sold;" and my ears caught the sound. For my part, I knew little of either selling or buying, except what I had seen in the market at Kelso; but I said aloud, "I think there can be little doubt of that"—a shameful thing for an officer to say! Then, looking round, I made as though I would turn again. No, not a man of them would take the hint—but rather went the faster; and the old burley ill-natured sergeant, though assured that he was sold to destruction, and puffing and groaning with ill humour on that account, hurried on faster than the rest.

The centre and right wing were engaged before us, and a terrible turmoil there seemed to be; but I did not see what was going on, till the Yankee horse, in a moment, came and attacked our flank. We had been firing off at the right; but I believe, they never got a shot of our fire until they were among us, thrashing with their sabres. One tremendous fellow came full drive upon me. Not knowing in the least what I was doing, and chancing to have a hold of my flag-staff with both my hands, I struck at him with my colours, which, flapping round the horse's head, blindfolded him. At the same moment the cavalier struck at me; but, by good luck, hit the flag-staff, which he cut in two, not a foot from my hand, and I ran for it, leaving my colours either about his horse's head or feet—I did not stay to examine which; but, owing to the pikes and bayonets of our men, I could only fly a very short way. When the old crusty sergeant saw the colours down and abandoned, he dashed forward with a terrible oath, and seized them, but was himself cut down that moment. The dragoon's horse, that left the ranks and came upon me, had been shot. I deemed that he had come in desperate valour to seize my standard, whereas his horse was running with him in the agonies of death, not knowing where he was going. There is something here that I do not perfectly recollect, else, I declare, I would set it down. I have forgot whether my

joints failed me, and I fell in consequence; or whether I threw myself down out of desperation; or if I was ridden down by the wounded horse; but the first thing I recollect was lying beneath the dying horse, face to face with the dragoon that cut my flag-staff in two, who was himself entangled in the same manner. Our troops had given way for a little, for the small troop of horse rode by us, over us they could not get for the horse that was lying kicking with its four feet upmost. I thought I was in a woeful scrape, and roared out for assistance; but no one regarded me save the Yankee dragoon, who d—d me for a brosey-mou'd beast. I liked his company very ill, for I knew that he would stick me the moment he could extricate himself; and, being fairly desperate, I seized the sergeant's pike or halbert, that lay alongside of me, and struck it into the horse's shoulder. The animal was not so far gone but he felt the wound, and making a flounce about, as if attempting to rise, I at that moment got clear of him. The dragoon had very near got free likewise; but, luckily for me, his foot was fixed in the stirrup beneath the horse, and with all his exertions he could not get it out. However, he laid hold of me, and tried to keep me down; but I seized hold of the sergeant's halbert again, pulled it out of the horse's shoulder, and stabbed the Yankee through the heart. The blood sprung out upon me, from head to foot—his eyes turned round, and his countenance altered. At that moment I heard a loud voice, as at my ear, cry out, "The colours! the colours! secure the colours!" This was the voice of an American officer; but I thought it was some of our people calling to me to bring my colours along with me, which I did instinctively, and without the most distant idea of valour or heroism in my mind. At that moment I cared not a pin for the colours, for, being quite raw to soldiership, I forgot every idea relating to them and their great value.

This onset of the Yankee horse was merely a dash to throw our lines into confusion; for they were now scouring away, fighting as they went, toward the centre, and I joined our lines again that were advancing rapidly without any interruption. I had my demolished flag in one hand, the dead sergeant's long halbert in the other, and bathed with the blood of man and horse over my whole body. An old English officer came running to meet me: "Well done, young Scot," cried he, and shook me by the hand; "Well done! you have behaved like a hero!" "The devil I have," thought I to myself; and staring the old veteran in the face I saw he was quite serious. "If that is the case," thought I, "it is more than I knew or had any intention of;" for I was quite delirious, and knew not what I was about; and I remember that on the very evening of that day the transactions of the morning remained with me only as a dream half recollected. The old man's words raised my madness to the highest pitch. I swore dreadfully at the Yankees, threw down my colours, and began to strip off my coat—the first thing that a countryman of Scotland always does when he is going to fight with any of his neighbours. "No, no," said the old lieutenant, "you must not quit your colours after fighting so hardly for them; you must not throw them away because they have lost the pole." He then took the colours, and giving them a hasty roll up fixed them in my shoulder behind, between my coat and shirt, where they stuck like a large furled umbrella. Having now both my hands at liberty, I seized the long bloody halbert once more, and with my eyes gleaming madness and rage, and, as I was told, with my teeth clenched, and grinning like a mad dog, I rushed on in the front of the line to the combat. In a moment we had crossed bayonets with the enemy; but I had quite the advantage of their bayonets with my long pike, which was as sharp as a lance, and the best weapon that since that time I have ever had in my hand. It seems I did most excellent service, and wounded every man that came within my reach, pricking them always in the face about the eyes and nose, which they could not stand. Our division was the first that entered both the first and second trench; and after twelve minutes' hard fighting with swords and bayonets, they were driven from them all, and fled. When once I got their backs turned towards me, I was more bent on vengeance than ever. Many of the enemy shared the fate of Colin Frazer.

At the fords of the river Champley, the Americans gaining the wood were safe from the pursuit, and a full halt was ordered. No sooner had we formed than my worthy old friend the English officer, whose name I then learned was Lieutenant George Willowby, came, and taking me by the hand he led me up to the general, precisely as I was in the battle, with my colours fastened most awkwardly in my clothes, my long halbert in my hand, and literally covered with blood. "My honoured general," said he, "suffer me to present to you this young Scotch borderer who has newly joined the regiment, and who hath performed such deeds of valour this day as I never witnessed. I saw him, your honour, with my own eyes, when the American cavalry turned our flank, in the very rear of their army, down among his enemies fighting for his colours, and stabbing men and horse alternately like so many fish. And, do you see," continued he, pulling them out of my back, "he brought them safely off, after the staff was cut in two by the stroke of a sabre. And having them fixed in this manner, as your honour sees, he has led on the lines through the heat of the engagement, and actually opened the enemy's ranks again and again by the force of his own arm."

The general took me by the hand, and said he was proud to hear such a character of his own countryman—that he knew a Scot would always stand his own ground in any quarter of the world if he got fair play—that he did see the division to

which I belonged the foremost to break in upon both lines, which it appeared had been solely owing to my gallant behaviour. He concluded by assuring me that such intrepidity and heroic behaviour should not and would not go unrewarded. That same night Odogherty, who cared not a fig for lying, took care to spread it through all the mess, and the army to boot, "that on my first landing in America I had been challenged to single combat by a tremendous Highlander, the first swordsman in Britain, because I had chanced to kiss his sister, or used some little innocent familiarities with her; that I had accepted the challenge, met him, and fairly overcome him, and after running him twice through the body, had made him confess that he was quite satisfied; while I, as they saw, had only received a slight cut on the cheek."

I was regarded all at once as a prodigy of valour; and never were any honours less deserved. I believe I did fight most furiously after I went fairly mad and had lost all sense of fear, but I was merely plying and exerting myself as a man does who has taken work by the piece, and toils to get through with it. I had some confused notion that these Americans were all to be killed, and the sooner we could get that done the better; and besides, I was in great wrath at them, I suppose, for wanting to kill me.

This acquisition of honours gave a new turn to my character again. I determined to support it with my life, and was engaged early and late in perfecting myself in all warlike exercises. I was given to understand that I would be raised to the rank of lieutenant in the course of three weeks, and had little doubt of being soon at the head of the British forces. There was one principal resolution that I formed in my own mind on this my sudden elevation. It was the generous one of parting with Clifford Mackay. I thought it was base that there was no one to enjoy the emoluments and pride of my growing rank but the daughter of a despicable Highland cooper—a wench brought up among girds and shavings, or perhaps in a herring-barrel. The thing was quite incongruous, and would never do! so I began to cast about for a lady of great riches and rank, and made many knowing inquiries, but could not hear of any that was grand enough in all America. Odogherty thought proper to take advantage of this vain presumption, and brought me into some vile scrapes. In the meantime I longed exceedingly for the arrival of Clifford, from whom I had now been a long time separated; but it was principally that I might tell her my mind, and put her upon some plan of providing for herself. The baggage and ladies at length arrived at Montreal, escorted by Major Ker and three companies of dragoons. The officers went down by lot to see their friends, and my turn came the last of any. I was rejoiced to find that our general himself, and the greater part of our officers, had acquaintances that stood in the same relation with them as Clifford did to me, and not a little proud to see them all outdone by her in beauty. It was rather a hard matter to part with so much beauty, sweetness, and affability, but considering the great figure that I was to cut in life it was absolutely necessary; so just before we parted I made up my mind to the task.

"Clifford," said I, with a most serious and important face, "I have a proposal to make to you, which I like very ill to make; but both for your sake and my own I am obliged to do it."

"I am in the very same predicament with regard to you," replied she; "I had a proposal to make which has been at the root of my tongue for these twelve hours, and could never find its way out, for there was something below it that always drew it back. But now that you have mentioned proposals, I find it is at liberty. Suffer me therefore to make my proposal first, and do you make yours afterwards. You must know then that there is scarce an officer in your regiment who has not tried to seduce my affections from you, and some of them have made me very tempting offers. I have made a resolution, however, never to be either a mistress or wife to any one in the same regiment with you, and under your eye; but Major Ker of the dragoons has made me an offer that will place me in affluence all the rest of my life. I am afraid that you will weary of me, for I will become burdensome and expensive to you, and your pay is small; and therefore I would not give him any answer until I asked at you whether I should suffer myself to be seduced by him or not."

I was thunderstruck with astonishment at the simplicity and candour manifested in this proposal, and stood gaping and staring at her a good while without having a word to answer. There is a great difference in giving up an object voluntarily and having it wrested from you. "I am very much obliged, in faith," said I, "to Major Ker of the dragoons, as well as my brother officers! confound them for a set of dishonourable knaves! There is one, I am sure, that would not yield to be guilty of such a discreditable act, my friend and companion Ensign Odogherty."

"Bless your simple heart," said she, "Ensign Odogherty was the very first among them who made the proposal, and what I refused to his blarney he was like to have taken by force. He is a perfect devil incarnate that Odogherty."

"The young Irish dog!" exclaimed I, "I'll cut his throat for him."

"If you would presume to cut the throats of all who offend in that particular," replied she, "you may exercise your skill on every officer in the army."

"Are you tired of me, my dearest Clifford?" said I, "and would you wish to leave me for another? If so, I scorn to retain you by force. But you may well know that I would rather give up all the world than part with you. And as to wealth, take no

thought of that, for I have large funds that I brought from home which I have as yet scarcely touched; and, moreover, I am already promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and expect to be a captain in a very short time. But if you should leave me, what would all these additions of wealth avail me?"

So much are we the children of caprice that I have often been ashamed on looking back to my actions to see in what manner I have been swayed by the meanest of all motives. Everything was soon made up between Clifford and me, and she continued living under my protection for three succeeding years. I never found it convenient to get a very rich wife, nor practicable to rise any higher in the army than a poor lieutenant. Indeed there was an incident occurred that had very nearly been the cause of my being reduced to the ranks.

Our army was a most licentious one; the men were brave, but they had no other good quality, and gaming prevailed to a degree among the officers that can scarce be credited. No opportunity of intriguing with the ladies of the country was let slip, and though we were often almost starved to death for want of meat, we were generally drunk once in the twenty-four hours, often for a considerable portion of that time at once. Moreover, all of them had their mistresses, either hanging about the camp, or at no great distance from it, and, for the whole of the two last winters that I remained there, our headquarters presented the most motley scene that can be conceived of dissoluteness and meagre want. We depended mostly on the supplies sent from England for our sustenance, but these became more and more uncertain; and, though I valued myself on being able to bear these privations better than my associates, I often suffered so much from hunger, that I never saw meat but I coveted and took it, if I could conveniently come by it.

The officers of our regiment were invited to dine with a gentleman, of great riches and high respectability, in the district of New York, not far from the place where we were then stationed. The entertainment was elegant and expensive, and we drank with great liberality. Gambling commenced and was carried on, with much noise and little regularity, till after midnight. All the while there was a long table that stood behind covered with viands, at which every man helped himself as he pleased. At length we all went off, a little before day, in a state of high elevation. Our path lay down a narrow valley by the side of the river Tortuse. Odogherty and a Lieutenant Jardine from Annandale, were immediately before me, going arm in arm, and excessively drunk. I kept near them, unperceived, for the sake of getting some sport, and soon saw, to my astonishment, that they made a dead halt. On drawing nearer them, I heard that they were consulting about the best means of getting over the river. I was amused beyond measure at this, and could not comprehend the meaning of it, for the path did not lead across the river, which was quite impassable on foot. The moon shone almost as bright as day, while I stood at their backs, and heard the following dialogue:—

Odog. "By the powers, and I believe we are come to the end of our journey before we have got halfway, that we have."

Jar. "'Od man, my head's no that clear, but I canna mind o' wading ony water as we came up. I fear we've gane wrang."

Odog. "How the devil can that be? Have we not come straight up the path that goes down the side of the river? There is no other road but that, so we must either push on or turn back."

Jar. "By my trouth, man, an' I think we had better turn back than drown oursels, an lippen to the man for quarters. He's a cannie discreet man."

Odog. "By my shoul, but I know better than to do any such thing. Don't you see that all the rest of the gentlemen have got over? There are none of them here."

Jar. "It maks an unco rumbling noise, man. What will we do gin it tak us down?"

Odog. "Why, come up again, to be sure."

Jar. "Weel, weel, gie's your arm. Here's wi' ye, Captain Odogherty. Gin Sandy Jardine dinna wade as deep as ony chap in a' Airland, deil that he gang down the gullots like a flowy peat. Here's wi' ye, Maister Odogherty."

Odog. "Don't be in such a hurry, will you not, till I be ready before you? Think you I will spoil all my fine clothes?"

Jar. "Oh, ye're gaun to cast aff, are ye? Gude faith, Sandy Jardine will let his claes tak their chance, there's mae whar they cam frae."

Odogherty stripped off his stockings and shoes, and tied his buckskin breeches around his neck, and giving his arm to his inebriated companion, they set forward with undaunted resolution, either to stem the roaring stream, or to perish in the attempt. I had by this time squatted down with my face to the earth, and was almost dead with laughing, having discovered their grotesque mistake. The moon was shining bright on the road all the way, but at this place a group of tall trees, that rose between the path and the river, threw a shadow right across the road, and hearing the rushing sound of the river behind the trees, they concluded that it was that which intercepted their way. Indeed I never witnessed a stronger deception, for the beams of the moon, trembling through the leaves, looked exactly like the rippling of the stream. Jardine roared and laughed when he found that they were wading through a shadow, till he made all the woods ring, but Odogherty was rather affronted.

I joined the train, and we went on, laughing and making a noise, till we were interrupted by the rest of the officers all in a group. A most disagreeable business had occurred. The gentleman with whom we dined had sent two household servants on horses

by a nearer path, to waylay us, who, addressing themselves to the senior captain, for neither General Frazer nor our colonel was present, informed him that their master had lost a valuable gold snuff-box, set with diamonds, which he had been using all night at the table. The captain rashly desired the men to begin by searching himself, and go on over all the company, and at the same time swore, that with whomsoever the box was found, he should suffer the most condign punishment.

The search was going on when we arrived, and we were instantly surrounded by those that had already undergone the fiery trial, but when the two Americans came to me, I refused to be searched. The captain swore, that whoever refused to be searched should be drummed out of the regiment. I said I would refer that to a court-martial, and not to him, and, at the same time I swore an oath, that I would run the first man through the body who offered to seize on me, or put a hand in my pockets. "Seize the dog! seize him, and down with him! We know with whom the snuff-box is now," burst forth from every mouth. I was forcibly seized and disarmed, but afterwards, shaking myself loose, I dealt among them some lusty blows with my fists, and never perhaps did I fight with more inveterate desperation. It was to no purpose, for I was pinioned fast by numbers, and searched. Woe be unto me! The grinning American took out from one of my coat pockets a roasted wild turkey deprived of a wing, and out of the other an immense black pudding. I was grievously mortified, and would rather have died on the spot.

When they came to search Odogherty, they found him bare-footed and bare-legged, and without the *small clothes* (as the ladies now with great indelicacy term them). "How does this come about, sir?" said the captain; "what is become of the rest of your dress?"

"O, plaise your honour, I have lost them."

"Lost them! have you lost your clothes off your body? The thing is impossible."

"To be sure, and I have. Look, your honour, here are the shoes; and look you, here are the stockings, but the braiches, I fear, are quite gone."

"You must have *taken* them off for one purpose or another?"

"To be sure, and I did; and it was for fear of wetting them too, for, your honour, they cost me a pound all to nothing, so I would not be after wetting them, and so I put them round my neck, your honour."

"Ensign, this is the most absurd story I ever heard, and argues very little in your favour. How could you wet your clothes, when there is neither rain nor dew?"

"Bless your honour! now, when I remember, it was to wade the river that I stripped them off, and tied them round my neck."

"You are either mortal drunk, or in a dream. What river did you cross?"

"The devil take me away if I know what river it was, but, o' my conscience, there was a river running, roaring, and tumbling across the step of a road, and so I knew from the sound that it would be after taking me up to the middle, and so I threw off braiches and all, your honour—and so Jardine and I waded across—and by the powers it was no river at all at all."

"The fellow is trifling with us! take his sword from him, and take him likewise into custody, and see that diligent search be made for the part of his clothes, which, it is evident, he hath secreted."

At this time one of the officers, feeling something entangling his feet, put down his hand to feel what it was, and brought up the fine buckskin breeches of Odogherty, all trampled and abused. They were searched, and in the pocket was found the gentleman's gold snuff-box. The captain and all the officers were highly incensed against Odogherty and me, crying out that we had disgraced them in the eyes of all the country. Odogherty swore by all the saints in the calendar that he was innocent, or that, if he had put up the worthy gentleman's box, out of which he had snuffed all the evening, it must have been by a very simple and common mistake. "And, by Saint Patrick!" said he, addressing the captain, "had you but proclaimed the matter, and suffered every man to search his own pockets, the gentleman would have got his box, and the honour of the corps had been preserved."

Every one felt that what the ensign said was sound sense in this instance. Circumstances, however, were strong against him; and as to my shameful crime, there was nothing to be said in extenuation of it; so, to degrade us as much as possible, we were hand-cuffed and conducted to the guard-house.

We were tried by a court-martial. I was condemned to three months' imprisonment, and then to be degraded into the ranks—a most iniquitous sentence for such a trivial affair, but the officers were irritated at me beyond measure.

They asked me if I had anything to say for myself why this sentence should not be executed?

I said that I would disdain to say a word, but, if there was any honour left among mankind, I should yet be righted.

I said this merely from the irritation of the moment, and without any reference to one circumstance connected with the affair. It was however a lucky phrase, and made some impression on my judges at the time, who looked at one another, as visibly suspecting there might be some trick. I was nevertheless remanded back to prison.

Odogherty was next brought in, and being desired to speak for himself, that the judges might hear what he had to bring forward in his defence, he thus addressed the audience:—

"Plaise your honours, the first thing that I must be after spaiking about is not of myself at all at all. I have been told by the mouths of those that con-

ducted me hither, that you have been to pass a sentence, and a hard one enough too, on the other gentleman that was after staling the pooding. It is all blarney and absoordity together, and your honours must call back the words the moment you have said them, for it was I that put the stooff into his pocket, to be a laugh upon him, and he is as unguilty of the whole affair as the child that is not after being born."

"Are you positive of what you say?" said the chief judge.

"Positive? by the shoul of Saint Patrick and that I am too. He had taken a beautiful maid from me that night—he had won all my money, and I had cut out of the game; so to amuse myself, and have some little revenge on him, I took the opportunity, when he was busy at play, to stooff his pockets for him, and that is the truth, your honours, to which I am ready to make oath, whenever, and as often as you have a mind."

Now this was all a contrivance of Odogherty's, but it was a generous and a good-natured one. There was not a word of it true; but this singular youth had the knack of setting off a lie better than the plain truth; and the way in which he interested himself in the matter and expressed his sentiments of it, together with what I had said in court, not only staggered the judges, but convinced them that what he had stated was the fact. The presiding judge, however, said to him—"Ensign, when once your own character is cleared, we will take your affidavit on this matter. As the case now stands, you cannot be admitted as a witness in this court."

Odogherty's guilt was very doubtful. It was proved that he had stripped to wade an imaginary river, and that in the frolicsome mood in which he and his associates were, it had never occurred to his mind to dress himself again, till they were surrounded by the rest of the officers. There was only one thing against him, and that was the losing of his breeches at such a convenient time. But on the other hand, to counterbalance this, it so happened that as soon as the box was found all further search ceased; and it was proven that he who had found the *small clothes* never had himself been searched, so that the box was actually not found in the possession of Odogherty. After long discussion, a verdict of *not proven* was returned, and the ensign was acquitted. For my part, I never know to this day whether he stole the box or not. No one could calculate on what Odogherty might do, either good or bad.

My case was again brought under review. The ensign swore to all he had said. Some doubts arose on the circumstance of the determined resolution I had manifested not to be searched. "O, bless your honours," said Odogherty, "nothing in the world but sheer drunkenness; he would have fought with a flea that night. I was glad you all set on him and pommelled him down, or I should have been forced to fight him myself." The final consequence was, that my sentence was reversed, and my sword and rank restored to me.

I was perfectly conscious of having pocketed the victuals myself, and as soon as I was alone with my friend Odogherty I mentioned the matter to him, when, to my utter astonishment, he declared to my face that I did no such thing, and that he put them there for me, disclaiming at the same time any regard for me, but only for *the truth*. Of all the inconsistencies I had ever seen or heard, this excelled; but as expostulation on my part would have been absurd, I only observed that "I regarded perjury in a very serious point of view." "Pough!" said he, "it is nothing at all at all! I would rather trust myself to the mercy of God than to that of these vile *connoters* at any time." I knew not what he meant by this term, nor would he inform me.

The last winter that I passed in America was with General Howe in Philadelphia, where we disgusted the inhabitants very much by our irregularities. Many of the officers as well as men formed matrimonial connections which they never meant to observe any longer than they remained in that place. Others introduced their mistresses into respectable families, which at last gave great offence. Being sick of an ague when I arrived in the city, I boarded Clifford with an elderly maiden lady in the suburbs, as my sister; and the lady being very devout and strict in her principles, I thought proper, by Clifford's advice, to visit there but seldom, and with much ceremony and deference to both. The old lady soon grew as fond of Clifford as ever a mother was of a child.

This lady was living in narrow circumstances, but she had a brother that was the richest man in New Jersey, though he seldom paid any regard to her; but seeing a dashing beauty with her every day at church, on whom the eyes of all were constantly turned, his visits to his neglected sister were renewed, after having been discontinued for many years, while, at the same time, her circumstances appeared to be bettering every day, as did also those of her lodger, who every week had some new additions to her dress. I grew jealous in the extreme, and determined once more to part with the hussey, whatever it might cost me; though I was obliged to acknowledge to myself that of all women I had ever known, I had the least reason to be suspicious of her.

One holiday we were drawn up in files as the company were coming from church, when I perceived the most elegant and splendid creature I had ever seen coming down the parade among the rest, leaning on the arm of a tall elderly gentleman. She was dressed in green silk, with a plumed bonnet, and veil of the same colour, bound with crapes of gold. I was petrified with admiration, but more with astonishment when, as passing by, she dropped me a low and graceful courtesy. At the same instant she whispered a word to her father, who looked at me, and saluted me with a respectful motion of the head.

I could not comprehend it, as I was certain I had never seen either of them before.

I was paralyzed with love, so that my knees shook under me when I saw her turning a corner, where she vanished from my sight. I could not leave my place at that time, for there was no other lieutenant on duty; but my heart was set on discovering her, and from what I had seen I could not doubt that she was desirous I should. I kept my secret and my situation of mind, however, close from all my brother officers. But being unable to take any dinner, I left the mess at an early hour, and walked up the river towards Burlington, where numbers of people were taking the air; but of my charmer I could see nothing. How my mind yearned to be quit of Clifford—I could not think of her with any degree of patience.

I came back to the town as it grew late, and was sauntering about the corner where I last saw this angelic creature, that had so completely turned my brain. A little chubby servant maid came up, who looked in my face, and smiled as if she knew me. I thought I was acquainted with the face, but had not the least recollection where I had seen it. I chucked her under the chin, and asked if she would accompany me to such a place? "Indeed I will do no such thing," replied she.

"But, my dear," said I, "I have something of the greatest importance to say to you."

"Say it here, where we are then," said she, naming me; "there needs not to be any secrets between you and I."

"And who are you, my pretty little dear?" said I; "for though I know you perfectly well, I cannot recollect your name. If you will tell me that, I am ready to make all due acknowledgments?"

"I will keep that to myself," returned she, "to learn you to look better about you when among friends. But say what you have to say; for I must not be standing chatting with a gentleman on the street at this time of the evening."

"Then first of all," said I, "before I tell you how much I am in love with yourself, can you tell me who the beautiful lady is, that came down from church to-day clad in green silk, and leaning on the arm of her father?"

The lassie dimpled, and eyed me two or three times with a suspicious look; but seeing that I was quite serious, she burst into such a fit of laughter, that I was utterly ashamed, and it was long before I could get another word out of her; but convinced that she knew something of the matter, I would not quit her altogether.

"Are you really quite serious in what you have asked?" inquired she at length, while her eyes were swimming in tears from her excess of merriment. "Upon my honour I am," said I; "there is not anything on earth I would not give to know who that adorable creature is, and what are her connections."

After the provoking imp had indulged in another hearty laugh, she came close up to me, and, smirking in my face, said; "Well, captain, in the first place, I have to inform you, that she is reckoned the most beautiful woman that ever was seen in the states of America. In the second place, that it is believed she will be married in a few weeks to a gentleman of the first rank; and in the third and last place, that she is in love with you, the most imprudent thing perhaps that ever she did in her life, and yet she makes no secret of it. But is it possible, captain, that you do not know that I am her servant, and wait on her, and that you did not see me walking behind her to-day?"

"No, I did not, my dear," said I; "but the next time that you pass with her, I promise that I shall note you. Nay, I promise that I shall never forget you as long as I live, if you will conduct me directly to the presence of that angelic lady."

"I will not take it upon me to do any such thing," replied she; "as far as I may judge, she is better engaged at present; but if you have any letter or message to send to the lady, I shall be very happy to deliver it."

I showered blessings upon her, shook her by the hand, and desired her to wait for me five minutes; and going into a tavern, I wrote a most flaming epistle of love, and darts, and despair, to this object of my adoration, and vowed everlasting fidelity, craving at the same time to be admitted to her presence. This epistle I gave to the girl, being fully resolved to watch her home; but she perceived my drift, and gave me the slip, by going into a mean house, and, as I suppose, out at a door on the other side, for I waited there till it was dark, and saw no more of her.

The next day I received the following letter from the servant in the house where I resided. It was written in a round old-fashioned hand, which I had never seen before, and could not help wondering how such an angelic creature wrote in such a curious antiquated style; but at the contents I wondered still more.

"Sir,—Yours I received. I heard your deeds, and have known you, by seeing you longer than mentioned. Inquiries are making to character; if it conform to favour, I shall not say how glad I will be, or what lengths go for your sake; particularly of a certain young lady, I hope it is not true. Be secret; but trust not that I will see you till cleared of that. Your humble servant, R. Y."

It was plain to me, from this, that the lady was in love with me; but that having heard some suspicious story about Clifford, she was going to make inquiries. I was not afraid of any discoveries being made there, if they came not from my brother officers; for I had behaved always to her as a brother, and a kind one, since we came to that city; but, to make sure of my new flame, I determined to part

with her instantly, and accordingly I wrote to her that I could see her no more, and I inclosed a note for £50. She waited on me next day in the plain russet dress in which I arrayed her. When she entered my apartment my blood rushed to my head, and I scarcely knew what I did or said; for my heart smote me, and I felt that I had done wrong. She had been kind and faithful to me; and saved my life and honour by preventing me from deserting; had bathed and dressed my wounds, and cheerfully shared all my fortunes. But instead of complaining, she addressed me in the same kind and familiar style as she was wont, and only begged of me, that now since we were to part, we should part good friends. She said, that understanding the regiment was soon to march on a long and perilous enterprise, she rather wished to be left behind; for she was tired of following the camp, and that now since she knew my mind she was resolved to marry. "Marry! my dear Clifford," said I, "whom do you mean to marry?"

"A very decent worthy man," said she, "who is neither so young nor so rich as I would choose perhaps, but I want to begin an honest and decent life: you cannot imagine how much I begin to enjoy it already. I have only one request to make, that you will give me away as your sister, and behave to me as such on my wedding-day; which now with your permission, shall be the day after to-morrow."

Overjoyed to find that I was like to get so well off, I promised everything; hoping that now I should enjoy the idol of my affections, the lovely unknown, when this main obstacle was removed. She refused to keep my £50, declaring she had no occasion for it, and I might have much: so I was not hard to persuade to take it again. This was a very shabby mean action. I might have, and ought to have, insisted on her keeping it, as a small marriage portion for the sister of a poor officer; but I took it and put it in my pocket.

On the day appointed for the marriage, a servant came to inform me that the ceremony stayed for me; I went reluctantly in my daily dress, knowing that I should be ushered in among a great number of the lower ranks, for not having made any minute inquiries, I took it for granted that Clifford was about to be married to some old doting artisan, or labouring manufacturer. Instead of that, I was ushered into one of the most elegant houses in the town, and to a select party of ladies and gentlemen. Among the rest I was introduced to a Mr. Oats, to whom I bowed reservedly, not knowing who he was. The parson was ready, and shortly after the bride and her maidens were ushered in, but I looked in vain for Clifford, and knew not how to calculate on anything that I saw—for any one may judge of my astonishment when I perceived that she whom they led in as bride was my beautiful unknown, decked out like a princess, and veiled as before. I knew the air, the shape, the plumes and crapes of gold, at first sight, and could not be mistaken. I had nearly fainted. I felt as if I were going to sink through the floor, and wished to do it. Judging that I had come to the wrong wedding, or that they had sent for me there to mock me, I stared all about me, and twice or thrice opened my mouth to speak, without finding anything to say. At length this angelic being came swimming through the company toward me, and, clasping me in her arms, she threw up her veil and kissed me. "My dear brother," said she, "I am so happy to see you here! I was afraid that you would not countenance me in this, nor give your consent to my remaining in a strange land." "My dearest sister," said I, "upon my soul I did not know you; but I never can, and never will, give my consent to part with you—never—never!" "What! did you not give me your word!" said she, "did you not promise that you would give your Clifford in marriage to the man of her choice with all your heart?"

"Yes I did, and I do still; but then I did not know who you were—that is, I did not know who somebody was, that is you. But I am very ill, and know not what I say, and therefore must beg that you will suffer me to retire." She entreated that her dearest brother would remain, and honour her nuptials with his presence; but I felt as if the house and all the wedding-guests were wheeling about, so I made off with myself in no very graceful manner. I was duped, confoundedly duped—yet I could hardly tell how; and besides, it was all my own doing, and of my own seeking. I never was so ill in my life, for such an infatuation had seized on me, that I could in nowise regard her whom I had lost as Clifford Mackay, the drunken cooper's daughter of Inverness, but as a new superlative being, who had captivated my heart and affections as by magic.

I could not but see that I had behaved disgracefully to her, and that she had acted prudently and wisely, both for herself and me; yet I was eminently unhappy, and kept myself from all company, as much as my duty would allow me, during the short time after that affair that I remained in Philadelphia. Mr. Oats, to whom she was married, was a rich and respectable merchant and planter, and doted so much on her, that though he had been possessed of the wealth of America, he would have laid it at her feet. He was brother to the lady with whom she lodged, and as I learned afterwards, never discovered that she was not in reality my sister. She had taken my family surname from the time that we first came there. It was a lucky marriage for her, as will soon appear.

We soon received marching orders, and set out on our celebrated western campaign, in which we underwent perils and privations that are not to be named. Our women all either died or left us, and there were some of them carried away by the Indians and scalped, for anything that we knew. I was in thirty engagements, in which we lost, by little and

little, more than one third of our whole army. We were reduced to live on the flesh of our horses, and all kinds of garbage that we could find; yet for all that, we never once turned our backs on our enemies. We had the better in every engagement on the lakes, and upon land, yet all our brilliant exploits went for nothing.

I was disgusted beyond bearing with our associates, the American Indians; and the very idea of being in affinity with such beasts made every action that we performed loathsome in my eyes. The taking of those horrid savages into our army to destroy our brethren, the men who sprang from the same country, spoke the same language, and worshipped the same God with ourselves, was an unparalleled disgrace. Remorse and pity, with every sensation of tenderness, were entirely extinct in the breasts of those wretches, having given place to the most ferocious and unrelenting cruelty. They often concealed such prisoners as they took, that they might enjoy, without interruption, the diabolical pleasure of tormenting them to death. I never abhorred any beings so much on earth as I did these, and nothing would have pleased me so well in any warlike service as to have cut them all to pieces. I found two of them one evening concealed among some bushes, wreaking their devilish propensity on a poor American girl whom they had taken prisoner. They had her bound hand and foot, and were mincing and slicing off her flesh with the greatest delight. I could not endure the sight, so I cut them both down with my sabre, and set her at liberty, but they had taken out one of her eyes, and otherwise abused her so much that she died. Whenever we were in the greatest danger they were most remiss, and at the battle of Skenesbury, where they should have supported our army, they stood idle spectators of the conflict, and seemed anxiously to desire that both sides should be exterminated. If the German auxiliaries had not come up and supported us, we had been cut off to a man. Their conduct was still more intolerable in St. Leger's army, where they mutinied and deserted in a body, but not before they had scalped all their prisoners, and tormented them to death in cold blood. I never expected that we could prosper after our connection with these hellish wretches.

At the dreadful encounter on the 7th of October, our regiment, that had suffered much before, was quite ruined; General Frazer himself being killed, with a great number of our best men; and the Germans, who supported us, almost totally cut off, so that we were compelled to yield ourselves prisoners of war. I received two bayonet wounds that day, which caused me great pain during our march. When we yielded, it was stipulated that we should be suffered to depart for Britain; but the congress refused to ratify this, on account, I think, of some suspicion that they took up of the honourableness of our intentions, and we were detained in prison. It was while there in confinement that I saw and took an affectionate leave of Clifford. She had got permission from her husband to visit her dear and beloved brother, and came and stayed with me two nights. On her return home she prevailed with her husband to use his influence in my behalf, which he did, and I obtained my liberty, being one of the few that congress suffered to return home. The worthy old gentleman, after that, had a son that was christened by my name.

I embarked in the *Swallow* of Leith, on the 11th of April. In our passage we suffered a great deal, both from the inclemency of the season and the ignorance of our crew. We were first wrecked in the straits of Belleisle, where we narrowly missed total destruction; and before we got the ship repaired, and reached the coast of Scotland, it was the beginning of October; we were then overtaken by a tremendous storm, and forced to run into a bay called Loch Rog, on the west coast of the isle of Lewis, where we found excellent moorings behind an island. Here I quitted the ship, being heartily sick of the voyage, intending to take a boat across the channel of Lewis, and travel over the Highlands on foot to Edinburgh.

I stayed and sauntered about that island a month, and never in my life was in such a curious country, nor among so curious a people. They know all that is to happen by reason of a singular kind of divination called the second-sight. They have power over the elements, and can stop the natural progress of them all save the tides. They are a people by themselves, neither Highlanders nor Lowlanders, at least those of Uig are, and have no communication with the rest of the world; but with the beings of another state of existence they have frequent intercourse. I at first laughed at their stories of hobgoblins and water spirits, but after witnessing a scene that I am going to describe, I never disbelieved an item of anything I heard afterwards, however far out of the course of nature it might be. I am now about to relate a story which will not be believed. I cannot help it. If it was any optical illusion, let those account for it who can. I shall relate what I saw as nearly as I can recollect, and it was not a scene to be easily forgotten.

On the banks of this Loch Rog there stands a considerably large village, and above that the gentleman's house, who rents all the country around from Lord Seaforth, and lets it off again to numberless small tenants. Between his house and the village there lies a straight green lane, and above the house, on a rising ground, stand a great number of tall stones that have been raised in some early age, and appear at a distance like an army of tremendous giants. One day a party of seven from on board the *Swallow* was invited to dine with this gentleman. We went out a shooting all the forenoon, and towards evening, on our return, we found all the family in the most dreadful alarm, on account of something

that an old maiden lady had seen which they called *Faileas More* (the Great Shadow), and which they alleged was the herald of terrible things, and the most dismal calamities. The villagers were likewise made acquainted with it, and they were running howling about in consternation.

The family consisted of an old man and his sister, a young man and his wife, and two children; the old man and the two ladies believed the matter throughout, but the young man pretended with us to laugh at it, though I could see he was deeply concerned at what he had heard. The vision was described to us in the following extraordinary manner:

The Great Shadow never comes alone. The next morning after is M'Torquille Dhu's visit. The loss of all the crops, and a grievous dearth in the island, invariably succeed to these. The apparitions rise sometimes in twelve, sometimes in three years, but always on the appearance of An Faileas More, Todhail Mac Torcill takes place next morning between daybreak and the rising of the sun. A dark gigantic shade is seen stalking across the loch in the evening, which vanishes at a certain headland, and from that same place the next morning, at the same degree of lightness, a whole troop of ghosts arise, and with Mac Torcill Dhu (Black M'Torquille), at their head, walk in procession to the standing stones, and there hide themselves again in their ancient graves.

As the one part of this story remained still to be proved, every one of us determined to watch, and see if there was any resemblance of such a thing. But the most extraordinary circumstance attending it was, that it could only be seen from the upper windows of that house, or from the same height in the air, a small space to the eastward of that; and that from no other point on the whole island had it ever been discovered that either of these visions had been seen.

We testified some doubts that the morning might not prove clear, but the old man and the old maiden lady both assured us that it would be clear, as the morning of M'Torquille's visit never was known to be otherwise. Some of us went to bed with our clothes on, but others sat up all night, and at an early hour we were all sitting at the windows, wearying for the break of day. The morning at length broke, and was perfectly clear and serene, as had been predicted. Every eye was strained toward the spot where *the Great Shade* had vanished, and at length the young gentleman of the house said, in a tone expressing great awe, "Yonder they are now." I could not discern anything for the space of a few seconds, but at length, on looking very narrowly toward the spot, I thought I perceived something like a broad shadow on the shore, and on straining my sight a little more, it really did appear as if divided into small columns like the forms of men. It did not appear like a cloud, but rather like the shadow of a cloud; yet there was not the slightest cloud or vapour to be seen floating in the firmament. We lost sight of it for a very short space, and then beheld it again coming over the heath, above the rocks that overhung the shore. The vision was still very indistinct, but yet it had the appearance of a troop of warriors dressed in greenish tartans with a tinge of red. The headland where the apparition first arose, was distant from us about half a mile; they appeared to be moving remarkably slow, yet notwithstanding of that, they were close upon us almost instantly. We were told that they would pass in array immediately before the windows, along the green lane between us and the back of the village; and seeing that they actually approached in that direction, Dr. Scott, a rough, rash, intrepid fellow, proposed that we should fire at them. I objected to it, deeming that it was a trick, and that they were all fellow-creatures, for we now saw them as distinctly as we could see any body of men in the gray of the morning. The young man, however, assuring us that it was nothing human that we saw, I agreed to the proposal, and as they passed in array immediately before the windows, we pointed out the eight loaded muskets directly at them, and fired on this mysterious troop all at once, but not one of them paused, or turned round his head. They all held on with the same solemn and ghost-like movement, still continuing in appearance to be walking very slow, yet some way they went over the ground with unaccountable celerity, and when they approached near to the group of tall obelisks, they rushed in amongst them, and we saw no more, save a reeling flicker of light that seemed to tremble through the stones for a moment.

They appeared to be a troop of warriors, with plaids and helmets, each having a broad targe on his arm, and a long black lance in the other hand, and they were led on by a tall figure in black armour, that walked considerably ahead of the rest. Some of our people protested that they saw the bare skulls below the helmets, with empty eye sockets, and the nose and lips wanting, but I saw nothing like this. They appeared to me exactly like other men, but the truth is, that I never saw them very distinctly, for they were but a short time near us, and during that time, the smoke issuing from the muskets intervened, and, owing to the dead calm of the morning, made us see them much worse. All the people of the village were hid in groups within doors, and engaged in some rite which I did not witness, and cannot describe; but they took great umbrage at our audacity in firing at their unearthly visitors, and I believe there was not one among us, not even the regardless Dr. Scott, who was not shocked at what had been done.

I make no pretensions to account for this extraordinary phenomenon, but the singular circumstance of its being visible only from one point, and no other, makes it look like something that might be accounted for. I can well excuse any who do not believe it, for if I had not seen it with my own eyes,

I never would have believed it. But of all things I ever beheld for wild sublimity, the march of that troop of apparitions excelled; not a day or a night hath yet passed over my head, on which I have not thought with wonder and awe on *the visit of M'Torquille.*

From that time forth, as long as I remained in Lewis, I considered myself in the country of the genii, and surrounded with spiritual beings that were ready to start up in some bodily form at my side. Such influence had the vision I had seen over my mind, and so far was it beyond my comprehension, that I grew like one half-crazed about spirits, and could think or speak about nothing else. For a whole week I lingered about the shores to see the mermaid, for I was assured by the people that she was very frequently to be seen, though they confessed that the male as often appeared as the female. They regarded her as a kind of sea-spirit, and ominous, in no ordinary degree, to the boatmen and fishers; but yet they confessed that she was flesh and blood, like other creatures, and that she had long hair, and a face and bosom so beautiful that their language had no words to describe them. I was actually in love with her, and watched the creeks as anxiously as ever a lover did his mistress's casement; and often when I saw the seals flouncing on the rocks at a distance, I painted them to myself as the most delicate and beautiful mermaids, but on coming near them was always disappointed and shocked at the ugly dog's heads that they set up to me, so that after all, I was obliged to give up my search after mermaids.

They told me of one that fell in love with a young man, named Alexander M'Leod, who often met her upon the shore, at a certain place which they showed me; and had amorous dalliance with her; but he soon fell sick and died, and when she came to the shore, and could no more find him, she cried one while, and sung another, in the most plaintive strains that ever were heard. This was the popular account; but there was an old man told me, who heard her one evening, and watched her, from a concealment close beside her, all the time she was on shore, that she made a slight humming noise like that made by a kid, not when it bleats out, but when it is looking round for its dam, and bleating with its mouth shut, and this was all the sound that she made, or that he believed she was able to make. I asked why he did not go to her; but he answered in his own language, that he would not have gone to her for all the lands of *the Mackenzie.*

M'Leod, when on his death-bed, told his friends of all that had passed between them, and grievously regretted having met with her. He said they never met but she clasped her arms around him, and wished to take him into the sea; but that it was from no evil intent, but out of affection, thinking that he could not live more than she, if left upon dry land. When asked if he loved her, he said that she was so beautiful he could not but love her, and would have loved her much better if she had not been so cold; but he added, that he believed she was a wicked creature. If the young man could imagine all this without any foundation, people may imagine after what they list; for my part, I believed every word of it, though disappointed of meeting with her.

I was equally unsuccessful in my endeavours to see the water-horse, a monster that inhabited an inland lake, of whom many frightful stories were told to me; but in my next attempt at an intercourse with the spirits that inhabit that dreary country, I had all the success that I could desire.

I was told of an old woman who lived in a lone shieling, at the head of an arm of the sea, called Loch Kios, to whom a ghost paid a visit every night. I determined to see the place, and to tarry a night with the old woman if possible. Accordingly, I travelled across the country by a wild and pathless route, and came to her bothy at the fall of night, and going in, I sat down feigning to be very weary, and unable to move farther. We did not understand a word of each other's language, and consequently no conversation, save by signs, could pass between us. I found a miserable old shrivelled creature, rather neatly dressed for that country, but manifestly deranged somewhat in her intellects.

Before I entered, I heard her singing some coronach or dirge, and when I went in I found her endeavouring to mend an old mantle, and singing away in a wild unearthly croon. So intent was she on both, that she scarcely lifted her eyes from her work when I went toward her, and when she did, it was not to me that she looked, but to the hole in the roof, or to the door by which I entered. The sight affected me very much, and in all things that affect me I become deeply interested. I heard that she was speaking to herself of me, for I knew the sound of the word that meant *Englishman*, but it was not with any symptoms of fear or displeasure that she seemed to talk of me, but merely as a thing that being before her eyes, her tongue mentioned as by rote.

The story that prevailed of her was, that being left a widow with an only son, then a child at the breast, she nourished him; he became a man, and the love and affection that subsisted between them was of no ordinary nature, as might naturally be supposed. He was an amiable and enterprising young man, but going out to the fishing once with some associates to the Saint's Islands, he never returned, and there were suspicions that he had been foully murdered by his companions, the weather having been so mild that no accident could have been supposed to have happened at sea. There were besides many suspicious circumstances attending it, but no proof could be led. However, the woman hearing that she had lost her darling son and only stay on earth, set no bounds to her grief, but raved and prayed, and called upon his name, conjuring him

by everything sacred to appear to her, and tell her if he was happy, and all that had befallen to him. These continued conjurations at length moved the dead to return. The spirit of her son appeared to her every night at midnight, and conversed with her about the most mysterious things—about things of life and death—the fates of kingdoms and of men: and of the world that is beyond the grave. She was happy in the communion, and abstracted from all things in this world beside.

I no sooner beheld the object of my curiosity than I thought her crazy, and that the story might have arisen from her ravings. Still she was an interesting object to contemplate; and, resolving to do so for the night, I tried by signs to make her understand that I was a traveller fatigued with walking, and wished to repose myself in her cottage until next morning; but she regarded me no more than she would have done a strayed cat or dog that had come in to take shelter with her. There was one sentence which she often repeated, which I afterward understood to be of the following import, "God shield thee, poor weary Saxon;" but I do not know how to spell it in Erse. I could likewise perceive, that for all the intentness with which she was mending the mantle, she was coming no speed, but was wasting cloth endeavouring to shape a piece suiting to the rent, which she was still making rather worse than better. It was quite visible that either she had no mind, or that it was engaged in something widely different from that at which her hands were employed.

She did not offer me any victuals, nor did she take any herself, but sat shaping and sewing, and always between hands singing slow melancholy airs, having all the wildness of the native airs of that wild and primitive people. Those that she crooned were of a solemn and mournful cast, and seemed to affect her at times very deeply.

Night came on, and still she gave herself no concern at all about me. She made no signs to me either to lie down and rest in the only couch the hovel contained, or to remain, or to go away. The fire sent forth a good deal of smoke, but neither light nor heat; at length, with much delay and fumbling, she put some white shreds of moss into a cruise of oil, and kindled it. This threw a feeble ray of light through the smoke, not much stronger than the light of a glow-worm, making darkness scarcely visible, if I may use the expression.

The woman, who was seated on a dry sod at the side of the fire, not more than a foot from the ground, crossed her arms upon her knees, and, laying her head on them, fell fast asleep. I wrapped myself in my military cloak, and threw myself down on the moss couch, laying myself in such a position that I could watch all her motions as well as looks. About eleven o'clock she awoke, and sat for some time moaning like one about to expire; she then kneeled on the sod seat, and muttered some words, waving her withered arms, and stretching them upward, apparently performing some rite, either of necromancy or devotion, which she concluded by uttering three or four feeble howls.

When she was again seated, I watched her features and looks, and certainly never before saw anything more unearthly. The haggard wildness of the features; the anxious and fearful way in which she looked about and about, as if looking for one that she missed away, made such an impression on me, that my hairs stood all on end, a feeling that I never experienced before, for I had always been proof against superstitious terrors. But here I could not get the better of them, and wished myself anywhere else. The dim lamp, shining amidst smoke and darkness, made her features appear as if they had been a dull yellow, and she was altogether rather like a ghastly shade of something that had once been mortal than anything connected with humanity.

It was apparent from her looks that she expected some one to visit her, and I became firmly persuaded that I should see a ghost, and hear one speak. I was not afraid of any individual of my own species; for, though I had taken good care to conceal them from her, for fear of creating alarm, I had two loaded pistols and a short sword under my cloak; and as no one could enter without passing my couch, by a very narrow entrance, I was sure to distinguish who or what it was.

I had quitted keeping my eyes upon the woman, and was watching the door, from which I thought I could distinguish voices. I watched still more intensely; but hearing that the sounds came from the other side, I moved my head slowly round, and saw, apparently, the corpse of her son sitting directly opposite to her. The figure was dressed in dead clothes; that is, it was wrapped in a coarse white sheet, and had a napkin of the same colour round its head. This was raised up on the brow, as if thrust up recently with the hand, discovering the pale steadfast features, that neither moved eyelid nor lip, though it spoke in an audible voice again and again. The face was not only pale, but there was a clear glazed whiteness upon it, on which the rays of the lamp falling showed a sight that could not be looked on without horror. The winding-sheet fell likewise aside at the knee, and I saw the bare feet and legs of the same bleached hue. The old woman's arms were stretched out towards the figure, and her face thrown upwards, the features meanwhile distorted as with ecstatic agony. My senses now became so bewildered that I fell into a stupor, like a trance, without being able to move either hand or foot. I know not how long the apparition stayed; for the next thing that I remember was being reluctantly wakened from my trance by a feeble cry, which I heard through my slumber repeated several times. I looked, and saw that the old miserable creature had fallen on her face, and

was grasping, in feeble convulsions, the seat where the figure of her dead son had so lately reclined. My compassion overcame my terror; for she seemed on the last verge of life, or rather sliding helplessly from time's slippery precipice, after the thread of existence by which she hung had given way. I lifted her up, and found that all her sufferings were over—the joints were grown supple, and the cold damps of death had settled on her hands and brow. I carried her to the bed from which I had risen, and could scarcely believe that I carried a human body—it being not much heavier than a suit of clothes. After I had laid her down, I brought the lamp near, to see if there was any hope of renovation—she was living, but that was all, and with a resigned though ghastly smile, and a shaking of the head, she expired.

I did not know what to do; for the night was dark as pitch; and I wist not where to fly, knowing the cot to be surrounded by precipitous shores, torrents, and winding bays of the sea; therefore all chance of escape, until daylight, was utterly impossible; so I resolved to trim the lamp, and keep my place, hoping it would not be long till day.

I suppose that I sat about an hour in this dismal place, without moving or changing my attitude, with my brow leaning upon both my hands, and my eyes shut; when I was aroused by hearing a rustling in the bed where the body lay. On looking round, I perceived with horror that the corpse was sitting upright in the bed, shaking its head as it did in the agonies of death, and stretching out its hands towards the hearth. I thought the woman had been vivified, and looked steadily at the face; but I saw that it was the face of a corpse still; for the eye was white, being turned upward and fixed in the socket, the mouth was open, and all the other features immoveably fixed for ever. Seeing that it continued the same motion, I lifted the lamp and looked fearfully round, and there beheld the figure I had so recently seen, sitting on the same seat, in the same attitude, only having its face turned toward the bed.

I could stand this no longer, but fled stumbling out at the door, and ran straight forward. I soon found myself in the sea, and it being ebb tide, I fled along the shore like a deer pursued by the hounds. It was not long till the beach terminated, and I came to an abrupt precipice, washed by the sea. I climbed over a ridge on my hands and knees, and found that I was on a rocky point between two narrow friths, and farther progress impracticable.

I had no choice left me; so, wrapping myself in my cloak, I threw me down in a bush of heath, below an overhanging cliff, and gave up my whole mind to amazement at what I had witnessed. Astonished as I was, nature yielded to fatigue, and I fell into a sound sleep, from which I did not awake till about the rising of the sun. The scene all around me was frightfully wild and rugged, and I scarce could persuade myself that I was awake, thinking that I was still struggling with a dreadful dream. One would think this was a matter easily settled, but I remember well, it was not so with me that morning. I pulled heath, cut some parts of it off, and chewed them in my mouth;—rose—walked about, and threw stones in the sea, and still had strong suspicions that I was in a dream. The adventures of the preceding night dawned on my recollection one by one, but these I regarded all as a dream for certain; and it may well be deemed not a little extraordinary, that to this day, if my oath were taken, I declare I could not tell whether I saw these things in a dream or in reality. My own belief leaned to the former, but every circumstance rather tended to confirm the latter, else, how came I to be in the place where I was.

I scrambled up among the rocks to the westward, and at length came to a small footpath which led from the head of the one bay to the other; and following that, it soon brought me to a straggling hamlet, called, I think, Battaline. Here I found a man that had been a soldier, and had a little broken English, and by his help I raised the inhabitants of the village; and, getting into a fishing-boat, we were soon at the cottage. There we found the body lying stretched, cold and stiff, exactly in the very place and the very position in which I laid it at first on the bed. The house was searched, and grievous to relate, there was no article either of meat, drink, or clothing in it, save the old mantle which I found her mending the evening before. It appeared to me on reflection, that it had been a settled matter between her and the spirit, that she was to yield up her frail life that night, and join his company, and that I had found her preparing for her change. The cloak she had meant for her winding-sheet, having nothing else; and by her little hymns and orgies she had been endeavouring to prepare her soul for the company among whom she knew she was so soon to be. There was a tint of spiritual sublimity in the whole matter.

On my arrival at Inverness, I made inquiries concerning Mackay the cooper, and, learning that he was still alive, I made the boy at the inn point him out to me. He was a fine-looking old Highlander, but in wretched circumstances with regard to apparel. I did not choose to bring him into the house where I lodged, but, watching an opportunity, I followed him into a lowly change-house, and found him sitting in a corner, without having called for anything to drink, and the manner in which his hostess addressed him, bespoke plainly enough how little he was welcome. I called for a pot of whisky, and began to inquire at all about me of the roads that led to the Lowlands, and, among other places, for the country of the Grants. Here old Mackay spoke up: "If she'll pe after te troving, she'll find te petterest bhaists in Sutherland, and te petterest shentlemans in te whole worlts to pe selling tem from:"—thus trying to forward the interest of his

clan and chief, of which a Highlander never loses sight for a moment, be his circumstances what they will. But the hostess, who, during this address, had been standing in the middle of the floor with a wooden ladle in her hand, looking sternly and derisively at the speaker, here interposed. "Petter cattles in Sutherland tan Strathspey, cooper? Fat's te man saying? One of Shemish More Grant's cows wad pe taking in one of Lord Reay's cromachs into within its pody in te inside. And wha will pe saying tat te Mackays are te petterest shentlemans of te Grants in tis house? Wha wad misca' a Gordon on te raws o' Strathbogie? Wha wad come into te Grant's Arms Tavern and Hottle, to tell te Grant's own coosin tat te Mackays pe te petter shentlemans? Te Mackays forseeth! An te stock shoult pe all like the sample she'll see a fine country of shentlemans forseeth! Tat will eat her neighbour's mhaits and trink him's trinks, an' teil a pawpee to sheathe in him's tanks." The cooper, whose old gray eye had begun to kindle at this speech, shrunk from the last sentence. It was rather hitting him on the sore heel. And moreover, the hostess of the Grant's Arms Tavern and Hotel was brandishing her wooden ladle in a way that gave him but little encouragement to proceed with his argument, so he only turned the quid furiously in his mouth; and, keeping his gray malignant eye fixed on the lady of the hotel, uttered a kind of low "humph." It was far more provoking than any language he could have uttered. "Fat te deil man, will she pe sitting grumphing like a sow at a porn laty in her own house? Get out of my apodes, you ould trunken plackgards," said the termagant hostess of the Grant's Arms, and so saying, she applied her wooden ladle to the cooper's head and shoulders with very little ceremony. He answered in Gaelic, his native tongue, and was going to make good his retreat, when I desired the hostess to let him remain, as I wished to make some inquiries at him about the country. When he heard that, he ran by her, cowering down his head as if expecting another hearty thwack as he passed, and placed himself up between my chair and the wall. I asked him if he would take share of my beverage, and at the same time handed him a queich filled with good Ferintosh. "And py her faith man and tat she will!—Coot health, sir," said he, with hurried impatience, and drank it off; then, fixing his eyes on me, that swam in tears of grateful delight, he added, "Cot pless you, man! Ter has not te like of tat gone up her troat for mony a plessed tay." "Aye," said the hostess, "te heat of some's troat has gart teir pottoms kiss te cassick." The cooper eyed her with apparent jealousy; but, desirous to keep his station, he only said "She never was peen sawing Mrs. Grant tis way pefore, but her worst wort pe always coming out te first, and she's a coot kint laty after all, and an honest laty too, sir, and she has often peen tooing coot to me and mine."

I conversed for some time with him about general matters, always handing him a little whisky between, which he drank heartily, and soon began to get into high spirits. I then inquired his name, and having heard it, I pretended to ruminate, repeating the name and occupation to myself for some time, and at length asked if he never had a daughter called Clifford? The old man stared at me as if his eyes would rend their sockets, and his head trembled as if some paralytic affection had seized him, but, seeing that I still waited for an answer, he held down his head, and said, with a deep sigh, "Och! and inteed, and inteed she had!" I asked if he knew that she was still living, or what had become of her? But before he answered this question, with true Highland caution he asked me, "Fat do you ken of my poor misfortunate pairn?" I said I had met with her once, in a country far away, and requested that he would tell me what kind of a girl she had been in her youth, and why she left her native country. The old man was deeply affected, much more than I could have expected one of his dissipated habits to be, and he answered me thus, while the tears were dropping from his eyes, "Alas, alas! my Cliffy was a fary tear bairn; a fary plessed cood disposed pairn as ever were peing porn, but she lost its moter, and ten she pe ill guidit, and worse advised."

"I weet weel, master, te cooper Mackay says right for eence, said the lady of the Grant's Arms, "for never was ter ane waur eesed breed in nae kintry tan puir Cliffy. De ye ken, sir, I hae seen tat auld trunken teek sitting at te fisky a' te neeght, and te peer lassick at heme wi' neither coal nor candle, nor meat nor trink, and gaun climp climping about on te cassick without either stockings or sheen. She was peing a kind affectionfee pairn to him, but was eesed waur tan a peest. Mony's the time and aft tat I hae said, 'Cliffy Mackay will either mak a speen or spill a guid horn,' and sae it turned out, for she was ponny, and left till hersel. But the vagabons that misleedit her has leeved to repent it—pless my heart, I wonder how he can look i' te auld cooper's face? Heaven's ay jeest and rightees, and has paid him heme for traducing ony puir man's pairn. Cot pe wi' us, sir, he's gaun apeet tis town, ye wad be wae to see him; he gangs twafauld o'er a steeck, and I widnee gie him credit de ye ken for a pot of fisky. Cot's preath gin tere pe not he jeest comin' in; speak o' te deil and he'll appear."

This speech of the lady's of the burning Mountain had almost petrified me, which need not be wondered at, considering how much I was involved in all to which it alluded; but I had not time either to make inquiries or observations, ere the identical Lieutenant Colin Frazer entered our hall (the only tenable apartment that the Grant's Arms Tavern and Hotel contained) in a woeful plight indeed. He was emaciated to skin and bone, and walked

quite double, leaning on a staff. Never shall I forget his confounded and mortified looks, when he saw the father of Clifford Mackay and me sitting in close conference together at the side of the fire. He looked as if he would have dropped down, and his very lips turned to a livid whiteness. He had not a word to utter, and none of us spoke to him, but at last our hostess somewhat relieved his embarrassment by saying, "Guide'en, guide'en til ye, Captain Frazer." "Coote'en Mustress Grhaunt, coote'en. She pe fary could tay tat. Any nhews, Mustress Grhaunt? She pe fary could tay; fary could inteed. Hoh oh oh oh—pooh pooh pooh pooh." And so saying, he left the Grant's Arms faster than he entered.

"Cot bless my heart, fat ails te man?" cried our hostess, "he looks as gin he had seen te ghaist o' his grandmither. Is it te auld cooper's face tat he's sae freighit for? Ten his kinscience is beguid to barm at last. Teil tat it birst te white middrit o' him."

The cooper now eagerly took up the conversation where we had left off, and inquired about his lost child, and when I told him that she was well and happy, and married to a rich man that doted on her; that she was the mother of a fine boy, and lived in better style than any lady in Inverness, he seized my hand, and, pressing it between his, wet it with a flood of tears, showering all the while his blessings on me, on his Cliffy, her husband, and child promiscuously. I was greatly affected, for, to say the truth, I had felt, ever since we parted, a hankering affection for Clifford, such as I never had for any human being but herself; yet so inconsistent were all my feelings, that the impression she made on my heart, when I did not know who she was, still remained uppermost, keeping all the intimacy and endearments that had passed between us in the shade, and I found myself deeply interested in the old drunken cooper on her account. Being likewise wrought up by the Highland whisky to high and generous sentiments, I made the cooper a present of ten guineas in his daughter's name, assuring him, at the same time, that I would see the same sum paid to him every year.

The lady of the burning Mountain now bustled about, and fearing that the cooper "wadnee hae been birsten wi' his meltith," as she termed it, made him a bowl of wretched tea, and her whole behaviour to him underwent a radical change. I rather repented of this donation, for my finances could but ill afford it; and I dreaded that the lady of the Grant's Arms Tavern and Hotel would soon get it all. However, I did not think of keeping my word with regard to the succeeding years.

It was the middle of winter when I arrived in Edinburgh, and, owing to the fatigue I had undergone, I was affected with a scorbutic complaint, and my wounds became very troublesome. This had the effect of getting me established on the half-pay list, and I remained totally idle in Edinburgh for the space of three years. During that time I courted and dangled after seventeen different ladies, that had, or at least were reported to have large fortunes; for the greater part of such fortunes amount to nothing more than a report. I was at one time paying my addresses to four, with all the ardour I was master of; however, I did not get any of them, and living became very hard, so that I was often driven to my last shift for a dinner, and to keep appearances somewhat fair.

I had my lodgings from a tailor in Nicholson Street, who supplied me with clothes, and with him I soon fell deep in debt. When my small pay came in, I went and paid up my grocers in part, and thus procured a little credit for another season, till I could find a fair pretence of being called away on some sudden service, and leaving them all in the lurch. Those who imagine that a half-pay officer lives a life of carelessness and ease, are widely mistaken; there is no business that I know of which requires so much dexterity and exertion. Things were coming to a crisis with me, and I saw the time fast approaching when Edinburgh, and Nicholson Street in particular, would be too hot for my residence. The forage, besides, had completely failed, so that there was an absolute necessity for shifting head-quarters, but how to accomplish that was the next great concern.

"A wife I must have!" said I to myself, "either with more or less money, else my credit is gone for ever;" and in order to attain this honourable connection, never did man court with such fervour as I did at this time. My passion of love rose to the highest possible pitch, and I told several ladies, both old and young ones, that it was impossible I could live without them. This was very true, but there's a kind of coldness about the idea of half-pay, that Cupid himself cannot warm. They remained unmoved, and took their own way, suffering me to take mine. There was, however, one good thing attending these attacks. Whenever *any* of the besieged were invited to tea, I was sure to be invited too by their gossips; and either with those who invited me, or with such as I conducted home, I generally contrived to *tarry supper*. We are the most useful and convenient of all men for evening parties where not much is going, but worthy citizens seldom choose men of our calibre for their dinner companions.

I was right hard beset now, and at length was obliged to make a great fuss, and tell my landlady that my father was dead (this was the truth, only he had died four years before), and that I was obliged to go to the country to attend the funeral, at which I would require all the ready money I had, but on winding up his affairs I would be enabled to settle everything; and then embracing the lady of the needle, I bade her adieu for *a few weeks* with much apparent regret.

Straightway I made for my brother's house in

Lammer Moor, and resolved to stay there a while at free quarters until my pay ran up; but though my brother was civil, he was no more—he was in easy, but not affluent circumstances, and had a rising family to provide for, and I easily perceived that I was not a very welcome guest. My sister-in-law, in particular, took little pains to conceal her disapprobation, and often let me hear things not a little mortifying. Nevertheless, I kept my ground against every opposition, until found out by my friend the tailor, who, having learned that I had not been telling his wife the genuine truth, threatened me with a prosecution for the recovery of the sums I owed him. Others followed his example, and there was no more peace for me there.

I saw that there would be no end of all my labours; and, owing to my thriftless and liberal manner of living, my difficulties increased to a degree that could no longer be withstood.

I therefore was obliged to apply to my old friend, Mrs. Rae. She had a wife in her eye ready for me; a rich widow, and a worthy excellent woman, rather well looked—so she described her; and shortly after I was introduced. Instead of finding her well looked, she was so ugly I could scarce bear to look at her. She had gray eyes, shrivelled cheeks, a red nose, and a considerable beard; but everything about the house had the appearance of plenty, cleanliness, and comfort; matters that weighed mightily with one in my situation, so I was obliged to ask her in marriage, and by the help of Mrs. Rae, soon overcame all scruples on the part of my fair lady of the mustachio, who seemed quite overjoyed at the prospect of getting such a husband. Our interviews of love were ludicrous beyond any scene ever witnessed. Had any one seen how she ogled, he would have split his sides with laughter. Her thin lips were squeezed into a languishing smile, her gray eyes softly and squintingly turned on me, and the hairs of her beard moved with a kind of muscular motion, like the whiskers of a cat. Though my stomach was like to turn at this display of the tender passion, I was obliged to ogle again, and press her to name a day, whereon I was to be made the happiest of men!

"Oh! captain, captain, you are a kind, dear, delightful man!" exclaimed she, "you have stole away my heart, and I can no longer *withstand* your *importunities*. Well then, since you will have it so, let it be at Christmas, when the days are short. Oh! captain!" and saying so, she squeezed my hand in both of hers, and lifted up her voice and wept.

The thing that pleased me best in this interview was the receipt of £100 from my now affianced bride to prepare for the wedding, which relieved me a good deal; so that when Christmas came, I was in no hurry for the marriage, but contrived to put it off from day to day. I had a strong impression on my mind that the event was never to happen, though I could divine nothing that was likely to prevent it; but so confident was I of this, that I went on fearlessly till the very last day of my liberty. I had that day, after sitting two hours over my breakfast, thrown myself into an easy chair in a fit of despondence, and was ruminating on all the chequered scenes of my past life, and what was like to be my future fate with this my whiskered spouse. "Pity me! O ye powers of love, pity me!" I exclaimed, and stretched myself back in one of those silent agonies which regret will sometimes shed over the most careless and dissipated mind. I saw I was going to place myself in a situation in which I would drag out an existence, without having one person in the world that cared for me, or one that I loved and could be kind to. The prospect of such a life of selfishness and insignificance my heart could not brook, and never in my life did I experience such bitterness of heart.

While leaning in this languid and sorrowful guise, and just when my grief was at the height, I heard a rap at the door. It was too gentle and timid to be that of a bailiff or creditor, and therefore I took it to be a (still more unwelcome) messenger of love, or perhaps the dame of the mustachio and malmsey nose herself. I strained my organs of hearing to catch the sounds of her disagreeable voice—I heard it; that is, I heard a female voice on the landing-place, and I knew it could be no other; and, though I had pledged myself to lead my life with her, my blood revolted from this one private interview, and I sat up in my seat half enraged. The servant opened the door in the quick abrupt manner in which these impertinent rascals always do it. "A lady wishes to speak with you, sir." "Cannot you show her in then, you blockhead?" He did so; and there entered—Oh heaven!—not my disastrous dame, but the most lovely, angelic, and splendid creature I had ever seen, who was leading by the hand a comely boy about seven years of age, dressed like a prince. My eyes were dazzled, and my senses so wholly confounded that I could not speak a word, but, rising from my seat, I made her a low respectful bow. This she did not deign to return, but coming slowly up to me, and looking me full in the face, she stretched out her beautiful hand. "So then I have found you out at last," said she, taking my unresisting hand in hers. It was Clifford Mackay. "My dear Clifford! my angel, my preserver," said I, "is it you?" and taking her in my arms, I placed her on my knees in the easy chair, and kissed her lips, her cheek, and chin, a thousand times in raptures of the most heartfelt delight, till even the little boy, her only son, wept with joy at seeing our happiness. Her husband had died, and left this her only son heir to all his wealth, the interest of which was solely at her disposal as long as her son was a minor, for the purpose of his education; and when he became of age, she was to have £100 a year as long as she lived. As soon as she found herself in these circumstances, she determined

to find me out, and share it with me, to whatever part of the world I had retired, and in whatever condition of life she found me, whether married or unmarried. With this intent, she told the other guardians of her son's property, that she intended going into Scotland, to live for a time with her relations in that country, and to overlook the education of her son, whom she was going to place at the seminaries there. They approved highly of the plan, and furnished her with every means of carrying it into execution; and she having once got a letter from me dated from Edinburgh, as from her brother, she came straight thither, and heard of me at once by applying at the office of the army agent.

I told her of my engagement, and of my determination to break it off, and make her my lawful wife; and she in return acknowledged frankly, that such a connection was what of all things in the world she most wished, if I could do so with honour, but she added, that were I married a thousand times it could not diminish her interest in me one whit. I assured her there was no fear of getting free of my beloved, and sitting down, I wrote a letter to her, stating the impossibility of my fulfilling my engagements with her, as the wife of my youth, whom I had lost among the savages of America more than seven years ago, and had long given up hopes of ever seeing again, had found her way to this country with my child, to claim her rights, which my conscience would not suffer me to deny; and that she had arrived at my house, and was at that very time sitting with me at the same table.

Clifford and I were regularly married, and have now lived together eighteen years as man and wife, and I have always found her a kind, faithful, and good-natured companion. It is true we have lived rather a dissipated, confused, irregular sort of life, such as might have been expected from the nature of our first connection: but this has been wholly owing to my acquired habits, and not to any bias in her disposition towards such a life. We lived in affluence till the time that her son became of age, but since that period we feel a good deal of privation, although our wants are mostly artificial; and I believe I have loved her better than I could have loved any other, and as well as my unstaid mind was capable of loving any one.

These last eighteen years of my life have been so regular, or rather so uniformly irregular, that the shortest memorandum of them that I could draw up would be flat and unprofitable. There has been nothing varied in them—nothing animating; and I am wearing down to the grave, sensible of having spent a long life of insignificance, productive of no rational happiness to myself, nor benefit to my fellow-creatures. From these reflections have I been induced to write out this memoir. The exercise has served to amuse me, and may be a source of amusement as well as instruction to others. From the whole of the narrative these moral axioms may be drawn: That without steadiness in a profession, success in life need not be expected; and without steadiness of principle we forego our happiness both here and hereafter. It may be deemed by some that I have treated female imprudence with too great a degree of levity, and represented it as productive of consequences that it does not deserve; but in this, I am only blameable in having adhered to the simple truth. Never yet was there a *young* female seduced from the paths of virtue, who did not grievously repent, and who would not gladly have returned, had an opportunity offered, or had even a possibility been left. How cruel then to shut the only door, on the regaining of which the eternal happiness or misery of a fellow-creature depends. I have known many who were timeously snatched from error before their *minds* were corrupted, which is not the work of a day; and who turned out characters more exemplary for virtue and every good quality than in all likelihood they would have been, had no such misfortune befallen them.

"The rainbow's lovely in the eastern cloud,
The rose is beauteous on the bended thorn;
Sweet is the evening ray from purple shroud,
And sweet the orient blushes of the morn:
Sweeter than all, the beauties which adorn
The female form in youth and maiden bloom;
Oh! why should passion ever man suborn
To work the sweetest flower of nature's doom,
And cast o'er all her joys a veil of cheerless gloom!

Oh fragile flower, that blossoms but to fade!—
One slip recovery or recall defies;
Thou walk'st the dizzy verge with steps unstaid,
Fair as the habitants of yonder skies:
Like them thou fallest never more to rise.
Oh fragile flower, for thee my heart's in pain!—
Haply a world is hid from mortal eyes,
Where thou mayst smile in purity again,
And shine in virgin bloom that ever shall remain."

ADAM BELL.

THIS tale, which may be depended on as in every part true, is singular for the circumstance of its being insolvable, either from the facts that have been discovered relating to it, or by reason: for though events sometimes occur among mankind, which at the time seem inexplicable, yet there being always some individuals acquainted with the primary causes of those events, they seldom fail of being brought to light before all the actors in them, or their confidants, are removed from this state of existence. But the causes which produced the events here related have never been accounted for in this world; even conjecture is left to wander in a labyrinth, unable to get hold of the thread that leads to the catastrophe.

Mr. Bell was a gentleman of Annandale, in Dumfriesshire, in the south of Scotland, the proprietor of a considerable estate in that district, part of which he occupied himself. He lost his father when he was an infant, and his mother dying when he was about twenty years of age, left him the sole proprietor of the estate, besides a large sum of money at interest, for which he was indebted, in a great measure, to his mother's parsimony during his minority. His person was tall, comely, and athletic, and his whole delight was in warlike and violent exercises. He was the best horseman and marksman in the county, and valued himself particularly upon his skill in the broadsword. Of this he often boasted aloud, and regretted that there was not one in the country whose skill was in some degree equal to his own.

In the autumn of 1745, after being for several days busily and silently employed in preparing for his journey, he left his own house, and set out for Edinburgh, giving, at the same time, such directions to his servants, as indicated his intention of being absent for some time.

A few days after he had left his home, in the morning, while his housekeeper was putting the house in order for the day, her master, as she thought, entered by the kitchen door, the other being bolted, and passed her in the middle of the floor. He was buttoned in his greatcoat, which was the same he had on when he went from home; he likewise had the same hat on his head, and the same whip in his hand, which he took with him. At sight of him she uttered a shriek, but recovering her surprise, instantly said to him, "You have not stayed so long from us, sir." He made no reply, but went sullenly into his own room, without throwing off his greatcoat. After a pause of about five minutes, she followed him into the room—he was standing at his desk with his back towards her—and asked him if he wished to have a fire kindled? and afterwards if he was well enough? but he still made no reply to any of these questions. She was astonished, and returned into the kitchen. After tarrying about other five minutes, he went out at the front door, it being then open, and walked deliberately towards the bank of the river Kinnel, which was deep and wooded, and in that he vanished from her sight. The woman ran out in the utmost consternation to acquaint the men who were servants belonging to the house; and coming to one of the ploughmen, she told him that their master was come home, and had certainly lost his reason, for that he was wandering about the house and would not speak. The man loosed his horses from the plough and came home, listened to the woman's relation, made her repeat it again and again, and then assured her that she was raving, for their master's horse was not in the stable, and of course he could not be come home. However, as she persisted in her asseveration with every appearance of sincerity, he went into the linn to see what was become of his mysterious master. He was neither to be seen nor heard of in all the country! It was then concluded that the housekeeper had seen an apparition, and that something had befallen their master; but on consulting with some old people, skilled in those matters, they learned, that when a *wraith*, or apparition of a living person, appeared while the sun was up, instead of being a prelude of instant death, it prognosticated very long life; and, moreover, that it could not possibly be a ghost that she had seen, for they always chose the night season for making their visits. In short, though it was the general topic of conversation among the servants, and the people in their vicinity, no reasonable conclusion could be formed on the subject.

The most probable conjecture was, that as Mr. Bell was known to be so fond of arms, and had left his home on the very day that prince Charles Stuart and his Highlanders defeated General Hawley on Falkirk Moor, he had gone either with him or the Duke of Cumberland to the north. It was, however, afterwards ascertained, that he had never joined any of the armies. Week passed after week, and month after month, but no word of Mr. Bell. A female cousin was his nearest living relation; her husband took the management of his affairs; and, conclud-

ing that he had either joined the army, or drowned himself in the Kinnel, when he was seen going into the linn, made no more inquiries after him.

About this very time, a respectable farmer, whose surname was M'Millan, and who resided in the neighbourhood of Musselburgh, happened to be in Edinburgh about some business. In the evening he called upon a friend who lived near Holyrood-house; and being seized with an indisposition, they persuaded him to tarry with them all night. About the middle of the night he grew exceedingly ill, and not being able to find any rest or ease in his bed, imagined he would be the better of a walk. He put on his clothes, and that he might not disturb the family, slipped quietly out at the back door, and walked in St. Anthony's Garden behind the house. The moon shone so bright that it was almost as light as noonday, and he had scarcely taken a single turn, until he saw a tall man enter from the other side, buttoned in a drab-coloured greatcoat. It so happened, that at that time M'Millan stood in the shadow of the wall, and perceiving that the stranger did not observe him, a thought struck him that it would not be amiss to keep himself concealed; that he might see what the man was going to be about. He walked backwards and forwards for some time in apparent impatience, looking at his watch every minute, until at length another man came in by the same way, buttoned likewise in a greatcoat, and having a bonnet on his head. He was remarkably stout made, but considerably lower in stature than the other. They exchanged only a single word; then turning both about, they threw off their coats, drew their swords, and began a most desperate and well-contested combat.

The tall gentleman appeared to have the advantage. He constantly gained ground on the other, and drove him half round the division of the garden in which they fought. Each of them strove to fight with his back towards the moon, so that she might shine full in the face of his opponent; and many rapid wheels were made for the purpose of gaining this position. The engagement was long and obstinate, and by the desperate thrusts that were frequently aimed on both sides, it was evident that they meant one another's destruction. They came at length within a few yards of the place where M'Millan still stood concealed. They were both out of breath, and at that instant a small cloud chancing to overshadow the moon, one of them called out, "Hold, we can't see." They uncovered their heads—wiped their faces—and as soon as the moon emerged from the cloud, each resumed his guard. Surely that was an awful pause! and short, indeed, was the stage between it and eternity with the one! The tall gentlemen made a lounge at the other, who parried and returned it; and as the former sprung back to avoid the thrust, his foot slipped, and he stumbled forward towards his antagonist, who dexterously met his breast in the fall with the point of his sword, and ran him through the body. He made only one feeble convulsive struggle, as if attempting to rise, and expired almost instantaneously.

M'Millan was petrified with horror; but conceiving himself to be in a perilous situation, having stolen out of the house at that dead hour of the night, he had so much presence of mind as to hold his peace, and to keep from interfering in the smallest degree.

The surviving combatant wiped his sword with great composure—put on his bonnet—covered the body with one of the great coats—took up the other, and departed; M'Millan returned quietly to his chamber without awakening any of the family. His pains were gone, but his mind was shocked and exceedingly perturbed; and after deliberating until morning, he determined to say nothing of the matter, and to make no living creature acquainted with what he had seen, thinking that suspicion would infallibly rest on him. Accordingly he kept his bed next morning until his friend brought him the tidings, that a gentleman had been murdered at the back of the house during the night. He then arose and examined the body, which was that of a young man, seemingly from the country, having brown hair, and fine manly features. He had neither letter, book, nor signature of any kind about him, that could in the least lead to a discovery of who he was; only a common silver watch was found in his pocket, and an elegant sword was clasped in his cold bloody hand, which had an A and B engraved on the hilt. His antagonist's weapon had entered at his breast, and gone out at his back a little below the left shoulder. He had likewise received a slight wound on the sword-arm.

The body was carried to the dead-room, where it lay for eight days, and though great numbers inspected it, yet none knew who or whence the deceased was, and he was at length buried among the strangers in the Greyfriars' Churchyard.

Sixteen years elapsed before M'Millan once mentioned the circumstance of his having seen the duel to any person; but, at that period, being in Annandale receiving some sheep that he had bought, and chancing to hear of the astonishing circumstances of Bell's disappearance, he divulged the whole. The time, the description of his person, his clothes, and above all, the sword with the initials of his name engraven upon it, confirmed the fact beyond the smallest shadow of doubt, that it was Mr. Bell whom he had seen killed in the duel behind the Abbey. But who the person was that slew him, how the quarrel commenced, or who it was that appeared to his housekeeper, remains to this day a profound secret, and is likely to remain so, until that day when every deed of darkness shall be brought to light.

Some have even ventured to blame M'Millan for

the whole, on account of his long concealment of facts; and likewise in consideration of his uncommon bodily strength and daring disposition, he being one of the boldest and most enterprising men of the age in which he lived; but all who knew him despised such insinuations, and declared them to be entirely inconsistent with his character, which was most honourable and disinterested; and besides, his tale has every appearance of truth. "*Pluris est oculatus testis unus quam auriti decem.*"[1]

DUNCAN CAMPBELL.

DUNCAN CAMPBELL came from the Highlands, when six years of age, to live with an old maiden aunt in Edinburgh, and attend the school. His mother was dead; but his father had supplied her place by marrying his housekeeper. Duncan did not trouble himself about these matters, nor indeed about any other matters, save a black foal of his father's and a large sagacious collie, named Oscar, which belonged to one of the shepherds. There being no other boy save Duncan about the house, Oscar and he were constant companions—with his garter tied round Oscar's neck, and a piece of deal tied to his big bushy tail, Duncan would often lead him about the green, pleased with the idea that he was conducting a horse and cart. Oscar submitted to all this with great cheerfulness, but whenever Duncan mounted to ride on him, he found means instantly to unhorse him, either by galloping, or rolling himself on the green. When Duncan threatened him, he looked submissive and licked his face and hands; when he corrected him with the whip he cowered at his feet;—matters were soon made up. Oscar would lodge nowhere during the night but at the door of the room where his young friend slept, and woe be to the man or woman who ventured to enter it at untimely hours.

When Duncan left his native home he thought not of his father, nor any of the servants. He was fond of the ride, and some supposed that he scarcely even thought of the black foal; but when he saw Oscar standing looking him ruefully in the face, the tears immediately blinded both his eyes. He caught him around the neck, hugged and kissed him—"Good b'ye, Oscar," said he blubbering; "good b'ye, God bless you, my dear Oscar." Duncan mounted before a servant, and rode away; Oscar still followed at a distance, until he reached the top of the hill—he then sat down and howled. Duncan cried till his little heart was like to burst. "What ails you?" said the servant. "I will never see my poor honest Oscar again," said Duncan, "an' my heart canna bide it."

Duncan stayed a year in Edinburgh, but he did not make great progress in learning. He did not approve highly of attending the school, and his aunt was too indulgent to compel his attendance. She grew extremely ill one day—the maids kept constantly by her, and never regarded Duncan. He was an additional charge to them, and they never loved him, but used him harshly. It was now with great difficulty that he could obtain either meat or drink. In a few days after his aunt was taken ill, she died. All was in confusion, and poor Duncan was like to perish with hunger. He could find no person in the house, but hearing a noise in his aunt's chamber, he went in, and beheld them dressing the corpse of his kind relation. It was enough. Duncan was horrified beyond what mortal breast was able to endure—he hasted down the stair, and ran along the High Street, and South Bridge, as fast as his feet could carry him, crying incessantly all the way. He would not have entered that house again, if the world had been offered to him as a reward. Some people stopped him, in order to ask what was the matter; but he could only answer them by exclaiming, "O dear! O dear!" and, struggling till he got free, held on his course, careless whither he went, provided he got far enough from the horrid scene he had so lately witnessed. Some have supposed, and I believe Duncan has been heard to confess, that he then imagined he was running for the Highlands, but mistook the direction. However that was, he continued his course until he came to a place where two ways met, a little south of Grange Toll. Here he sat down, and his frenzied passion subsided into a soft melancholy; he cried no more, but sobbed excessively, fixed his eyes on the ground, and made some strokes in the dust with his finger.

A sight just then appeared, which somewhat cheered, or at least interested his heavy and forlorn heart: it was a large drove of Highland cattle. They were the only creatures like acquaintances that Duncan had seen for a twelvemonth, and a tender feeling of joy, mixed with regret, thrilled his heart at the sight of their white horns and broad dew-laps. As the van passed him, he thought their

[1] One eye-witness is worth more than ten ear-witnesses.

looks were particularly gruff and sullen; he soon perceived the cause. They were all in the hands of Englishmen—poor exiles like himself—going far away to be killed and eaten, and would never see the Highland hills again!

When they were all gone by, Duncan looked after them and wept anew; but his attention was suddenly called away to something that softly touched his feet; he looked hastily about—it was a poor, hungry, lame dog, squatted on the ground, licking his feet, and manifesting the most extravagant joy. Gracious heaven! it was his own beloved and faithful Oscar, starved, emaciated, and so crippled, that he was scarcely able to walk! He was now doomed to be the slave of a Yorkshire peasant (who, it seems, had either bought or stolen him at Falkirk), the generosity and benevolence of whose feelings were as inferior to those of Oscar, as Oscar was inferior to him in strength and power. It is impossible to conceive a more tender meeting than this was; but Duncan soon observed that hunger and misery were painted in his friend's looks, which again pierced his heart with feelings unfelt before. "I have not a crumb to give you, my poor Oscar!" said he—"I have not a crumb to eat myself, but I am not so ill as you are." The peasant whistled aloud. Oscar well knew the sound, and clinging to the boy's bosom, leaned his head upon his thigh, and looked in his face, as if saying, "O Duncan, protect me from yon ruffian." The whistle was repeated, accompanied by a loud and surly call. Oscar trembled, but fearing to disobey, he limped away reluctantly after his unfeeling master, who, observing him to linger and look back, imagined he wanted to effect his escape, and came running back to meet him. Oscar cowered to the earth in the most submissive and imploring manner, but the peasant laid hold of him by the ear, and uttering many imprecations, struck him with a thick staff till he lay senseless at his feet.

Every possible circumstance seemed combined to wound the feelings of poor Duncan, but this unmerited barbarity shocked him most of all. He hasted to the scene of action, weeping bitterly, and telling the man that he was a cruel brute; and that if ever he himself grew a big man he would certainly kill him. He held up his favourite's head that he might recover his breath, and the man knowing that he could do little without his dog, waited patiently to see what would be the issue. The animal recovered, and stammered away at the heels of his tyrant without daring to look behind him. Duncan stood still, but kept his eyes eagerly fixed upon Oscar, and the farther he went from him, the more strong his desire grew to follow him. He looked the other way, but all there was to him a blank—he had no desire to stand where he was, so he followed Oscar and the drove of cattle.

The cattle were weary and went slowly, and Duncan, getting a little goad in his hand, assisted the men greatly in driving them. One of the drivers gave him a penny, and another gave him twopence; and the lad who had the charge of the drove, observing how active and pliable he was, and how far he had accompanied him on the way, gave him sixpence; this was a treasure to Duncan, who, being extremely hungry, bought three penny rolls as he passed through a town; one of these he ate himself, another he gave to Oscar, and the third he carried below his arm in case of further necessity. He drove on all the day, and at night the cattle rested upon a height, which, by his description, seems to have been that between Gala Water and Middleton. Duncan went off at a side, in company with Oscar, to eat his roll, and, taking shelter behind an old earthen wall, they shared their dry meal most lovingly between them. Ere it was quite finished, Duncan being fatigued, dropped into a profound slumber, out of which he did not awake until the next morning was far advanced. Englishmen, cattle, and Oscar, all were gone. Duncan found himself alone on a wild height, in what country or kingdom he knew not. He sat for some time in a callous stupor, rubbing his eyes and scratching his head, but quite irresolute what was further necessary for him to do, until he was agreeably surprised by the arrival of Oscar, who (although he had gone at his master's call in the morning) had found means to escape and seek the retreat of his young friend and benefactor. Duncan, without reflecting on the consequences, rejoiced in the event, and thought of nothing else but furthering his escape from the ruthless tyrant who now claimed him. For this purpose he thought it would be best to leave the road, and accordingly he crossed it, in order to go over a waste moor to the westward. He had not got forty paces from the road, until he beheld the enraged Englishman running towards him without his coat, and having his staff heaved over his shoulder. Duncan's heart fainted within him, knowing it was all over with Oscar, and most likely with himself. The peasant seemed not to have observed them, as he was running, and rather looking the other way; and as Duncan quickly lost sight of him in a hollow place that lay between them, he crept into a bush of heath, and took Oscar in his bosom—the heath was so long that it almost closed above them; the man had observed from whence the dog started in the morning, and hasted to the place, expecting to find him sleeping beyond the old earthen dike; he found the nest, but the birds were flown. He called aloud; Oscar trembled and clung to Duncan's breast; Duncan peeped from his purple covert, like a heath-cock on his native waste, and again beheld the ruffian coming straight towards them, with his staff still heaved, and fury in his looks. When he came within a few yards he stood still, and bellowed out: "Oscar, yho, yho!" Oscar quaked, and crept still closer to Duncan's breast; Duncan almost sunk in the earth; "Confound him," said the Englishman, "if I had hold of him I should make both him and the little

thievish rascal dear at a small price: they cannot be far gone—I think I hear them;" he then stood listening, but at that instant a farmer came up on horseback, and having heard him call, asked him if he had lost his dog? The peasant answered in the affirmative, and added, that a blackguard boy had stolen him. The farmer said that he met a boy with a dog about a mile forward. During this dialogue, the farmer's dog came up to Duncan's den,—smelled upon him, and then upon Oscar—cocked his tail, walked round them growling, and then behaved in a very improper and uncivil manner to Duncan, who took all patiently, uncertain whether he was yet discovered. But so intent was the fellow upon the farmer's intelligence, that he took no notice of the discovery made by the dog, but ran off without looking over his shoulder.

Duncan felt this a deliverance so great that all his other distresses vanished; and as soon as the man was out of sight, he arose from his covert, and ran over the moor, and ere it was long, came to a shepherd's house, where he got some whey and bread for his breakfast, which he thought the best meat he had ever tasted, yet shared it with Oscar.

Though I had his history from his own mouth, yet there is a space here which it is impossible to relate with any degree of distinctness or interest. He was a vagabond boy, without any fixed habitation, and wandered about Herriot Moor, from one farm-house to another, for the space of a year; staying from one to twenty nights in each house, according as he found the people kind to him. He seldom resented any indignity offered to himself, but whoever insulted Oscar, or offered any observations on the impropriety of their friendship, lost Duncan's company the next morning. He stayed several months at a place called Dewar, which he said was haunted by the ghost of a piper; that piper had been murdered there many years before, in a manner somewhat mysterious, or at least unaccountable; and there was scarcely a night on which he was not supposed either to be seen or heard about the house. Duncan slept in the cow-house, and was terribly harassed by the piper; he often heard him scratching about the rafters, and sometimes he would groan like a man dying, or a cow that was choked in the band; but at length he saw him at his side one night, which so discomposed him, that he was obliged to leave the place, after being ill for many days. I shall give this story in Duncan's own words, which I have often heard him repeat without any variation.

"I had been driving some young cattle to the heights of Willenslee. It grew late before I got home. I was thinking, and thinking, how cruel it was to kill the poor piper! to cut out his tongue, and stab him in the back. I thought it was no wonder that his ghost took it extremely ill; when, all on a sudden, I perceived a light before me. I thought the wand in my hand was all on fire, and threw it away, but I perceived the light glide slowly by my right foot, and burn behind me. I was nothing afraid, and turned about to look at the light, and there I saw the piper, who was standing hard at my back, and when I turned round, he looked me in the face." "What was he like, Duncan?" "He was like a dead body! but I got a short view of him; for that moment all around me grew dark as a pit! I tried to run, but sunk powerless to the earth, and lay in a kind of dream, I do not know how long; when I came to myself, I got up, and endeavoured to run, but fell to the ground every two steps. I was not a hundred yards from the house, and I am sure I fell upwards of a hundred times. Next day I was in a high fever; the servants made me a little bed in the kitchen, to which I was confined by illness many days, during which time I suffered the most dreadful agonies by night, always imagining the piper to be standing over me on the one side or the other. As soon as I was able to walk, I left Dewar, and for a long time durst neither sleep alone during the night, nor stay by myself in the daytime."

The superstitious ideas impressed upon Duncan's mind by this unfortunate encounter with the ghost of the piper, seem never to have been eradicated; a strong instance of the power of early impressions, and a warning how much caution is necessary in modelling the conceptions of the young and tender mind, for, of all men I ever knew, he is the most afraid of meeting with apparitions. So deeply is his imagination tainted with this startling illusion, that even the calm disquisitions of reason have proved quite inadequate to the task of dispelling it. Whenever it wears late, he is always on the look-out for these ideal beings, keeping a jealous eye upon every bush and brake, in case they should be lurking behind them, ready to fly out and surprise him every moment; and the approach of a person in the dark, or any sudden noise, always deprives him of the power of speech for some time.

After leaving Dewar, he again wandered about for a few weeks; and it appears that his youth, beauty, and peculiarly destitute situation, together with his friendship for his faithful Oscar, had interested the most part of the country people in his behalf; for he was generally treated with kindness. He knew his father's name, and the name of his house; but as none of the people he visited had ever before heard of either the one or the other, they gave themselves no trouble about the matter.

He stayed nearly two years in a place called Cowhaur, until a wretch, with whom he slept, struck and abused him one day. Duncan, in a rage, flew to the loft, and cut all his Sunday hat, shoes, and coat, in pieces; and not daring to abide the consequences, decamped that night.

He wandered about for some time longer among the farmers of Tweed and Yarrow; but this life was now become exceedingly disagreeable to him. He durst not sleep by himself, and the servants did not

always choose to allow a vagrant boy and his great dog to sleep with them.

It was on a rainy night, at the close of harvest, that Duncan came to my father's house. I remember all the circumstances as well as the transactions of yesterday. The whole of his clothing consisted only of a black coat, which, having been made for a full-grown man, hung fairly to his heels; the hair of his head was rough, curly, and weather-beaten; but his face was ruddy and beautiful, bespeaking a healthy body and a sensible feeling heart. Oscar was still nearly as large as himself, and the colour of a fox, having a white stripe down his face, with a ring of the same colour around his neck, and was the most beautiful collie I have ever seen. My heart was knit to Duncan at the first sight, and I wept for joy when I saw my parents so kind to him. My mother, in particular, could scarcely do anything else than converse with Duncan for several days. I was always of the party, and listened with wonder and admiration: but often have these adventures been repeated to me. My parents, who soon seemed to feel the same concern for him as if he had been their own son, clothed him in blue drugget, and bought him a smart little Highland bonnet; in which dress he looked so charming, that I would not let them have peace until I got one of the same. Indeed, all that Duncan said or did was to me a pattern; for I loved him as my own life. At my own request, which he persuaded me to urge, I was permitted to be his bed-fellow, and many a happy night and day did I spend with Duncan and Oscar.

As far as I remember, we felt no privation of any kind, and would have been completely happy, if it had not been for the fear of spirits. When the conversation chanced to turn upon the Piper of Dewar, the Maid of Plora, or the Pedlar of Thirlestane Mill, often have we lain with the bed-clothes drawn over our heads till nearly suffocated. We loved the fairies and the brownies, and even felt a little partiality for the mermaids, on account of their beauty and charming songs; but we were somewhat jealous of the water-kelpies, and always kept aloof from the frightsome pools. We hated the devil most heartily, although we were not much afraid of him; but a ghost! oh, dreadful! the names ghost, spirit, or apparition sounded in our ears like the knell of destruction, and our hearts sunk within us as if pierced by the cold icy shaft of death. Duncan herded my father's cows all the summer—so did I—we could not live asunder. We grew such expert fishers, that the speckled trout, with all his art, could not elude our machinations: we forced him from his watery cove, admired the beautiful shades and purple drops that were painted on his sleek sides, and forthwith added him to our number without reluctance. We assailed the habitation of the wild bee, and rifled her of all her accumulated sweets, though not without encountering the most determined resistance. My father's meadows abounded with hives; they were almost in every swath—in every hillock. When the swarm was large they would beat us off, day after day. In all these desperate engagements, Oscar came to our assistance, and, provided that none of the enemy made a lodgment in his lower defiles, he was always the last combatant of our party on the field. I do not remember of ever being so much diverted by any scene I ever witnessed, or laughing as immoderately as I have done at seeing Oscar involved in a moving cloud of wild bees, wheeling, snapping on all sides, and shaking his ears incessantly.

The sagacity which this animal possessed is almost incredible, while his undaunted spirit and generosity would do honour to every servant of our own species to copy. Twice did he save his master's life; at one time when attacked by a furious bull, and at another time when he fell from behind my father, off a horse in a flooded river. Oscar had just swum across, but instantly plunged in a second time to his master's rescue. He first got hold of his bonnet, but that coming off, he quitted it, and again catching him by the coat, brought him to the side, where my father reached him. He waked Duncan at a certain hour every morning, and would frequently turn the cows of his own will, when he observed them wrong. If Duncan dropped his knife, or any other small article, he would fetch it along in his mouth; and if sent back for a lost thing, would infallibly find it. When sixteen years of age, after being unwell for several days, he died one night below his master's bed. On the evening before, when Duncan came in from the plough, he came from his hiding-place, wagged his tail, licked Duncan's hand, and returned to his deathbed. Duncan and I lamented him with unfeigned sorrow, buried him below the old rowan tree at the back of my father's garden, placing a square stone at his head, which was still standing the last time I was there. With great labour, we composed an epitaph between us, which was once carved on that stone; the metre was good, but the stone was so hard, and the engraving so faint, that the characters, like those of our early joys, are long ago defaced and extinct.

Often have I heard my mother relate with enthusiasm the manner in which she and my father first discovered the dawnings of goodness and facility of conception in Duncan's mind, though, I confess, dearly as I loved him, these circumstances escaped my observation. It was my father's invariable custom to pray with the family every night before they retired to rest, to thank the Almighty for his kindness to them during the bygone day, and to beg his protection through the dark and silent watches of the night. I need not inform any of my readers that that amiable (and now too much neglected and despised) duty consisted in singing a few stanzas of a psalm, in which all the family joined their voices with my father's, so that the double octaves of the various ages and sexes swelled the simple concert.

He then read a chapter from the Bible, going straight on from beginning to end of the Scriptures. The prayer concluded the devotions of each evening, in which the downfall of Antichrist was always strenuously urged, the ministers of the gospel remembered, nor was any friend or neighbour in distress forgot.

The servants of a family have, in general, liberty either to wait the evening prayers, or retire to bed as they incline, but no consideration whatever could induce Duncan to go one night to rest without the prayers, even though both wet and weary, and entreated by my parents to retire for fear of catching cold. It seems that I had been of a more complaisant disposition; for I was never very hard to prevail with in this respect; nay, my mother used to say that I was extremely apt to take a pain about my heart at that time of the night, and was, of course, frequently obliged to betake me to the bed before the worship commenced.

It might be owing to this that Duncan's emotions on these occasions escaped my notice. He sung a treble to the old church tunes most sweetly, for he had a melodious voice; and when my father read the chapter, if it was in any of the historical parts of Scripture, he would lean upon the table and look him in the face, swallowing every sentence with the utmost avidity. At one time, as my father read the 45th chapter of Genesis, he wept so bitterly, that at the end my father paused, and asked what ailed him? Duncan told him that he did not know.

At another time, the year following, my father, in the course of his evening devotions, had reached the 19th chapter of the book of Judges; when he began reading it, Duncan was seated on the other side of the house, but ere it was half done, he had stolen up close to my father's elbow. "Consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds," said my father, and closed the book. "Go on, go on, if you please, sir," said Duncan—"go on, and let's hear what they said about it." My father looked sternly in Duncan's face, but seeing him abashed on account of his hasty breach of decency, without uttering a word, he again opened the Bible, and read the 20th chapter throughout, notwithstanding of its great length. Next day Duncan was walking about with the Bible below his arm, begging of every one to read it to him again and again. This incident produced a conversation between my parents on the expenses and utility of education; the consequence of which was, that the week following, Duncan and I were sent to the parish school, and began at the same instant to the study of that most important and fundamental branch of literature, the A, B, C; but my sister Mary, who was older than I, was already an accurate and elegant reader.

This reminds me of another anecdote of Duncan, with regard to family worship, which I have often heard related, and which I myself may well remember. My father happening to be absent overnight at a fair, when the usual time of worship arrived, my mother desired a lad, one of the servants, to act as chaplain for that night; the lad declined it, and slunk away to his bed. My mother testified her regret that we should all be obliged to go prayerless to our beds for that night, observing that she did not remember the time when it had so happened before. Duncan said he thought we might contrive to manage it amongst us, and instantly proposed to sing the psalm and pray, if Mary would read the chapter. To this my mother with some hesitation agreed, remarking, that if he prayed as he could, with a pure heart, his prayer had as good a chance of being accepted as some others that were *better worded*. Duncan could not then read, but having learned several psalms from Mary by rote, he caused her seek out the place, and sung the 23d psalm from end to end with great sweetness and decency. Mary read a chapter in the New Testament, and then (my mother having a child on her knee) we three kneeled in a row, while Duncan prayed thus:—"O Lord, be thou our God, our guide, and our guard unto death, and through death,"—that was a sentence my father often used in prayer: Duncan had laid hold of it, and my mother began to think that he had often prayed previous to that time. "O Lord, thou"—continued Duncan, but his matter was exhausted; a long pause ensued, which I at length broke by bursting into a loud fit of laughter. Duncan rose hastily, and without once lifting up his head, went crying to his bed: and as I continued to indulge in laughter, my mother, for my irreverent behaviour, struck me across the shoulders with the tongs. Our evening devotions terminated exceedingly ill; I went crying to my bed after Duncan, even louder than he, and abusing him for his *useless prayer*, for which I had been nearly felled.

By the time that we were recalled from school to herd the cows next summer, we could both read the Bible with considerable facility. But Duncan far excelled me in perspicacity; and so fond was he of reading Bible history, that the reading of it was now our constant amusement. Often have Mary, and he, and I, lain under the same plaid, by the side of the corn or meadow, and read chapter about on the Bible for hours together, weeping over the failings and fall of good men, and wondering at the inconceivable might of the heroes of antiquity. Never was man so delighted as Duncan was when he came to the history of Samson, and afterwards of David and Goliah; he could not be satisfied until he had read it to every individual with whom he was acquainted, judging it to be as new and as interesting to every one as it was to himself. I have seen him standing by the girls, as they were milking the cows, reading to them the feats of Samson; and, in short, harassing every man and woman about the hamlet for audience. On Sundays my parents

accompanied us to the fields, and joined in our delightful exercise.

Time passed away, and so also did our youthful delights!—but other cares and other pleasures awaited us. As we advanced in years and strength, we quitted the herding, and bore a hand in the labours of the farm. Mary, too, was often our assistant. She and Duncan were nearly of an age—he was tall, comely, and affable; and if Mary was not the prettiest girl in the parish, at least Duncan and I believed her to be so, which with us amounted to the same thing. We often compared the other girls in the parish with one another, as to their beauty and accomplishments, but to think of comparing any of them with Mary was entirely out of the question. She was, indeed, the emblem of truth, simplicity, and innocence, and if there were few more beautiful, there were still fewer so good and amiable; but still, as she advanced in years, she grew fonder and fonder of being near Duncan; and by the time she was nineteen, was so deeply in love, that it affected her manner, her spirits, and her health. At one time she was gay and frisky as a kitten; she would dance, sing, and laugh violently at the most trivial incidents. At other times she was silent and sad, while a languishing softness overspread her features, and added greatly to her charms. The passion was undoubtedly mutual between them; but Duncan, either from a sense of honour or some other cause, never declared himself further on the subject, than by the most respectful attention and tender assiduities. Hope and fear thus alternately swayed the heart of poor Mary, and produced in her deportment that variety of affections which could not fail of rendering the sentiments of her artless bosom legible to the eye of experience.

In this state matters stood, when an incident occurred which deranged our happiness at once, and the time arrived when the kindest and most affectionate little social band of friends that ever panted to meet the wishes of each other were obliged to part.

About forty years ago, the flocks of southern sheep, which have since that period inundated the Highlands, had not found their way over the Grampian Mountains, and the native flocks of that sequestered country were so scanty, that it was found necessary to transport small quantities of wool annually to the north, to furnish materials for clothing the inhabitants. During two months of each summer, the hill countries of the Lowlands were inundated by hundreds of women from the Highlands, who bartered small articles of dress, and of domestic import, for wool; these were known by the appellation of *norlan' netties;* and few nights passed, during the wool season, that some of them were not lodged at my father's house. It was from two of these that Duncan learned one day who and what he was; that he was the Laird of Glenellich's only son and heir, and that a large sum had been offered to any person that could discover him. My parents certainly rejoiced in Duncan's good fortune, yet they were disconsolate at parting with him; for he had long ago become as a son of their own; and I seriously believe, that, from the day they first met, to that on which the two *norlan' netties* came to our house, they never once entertained the idea of parting. For my part I wished that the *netties* had never been born, or that they had stayed at their own home; for the thoughts of being separated from my dear friend made me sick at heart. All our feelings were, however, nothing, when compared with those of my sister Mary. From the day that the two women left our house, she was no more seen to smile; she had never yet divulged the sentiments of her heart to any one, and imagined her love for Duncan a profound secret:—no,

> "She never told her love;
> But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
> Feed on her damask cheek;—she pined in thought;
> And, with a green and yellow melancholy,
> She sat like patience on a monument,
> Smiling at grief."

Our social glee and cheerfulness were now completely clouded; we sat down to our meals, and rose from them in silence. Of the few observations that passed, every one seemed the progeny of embarrassment and discontent, and our general remarks were strained and cold. One day at dinner time, after a long and sullen pause, my father said, "I hope you do not intend to leave us very soon, Duncan." "I am thinking of going away to-morrow, sir," said Duncan. The knife fell from my mother's hand: she looked him steadily in the face for the space of a minute. "Duncan," said she, her voice faltering, and the tears dropping from her eyes,—"Duncan, I never durst ask you before, but I hope you will not leave us altogether?" Duncan thrust the plate from before him into the middle of the table—took up a book that lay on the window and looked over the pages. Mary left the room. No answer was returned, nor any further inquiry made; and our little party broke up in silence.

When we met again in the evening, we were still all sullen. My mother tried to speak of indifferent things, but it was apparent that her thoughts had no share in the words that dropped from her tongue. My father at last said, "You will soon forget us, Duncan; but there are some among us who will not so soon forget you." Mary again left the room, and silence ensued until the family were called together for evening worship. There was one sentence in my father's prayer that night, which I think I yet remember, word for word. It may appear of little importance to those who are no wise interested, but it affected us deeply, and left not a dry cheek in the family. It runs thus: "We are an unworthy little flock, thou seest here kneeling before thee, our God; but few as we are, it is probable we shall never all kneel again together before thee in this world. We

have long lived together in peace and happiness, and hoped to have lived so much longer; but since it is thy will that we part, enable us to submit to that will with firmness; and though thou scatter us to the four winds of heaven, may thy almighty arm still be about us for good, and grant that we may all meet hereafter in another and a better world."

The next morning, after a restless night, Duncan rose early, put on his best suit, and packed up some little articles to carry with him. I lay panting and trembling, but pretended to be fast asleep. When he was ready to depart, he took his bundle below his arm, came up to the side of the bed, and listened if I was sleeping. He then stood long hesitating, looking wistfully to the door and then to me alternately, and I saw him three or four times wipe his eyes. At length he shook me gently by the shoulder, and asked if I was awake. I feigned to start, and answered as if half asleep. "I must bid you farewell," said he, groping to get hold of my hand. "Will you not breakfast with us, Duncan?" said I. "No," said he, "I am thinking that it is best to steal away, for it will break my heart to take leave of your parents and"—"And who, Duncan?" said I. "And you," said he. "Indeed, but it is not best, Duncan," said I; "we will all breakfast together for the last time, and then take a formal and kind leave of each other." We did breakfast together, and as the conversation turned on former days, it became highly interesting to us all. When my father had returned thanks to Heaven for our meal, we knew what was coming, and began to look at each other. Duncan rose, and after we had all loaded him with our blessings and warmest wishes, he embraced my parents and me. He turned about. His eyes said plainly, there is somebody still wanting, but his heart was so full he could not speak. "What is become of Mary?" said my father. Mary was gone. We searched the house, the garden, and the houses of all the cottagers, but she was nowhere to be found. Poor, lovelorn, forsaken Mary! She had hid herself in the ancient yew that grows in front of the old ruin, that she might see her lover depart, without herself being seen, and might indulge in all the luxury of woe. Poor Mary! how often have I heard her sigh, and seen her eyes red with weeping, while the smile that played on her languid features, when aught was mentioned to Duncan's recommendation, would have melted a heart of adamant.

I must pass over Duncan's journey to the North Highlands, for want of room, but on the evening of the sixth day after leaving my father's house, he reached the mansion-house of Glenellich, which stands in a little beautiful woody strath, commanding a view of the Deu-Caledonian Sea, and part of the Hebrides; every avenue, tree, and rock was yet familiar to Duncan's recollection, and the feelings of his sensible heart, on approaching the abode of his father, whom he had long scarcely thought of, can only be conceived by a heart like his own. He had, without discovering himself, learned from a peasant that his father was still alive, but that he had never overcome the loss of his son, for whom he lamented every day; that his wife and daughter lorded it over him, holding his pleasure at naught, and rendered his age extremely unhappy; that they had expelled all his old farmers and vassals, and introduced the lady's vulgar presumptuous relations, who neither paid him rents, honour, nor obedience.

Old Glenellich was taking his evening walk on the road by which Duncan descended the strath to his dwelling. He was pondering on his own misfortunes, and did not even deign to lift his eyes as the young stranger approached, but seemed counting the number of marks which the horses' hoofs had made on the way. "Good e'en to you, sir," said Duncan; the old man started and stared him full in the face, but with a look so unsteady and harassed that he seemed incapable of distinguishing any lineament or feature of it. "Good e'en, good e'en," said he, wiping his brow with his arm, and passing by. What there was in the voice that struck him so forcibly it is hard to say. Nature is powerful. Duncan could not think of aught to detain him, and being desirous of seeing how matters went on about the house, thought it best to remain some days *incog.* He went into the fore-kitchen, conversed freely with the servants, and soon saw his stepmother and sister appear. The former had all the insolence and ignorant pride of vulgarity raised to wealth and eminence; the other seemed naturally of an amiable disposition, but was entirely ruled by her mother, who taught her to disdain her father, all his relations, and whomsoever he loved. On that same evening he came into the kitchen, where she then was chatting with Duncan, to whom she seemed attached at first sight. "Lexy, my dear," said he, "did you see my spectacles?" "Yes," said she, "I think I saw them on your nose to-day at breakfast." "Well, but I have lost them since," said he. "You may take up the next you find then, sir," said she. The servants laughed. "I might well have known what information I would get of you," said he regretfully. "How can you speak in such a style to your father, my dear lady!" said Duncan. "If I were he, I would place you where you should learn better manners. It ill becomes so pretty a young lady to address an old father thus." "He!" said she, "who minds him! He's a dotard, an old whining, complaining, superannuated being, worse than a child." "But consider his years," said Duncan, "and besides, he may have met with crosses and losses sufficient to sour the temper of a younger man. You should at all events pity and reverence, but never despise your father." The old lady now joined them. "You have yet heard nothing, young man," said the old laird, "if you saw how my heart is sometimes wrung. Yes. I have had losses indeed." "Your losses!" said his

spouse; "no; you have never had any losses that did not in the end turn out a vast profit." "Do you then account the loss of a loving wife and a son nothing?" said he. "But have you not got a loving wife and a daughter in their room?" returned she; "the one will not waste your fortune as a prodigal son would have done, and the other will take care of both you and that, when *you* can no longer do either; the loss of your son indeed! it was the greatest blessing you could have received!" "Unfeeling woman!" said he; "but Heaven may yet restore that son to protect the gray hairs of his old father, and lay his head in an honoured grave." The old man's spirits were quite gone—he cried like a child; his lady mimicked him, and, at this, his daughter and servants raised a laugh. "Inhuman wretches!" said Duncan, starting up, and pushing them aside, "thus to mock the feelings of an old man, even although he were not the lord and master of you all: but take notice, the individual among you all that dares to offer such another insult to him, I'll roast on that fire." The old man clung to him, and looked him ruefully in the face. "You impudent beggarly vagabond!" said the lady, "do you know to whom you speak? Servants, turn that wretch out of the house, and hunt him with all the dogs in the kennel." "Softly, softly, good lady," said Duncan, "take care that I do not turn you out of the house." "Alas! good youth," said the old laird, "you little know what you are about; for mercy sake forbear: you are brewing vengeance both for yourself and me." "Fear not," said Duncan, "I will protect you with my life." "Pray, may I ask you what is your name?" said the old man, still looking earnestly at him. "That you may," replied Duncan, "no man has so good a right to ask anything of me as you have; I am Duncan Campbell, your own son!" "M-m-m-my son!" exclaimed the old man, and sunk back on a seat with a convulsive moan. Duncan held him in his arms; he soon recovered, and asked many incoherent questions, looked at the two moles on his right leg, kissed him, and then wept on his bosom for joy. "O God of heaven!" said he, "it is long since I could thank thee heartily for anything; now I do thank thee indeed, for I have found my son, my dear and only son!"

Contrary to what might have been expected, Duncan's pretty only sister, Alexia, rejoiced most of all in his discovery. She was almost wild with joy at finding such a brother. The old lady, her mother, was said to have wept bitterly in private, but knowing that Duncan would be her master, she behaved to him with civility and respect. Everything was committed to his management, and he soon discovered, that besides a good clear estate, his father had personal funds to a great amount. The halls and cottages of Glenellich were filled with feasting, joy, and gladness.

It was not so at my father's house. Misfortunes seldom come singly. Scarcely had our feelings overcome the shock which they received by the loss of our beloved Duncan, when a more terrible misfortune overtook us. My father, by the monstrous ingratitude of a friend whom he trusted, lost at once the greater part of his hard-earned fortune. The blow came unexpectedly, and distracted his personal affairs to such a degree, that an arrangement seemed almost totally impracticable. He struggled on with securities for several months, but, perceiving that he was drawing his real friends into danger, by their signing of bonds which he might never be able to redeem, he lost heart entirely, and yielded to the torrent. Mary's mind seemed to gain fresh energy every day. The activity and diligence which she evinced in managing the affairs of the farm, and even in giving advice with regard to other matters, is quite incredible. Often have I thought what a treasure that inestimable girl would have been to an industrious man whom she loved. All our efforts availed nothing; my father received letters of horning on bills to a large amount, and we expected every day that he would be taken from us, and dragged to a prison.

We were all sitting in our little room one day, consulting what was best to be done—we could decide upon nothing, for our case was desperate. We were fallen into a kind of stupor, but the window being up, a sight appeared that quickly thrilled every heart with the keenest sensations of anguish. Two men came riding sharply up by the back of the old school-house. "Yonder are the officers of justice now," said my mother, "what shall we do?" We hurried to the window, and all of us soon discerned that they were no other than some attorney accompanied by a sheriff's officer. My mother intreated of my father to escape and hide himself until the first storm was overblown, but he would in nowise consent, assuring us that he had done nothing of which he was ashamed, and that he was determined to meet every one face to face, and let them do their worst; so, finding all our entreaties vain, we could do nothing but sit down and weep. At length we heard the noise of their horses at the door. "You had better take the men's horses, James," said my father, "as there is no other man at hand." "We will stay till they rap, if you please," said I. The cautious officer did not however rap, but, afraid lest his debtor should make his escape, he jumped lightly from his horse, and hastened into the house. When we heard him open the outer door, and his footsteps approaching along the entry, our hearts fainted within us; he opened the door, and stepped into the room—it was Duncan! our own dearly beloved Duncan. The women uttered an involuntary scream of surprise, but my father ran and got hold of one hand, and I of the other—my mother too, soon had him in her arms, but our embrace was short, for his eyes fixed on Mary, who stood trembling with joy and wonder in a corner of the room, changing her colour every moment. He snatched her up in his

arms and kissed her lips, and, ere ever she was aware, her arms had encircled his neck. "O my dear Mary," said he, "my heart has been ill at ease since I left you, but I durst not then tell you a word of my mind, for I little knew how I was to find affairs in the place where I was going; but ah! you little illusive rogue, you owe me another for the one you cheated me out of then;" so saying, he pressed his lips again to her cheek, and then led her to her seat. Duncan then recounted all his adventures to us, with every circumstance of his good fortune; our hearts were uplifted almost past bearing; all our cares and sorrows were now forgotten, and we were once more the happiest little group that ever perhaps sat together. Before the cloth was laid for dinner, Mary ran out to put on her white gown, and comb her yellow hair, but was surprised at meeting with a smart young gentleman in the kitchen, with a scarlet neck on his coat, and a gold-laced hat. Mary having never seen so fine a gentleman, made him a low courtesy, and offered to conduct him to the room, but he smiled, and told her he was the squire's servant. We had all of us forgot to ask for the gentleman that came with Duncan.

Duncan and Mary walked for two hours in the garden that evening—we did not know what passed between them, but the next day he asked her in marriage of my parents, and never will I forget the supreme happiness and gratitude that beamed in every face on that happy occasion. I need not tell my readers that my father's affairs were soon retrieved, or that I accompanied my dear Mary a bride to the Highlands, and had the satisfaction of saluting her as Mrs. Campbell, and Lady of Glenellich.

AN OLD SOLDIER'S TALE.

"Ye didna used to be sae hard-hearted wi' me, goodwife," said Andrew Gemble to old Margaret, as he rested his meal-pocks on the corner of the table: "if ye'll let me bide a' night I'll tell you a tale." Andrew well knew the way to Margaret's heart. "It's no to be the battle o' Culloden, then, Andrew, ye hae gart me greet owre often about that already." "Weel, weel, goodwife, it sanna be the battle o' Culloden, though I like whiles to crack about the feats o' my young days." "Ah, Andrew! I'll ne'er forgie you for stabbing the young Stuart o' Appin. I wish God may forgie you: but if ye dinna repent o' that, ye'll hae a black account to render again *ae day*." "Ay, but it will maybe be lang till that day; an' I'll just tell ye, goodwife, that I'll *never* repent o' that deed. I wad hae stickit a' the rebel crew, an' their papish prince, the same way, if I could hae laid my neeves on him; repent, quo' she!"

"Andrew, ye may gae your ways down to Deephope, we hae nae bed to lay ye in; ye're no gaun to bide here a' night, an' the morn the Sabbath day." "There's for ye now! there's for ye! that's the gratitude that an auld sodger's to expect frae the fok that he has sae often ventured his life for! weel, weel, I'll rather trodge away down to Deephope, auld, an' stiff, an' wearied as I am, ere I'll repent when ony auld witch in the country bids me." "Come your ways into this cozy nook ayont me, Andrew; I'll e'en tak' you in for ae night without repentance. We should a' do as we would like to be done to." "The deil tak' ye, goodwife, gin ye haena spoken a mouthfu' o' sense for aince; fair fa' your honest heart, you are your father's bairn yet, far a' that's come an' gane." But the unyielding spirit of Andrew never forsook him for a moment. He was no sooner seated, than, laying his meal-pocks aside, and turning his dim eye towards old Margaret, with a malicious grin, he sung the following stanza of an old song, with a hollow and tremulous croon:

> "O the fire, the fire and the smoke
> That frae our bold British flew,
> When we surrounded the rebels rude,
> That waefu' popish crew!
> And O the blood o' the rebels rude
> Alang the field that ran;
> The hurdies bare we turned up there
> Of many a Highland clan."

But ere he had done with the last stanza, his antagonist had struck up in a louder and shriller key, "Hey, Johnny Cope, are ye waukin yet," &c., which quite drowned Andrew, and sharpened the acrimony of his temper. He called her "an auld jacobite," and wished he "had ken'd her in the year forty-sax; he wad hae gotten her strappit like a herring." He had, however, given her her cue; she overpowered him with songs on the side of the Highlanders, against whom Andrew had served, all of them so scurrilous and severe, that he was glad to begin his tale that he might get quit of them: it was to the following effect, but were I to tell it in his own dialect, it would be unintelligible to the greater part of my readers.

"You will often have heard, gudewife, that the

Duke of Cumberland lay long in a state of inaction that year that he pursued the rebels to the north, so long indeed that many had concluded that he durst not follow them into their native fastnesses. The duke, however, acted with great prudence, for the roads were bad, and the rivers impassable, and by remaining about Aberdeen until the return of spring, he kept the rebels up among their mountains, and prevented them from committing depredations on the Lowlands.

"I was a sergeant in the Royals then, and was ordered to the westward, along with some of the Campbells, to secure certain passes and fortresses, by which the rebels kept up a communication with the south. We remained two weeks at a little village on the Don, but all was quiet on that road, nor did we ever lay hold of one suspicious character, though we kept a watch at the Bridge-end, both night and day. It was about the beginning of March, and the weather was dreadful; the snow was drifting every night; and the roads were so blocked up by wreaths and ice, that to march seemed impossible, although we knew that on the road west from us the Highlanders had established a line of communication; and besides, we could get nothing where we were, either to eat or drink. The gentlemen at head-quarters knew not that the snow lay so deep in the heights of Strathdon, and we received orders to march directly to the westward, to the next line of road. None of us liked the duty we were engaged in, for besides being half famished with cold and hunger, we had accounts every day of great bodies of rebels that were hovering about the country of the Grants, and Braemar, laying all true subjects under contribution, and taking from the country people whatever they pleased. We were likewise alarmed by a report that John Roy Stuart, accompanied by the Maclauchlans, had cut in pieces all our forces stationed at Keith, which turned out a very trifling matter after all, but it left us, as we supposed, quite exposed to every incursion from the north, and we were highly discontented. Captain Reginald Campbell commanded this flying party, a very brave fellow, and one to whom a soldier might speak as a friend. One day he came up from Lord Kintore's house, and after inspecting the different companies, he took me aside, and asked how I liked the service. 'Faith, captain,' says I, 'if we stay long here, you will soon have a poor account of us to render; the men are positively dying with hunger and cold. The Campbells make good shift, for they can talk the horrid jargon of the country; but as for us of the Royals, we can get not a morsel; and captain, if these Macintoshes come down upon us, we will not be a mouthful to them. Poor Renwick and Colstan are both dead already; and curse me if I was not afraid that these hungry ragamuffins of the village would eat them.'"

"If ye are gaun to tell us a story, Andrew," said old Margaret, "tell it even on, without mixing it up wi' cursing and swearing. What good can that do to the story? Ye gar a' my heart dirle to hear ye."

"Owther let me tell it in my ain way, gudewife, or else want it."

"Weel, Andrew, I'll rather want it than hear ye tak *His* name in vain."

"Wha's name? The deil's, I fancy; for the deil another name blew frae my tongue the night. It is a pity, gudewife, that ye sude be sic a great hypocrite! I hate a hypocrite! An' a' you that mak a fike an' a cant about religion, an'grane, an' pray, are hypocrites ilka soul o' ye. Ye are sodgers that haena the mense to do your duty, and then blubber an' whine for fear o' the lash. But I ken ye better than ye ken yoursel; ye wad rather hear nought else but swearing for a month, or ye didna hear out that story. Sae I'll e'en gae on wi't to please mysel; the deil-ma-care whether it please you or no!"

"'When men die of cold, sergeant, it is for want of exercise,' said he; 'I must remedy this. Gemble, you are a brave fellow; take ten men with you, and a guide, and proceed into the district of Strathavon; look at the state of the roads, and bring me all the intelligence you can about these rebel clans that are hovering over us.'

"Accordingly, I took the men and a guide, and one of the Campbells who could talk Gaelic, and proceeded to the north-west till I came to the Avon, a wild and rapid river; and keeping on its banks, through drift and snow, we turned in rather a southerly direction. We had not travelled long by the side of a stream till I observed that the road had very lately been traversed, either by a large body of men or cattle, yet it was so wholly drifted up that we could in no wise discover which of these it had been. It was moreover all sprinkled with blood, which had an ominous appearance, but none of us could tell what it meant. I observed that the two Highlanders, Campbell and the guide, spoke about it in their own language, in a vehement manner, and from their looks and motions I concluded that they were greatly alarmed; but when I asked them what they meant, or what they were saying, they made me no answer, I asked them what they supposed it to have been that made that track, and left all that blood upon the snow? but they only shook their heads and said, 'they could not pe tehlling her.' Still it appeared to have been shed in larger quantities as we proceeded; the wet snow that was falling had mixed with it, and gorged it up so, that it seemed often as if the road had been covered with hillocks of blood.

"At length we came up to a large wood, and by the side of it a small hamlet, where some joiners and sawyers resided, and here we commenced our inquiries. My two Highlanders asked plenty for their own information, but they spoke English badly, and were so averse to tell me anything, that I had nearly lost

all patience with them. At length, by dint of threats and close questioning, I understood that the rebels had fortified two strong castles to the southward, those of Corgarf and Braemar—that a body of the Macintoshes had passed by that same place about three hours before our arrival, with from twenty to thirty horses, all laden with the carcases of sheep which they had taken up on the Duke of Gordon's lands, and were carrying to Corgarf, which they were provisioning abundantly. I asked if there were any leaders or gentlemen of the party, and was answered, that Glenfernet and Spital were both with it, and that it was likely some more, either of the Farquharsons or Macintoshes, would be passing or repassing there that same night or next morning. This was an unwelcome piece of news to me; for, owing to the fatigue we had undergone, and the fall of snow, which had increased the whole day, we could not again reach Strathdon that night, nor indeed any place in our rear, for if we had essayed it, the wind and drift would have been straight in our faces. It appeared the most unaccountable circumstance to me I had ever seen, that the country at so short a distance should be completely under the control of the different armies; but it was owing to the lines of road from which there were no cross ones, or these only at great distances from one another.

"Necessity has no law; we were obliged to take up our quarters at this wretched hamlet all night, at the imminent risk of our lives. We could get nothing to eat. There was not meat of any description in these cots that we could find, nor indeed have I ever seen anything in these Highland bothies, saving sometimes a little milk or wretched cheese. We were obliged to go out a foraging, and at length, after great exertion, got hold of a she-goat, lean, and hard as wood, which we killed and began to roast on a fire of sticks. Ere ever we had tasted it, there came in a woman crying piteously, and pouring forth torrents of Gaelic, of which I could make nothing. I understood, however, that the goat had belonged to her; it had however changed proprietors, and I offered her no redress. I had no trust to put in these savages, so I took them all prisoners, men and women, and confined them in the same cot with ourselves, lest they might have conveyed intelligence to the clans of our arrival, placing the two Highlanders as sentinels at the door, to prevent all ingress or egress until next morning. We then dried our muskets, loaded them anew, fixed our bayonets, and lay down to rest with our clothes on, wet and weary as we were. The cottagers, with their wives and children, lighted sticks on the fire, and with many wild gestures babbled and spoke Gaelic all the night. I, however, fell sound asleep, and I believe so did all my companions.

"About two in the morning one of the soldiers awaked me from a sound sleep, by shaking me by the shoulder, without speaking a word. It was a good while before I could collect my senses, or remember where I was, but all the while my ears were stunned by the discordant sounds of Gaelic, seemingly issuing from an hundred tongues. 'What is all this, friend?' said I. 'Hush,' said he; 'I suppose it is the Macintoshes, we are all dead men, *that's all.*' 'Oh! if *that be all*,' returned I, 'that is a matter of small consequence: a fig for the Macintoshes! they shall get as good as they give.' 'Hush!' whispered he again; 'what a loss we cannot understand a word of their language. I think our sentinels are persuading them to pass on.' With that one of our prisoners, an old man, called out, and was answered by one of the passengers, who then seemed to be going away. The old man then began a babbling and telling him something aloud, always turning a suspicious glance on me; but while he was yet in the middle of his speech, Campbell turned round, levelled his musket at the old rascal, and shot him dead.

"Such an uproar then commenced as never was before seen in so small a cot—women screaming like a parcel of she-goats; children mewing like cats; and men babbling and crying out in Gaelic, both without and within. Campbell's piece was reloaded in a moment, and need there was for expedition, for we were attacked at the door by the whole party, and at last twenty guns were all fired on us at once. The sod walls, however, sheltered us effectually, while every shot that we could get fired from the door or the holes in the wall, killed or wounded some, and whoever ventured in had two or three bayonets in each side at once. We were in a sad predicament, but it came upon us all in an instant, and we had no shift but to make the best of it we could, which we did without any dismay; and so safe did we find ourselves within our sod walls, that whenever any of them tried to break through the roof, we had such advantage, that we always beat them off at the first assault; and moreover, we saw them distinctly between us and the snow, but within all was darkness, and they could see nothing. That which plagued us most of all was the prisoners that we had within among us, for they were constantly in our way, and we were falling over them, and coming in violent contact with them in every corner; and though we kicked them and flung them from us in great wrath, to make them keep into holes, yet there were so many of them, and the house was so small, it was impossible. We had now beat our enemies back from the door, and we took that opportunity of expelling our troublesome guests; our true Highlanders spoke something to them in Gaelic, which made them run out as for bare life. 'Cresorst, cresorst,' cried our guide; they ran still the faster, and were soon all out among the rebels. It was by my own express and hurried order that this was done, and never was anything so imprudent! the whole party were so overjoyed that they set up a loud and reiterated shout, mixed

with a hurra of laughter. 'What's the matter now?' thinks I to myself. I soon found that out to my sad experience. The poor cottagers had been our greatest safeguard; for the rebels no sooner knew that all their countrymen and their families were expelled and safely out, than they immediately set fire to the house on all sides. This was not very easily effected, owing to the wet snow that had fallen: besides, we had opened holes all the way round the heads of the walls, and kept them off as well as we could. It was not long, however, till we found ourselves involved in smoke, and likely to be suffocated. I gave orders instantly to sally out; but the door being triply guarded, we could not effect it. In one second we undermined the gable, which falling flat, we sallied forth into the midst of the rebels with fixed bayonets, and bore down all before us. The dogs could not stand our might, but reeled like the withered leaves of a forest that the winds whirl before them. I knew not how the combat terminated, for I soon found myself overpowered, and held fast down by at least half a dozen Highlanders. I swore dreadfully at them, but they only laughed at me, and, disarming me, tied my hands behind my back. 'I'm not in a very good way now,' thought I, as they were keckling and speaking Gaelic around me. Two of them stood as sentinels over me for about the space of an hour, when the troop joined us in a body, and marched away, still keeping by the side of the river, and taking me along with them. It was now the break of day, and I looked about anxiously if I could see any of my companions; but none of them were with us, so I concluded that they were all killed. We came to a large and ugly-looking village called Tamantoul, inhabited by a set of the most outlandish ragamuffins that I ever in my life saw: the men were so ragged and rough in their appearance, that they looked rather like savages than creatures of a Christian country: and the women had no shame nor sense of modesty about them, and of this the Highland soldiers seemed quite sensible, and treated them accordingly. Here I was brought in before their commander for examination. He was one of the Farquharsons, a very civil and polite gentleman, but as passionate as a wild bull, and spoke the English language so imperfectly, that I deemed it convenient not to understand a word that he said, lest I should betray some secrets of my commander.

"'Surcheon,' said he, 'you heffing peen tahken caring te harms, tat is, te kuns and te sorts, akainst our most plessit sohofrain, and his lennochmore Prince Sharles Stehuart, she shoold pe kiffing you ofer to pe shot in te heat wit powter and te pullets of kuns till you pe teat. Not te more, if you will pe cantor of worts to all tat she shall pe asking, akainst te accustoms of war you shall not pe shot wit powter and te pullets of kuns in te heat and prains till she pe teat, put you shall pe hold in free pondage, and peated wit sticks cfry tay, and efry night, and efry mhorning, till she pe answering all and mhore.'

"'I beg your pardon, captain,' says I, 'but really I dinna understand Gaelic, or Erse, or how d'ye ca't.'

"'A fencheance on your improotence, and te hignorance of yourself, tat cannot pe tahking town hany ting into your stuhpid prain tat is not peing spohken in te vhile Lowlands prohgue. Hupupup! You pase repellioner of a Sassenach tief! Finlay Pawn Peg Macalister Monro, you are peing te most least of all my men: pe trawing hout your claymhore, and if you do not pe cutting hoff tat creat Sassenach repel's heat at wan plow, py te shoul of Tonald Farquharson, put yours shall answer for it.'

"'I'm in a waur scrape now than ever,' thinks I to myself: however, I pretended to be listening attentively to all that the captain was saying, and when he had done I shook my head: 'I am really sorry, captain,' says I, 'that I cannot understand a word that you are saying.'

"'Hu, shay, shay,' said he, 'she'll pe mhaking you to understand petter eneugh.' I was then conducted to the back of the house, with all the men, women, and children in the village about me. The diminutive Finlay Bawn sharpened his claymore deliberately upon a stone—the soldiers bared my neck, and I was ordered to lay it flat upon the stump of a tree that they had selected as a convenient block. 'Captain,' says I, 'it is a shame for you to kill your prisoner whom you took fighting in the field for what he supposed to be right: you are doing the same, and which of us is in the right let Heaven decide. But I'll tell you what it is, captain, I'll bet you a guinea, and a pint of aquavitæ into the bargain, that if none of you lend any assistance to that shabby fellow, he shall not be able to cut off my head in an hour.' The captain swore a great oath that no one should interfere, and, laughing aloud, he took my bet. My hands only were bound. I stretched myself upon the snow, and laid my neck flat upon the stump. Finlay threw off his jacket, and raised himself to the stroke. I believe the little wretch thought that he would make my head fly away I do no not know how far. I, however, kept a sharp look-out from the corner of my eye, and just as his stroke was descending, I gave my head a sudden jerk to the one side towards his feet, on which he struck his sword several inches into the solid root of the birch tree. He tugged with all his might, but could in nowise extricate it. I lost not a moment, but, plaiting my legs around his, I raised myself up against his knees, and overthrew him with ease. I had now great need of exertion; for though I was three times as strong and heavy as he, yet my hands being fettered was greatly against me. It happened that, in trying to recover himself as he fell, he alighted with his face downward. I threw myself across his neck, and with my whole strength and weight squeezed his face and head down among the snow. The men and women shouted and clapped their

hands until all the forests of Strathavon rang again. I found I now had him safe; for though he exerted himself with all his power, he could only drag himself backward through the snow, and as I kept my position firm, he was obliged to drag me along with him; so that not being able to get any breath, his strength soon failed him, and in less than five minutes he could do no more than now and then move a limb, like a frog that is crushed beneath a waggon wheel.

"None of them, however, offered to release their countryman, until I, thinking that he was clean gone, arose from above him of my own accord. I was saluted by all the women, and many of them clasped me in their arms and kissed me; and the prettiest and best dressed one among them took off my bonds and threw them away, at which the captain seemed nothing offended. I was then conducted back to the inn in triumph, while poor Finlay Bawn Beg Macalister Monro was left lying among the snow, and his sword sticking fast in the stump of the birch tree; and for anything I know it is sticking there to this day.

"I was loaded with little presents, and treated with the best that the village could afford. The captain paid his wager; but before we had done drinking our whisky I got as drunk as a boar, and I fear behaved in a very middling way. I had some indistinct remembrance afterwards of travelling over great hills of snow, and by the side of a frozen lake, and of fighting with some Highlanders, and being dreadfully mauled, but all was like a dream; and next morning, when I awoke, I found myself lying in a dungeon vault of the castle of Braemar, on a little withered heath, and all over battered with blood, while every bone of my body was aching with pain. I had some terrible days with these confounded Farquharsons and Macintoshes, but I got a round amends of them ere all the play was played; it is a long story, but well worth telling, and if you will have patience—"

"Andrew," said old Margaret, "the supper is waiting; when we have got that an' the prayers by, we'll then hae the story out at our ain leisure; an' Andrew, ye sal hae the best i' the house to your supper the night."

"Gudewife, ye're no just sic a fool as I thought you were," said Andrew; "that's twice i' your life ye hae spoken very good sense. I trow we'll e'en take your advice, for ye ken how the auld sang ends,

"Gin ye be for the cock to craw,
Gie him a nievfu' groats, dearie."

KATIE CHEYNE.

SCENE I.

WHAT are ye greetin' for, Katie Cheyne?" "I'm greetin' nane, Duncan; I wonder to hear ye." "Why, woman, ye're greetin' till your very heart's like to burst the laces of your gown—gie owre, for gudesake, else I shall greet too." "O no, Duncan Stewart, I wadna wish to see you greetin' like a wean—how can I help sobbin', when I leave my mother's house for a fremit place!" "Keep up your heart, lass—your new place will grow like a hame, and fremit folk like sisters and brothers." "Well, I trust sae; what ails that wee lamb, that it bleats sae sairly, Duncan?" "It's bleating for its mither; it has lost her, poor thing." "Can lambs like other creatures better than their mothers?' "Na, Katie, nor half so well either." "O they are happy, happy creatures; but I maun gang—sae gude day."

"Now that young simple lassie with the light feet, the blue een, the white hand, and sae little to say, has gaen far to gar me make a fool of myself. She maun have magic in her feet, for her light steps go dancing through my heart; and then her een! I think blue een will be my ruin, and black anes are little better; and then her tongue. 'Can lambs like other creatures better than their mothers, Duncan?' The lassie will drive me demented. Simple soul, now she little kenned that artless words are the best of all words for winning hearts; I think I'll step on and tell her."

"Katie Cheyne, my dow, ye're no ill to overtake." "I didna like to hurt ye wi' rinnin' after me, Duncan." "Did ye na, Katie!—simplicity again! weel, now I like simplicity: simplicity saith the proverb—it's nae matter what the proverb saith; but I say this, that I love ye, Katie Cheyne, wi' all my heart, and with both my hands, as the daft sang says." "Men are queer creatures, Duncan Stewart, an' ye're ane o' the queerest o' them, and I'm no sure that I understand you. Did Jane Rodan and Peg Tamson understand you, when you vowed by more stars than the sky contains that ye loved them,

and loved them alone? Duncan, Duncan!" "Hout, that was when I kenned nae better; love them, giggling hempies! I'd sooner bait a fox trap wi' my heart than send it sae gray a gate. But I am a man now, Katie Cheyne, and I like you, and liking you, I love you, and loving you, I would fain marry you. My heart's lighter with the confession." "And my heart's lighter too, Duncan Stewart—sae we maun e'en let twa light hearts gang thegither. But, O Duncan, this maunna be for some time yet. We maun be richer, we maun gather mair prudence; for, alas! what's two yqung creatures, though their hearts be full of love, when the house is empty of plenishing?" "Now this is what I call happiness, Katie Cheyne—I'm baith daft and dizzy; but we maunna wed yet, ye say, till we get gear and plenishing? Be it sae. But now, dear Katie, ye are a simple creature, and may profit by the wisdom o' man. Take care o' yoursel in the grand house ye are gaun to. Folks there have smart looks, and sly tongues, and never put half the heart into their words that an honest shepherd lad does, who watches his flocks among the mountains, with the Word of God in his pocket, and his visible firmament above him. Be upright, and faithful, and just towards me; read at spare times, in your Bible; and beware of those creatures whose coats are of divers colours, and who run when the bell rings." "Ay, and take ye care of the ewe-milking lasses, Duncan. There will be setting on of leglins, and happing wi' plaids, and song-singing, and whispering when Katie Cheyne's out o' sight. But whenever you see ripe lips and roguish een, think on me and on our solemn engagement, Duncan Stewart." "Solemn engagement! the lass has picked that out o' some Cameronian sermon. It sounds like the kirk-bell. I shall set ye in sight of your new habitation, and then farewell till Lammas fair."

SCENE II.

"Weary fa' thee, Duncan Stewart. 'Solemn engagement!' what a serious sound there is in the very words. I have leaped o'er the linn wi' baith een open. I have broken my head wi' my ain hand. To be married is nothing; a light soke is easily worn, and a light yoke is easily borne. But I am worse than wedded; I am chained up like a fox amo' chickens, tied like a hawk amo' hen birds. I am fastened by a solemn engagement, and canna be loosed till siller comes. I maun gang to kirk and market wi' an antenuptial collar about my neck, and Katie Cheyne's name painted on't, and all who run will read. I'll never can face Peg Tamson nor Nell Rodan; they'll cry, 'There gangs poor Duncan Stewart, the silly lad, that is neither single nor married.' I like nae lass half sae weel, but then it's the bondage o' the solemn engagement; who would have thought such a simple creature could have picked up twa such lang-nebbit, peacock-tailed words? Hoolie, Duncan! here comes thy mother."

"Duncan! son Duncan! you are speaking to yersel. No young man ever speaks to himsel unless he is in love." "An' what an I be, dear mither, there is nought unnatural in the situation." "Love, my son, is natural only when fixed on a proper object; you have good blood and high blood in your veins, and if you look low, you will lift little. Keep your mother's house in remembrance." "I never thought a thought about it. I ken ye were a lady, for ye have aye said sae, but simple blood hauds up a poor man's roof-tree, while gentle blood pulls it about his lugs." "Lugs! O that son of mine should utter that vulgar word! O that a descendent of the ancient and honourable house of Knockhoolie should speak the language of plebeian life! How will you speed in your wooing with your fair cousin of Glenpether, if you are guilty of such vulgarisms? How will a man enter with dignity upon her fair possessions—seven acres of peatmoss, and a tower with a stone stair—who says, Lugs?" "O mither, mither, it's all over, all these grand visions maun vanish now; I am not my own man, I am settled, tied up, tethered, side-langled—I am under a solemn engagement." "What! has a son of Knockhoolie wedded below his degree? O that shame should ever fall on an ancient house—on a house whose dowry is a long descent and spotless honour—on a house that's as good as related to that of Pudinpoke, one of the most ancient names in the south country. Duncan Stewart, there has been Knockhoolie in Knockhoolie longer than tongue can tell or history reckon." "Married! mither, marrying's nought; it's but a shoot thegither o' two foolish things, by a man mair foolish than either. But I'm contracted, bespoke, gi'en awa'; I'm no my ain man, I'm the slave o' a solemn engagement; heard ye ever sic binding and unlooseable words? And wha wad hae thought that a simple quean like Katie Cheyne would have had such words in her head?" "Solemn engagement! my son; these are looseable words; keep the enchantment of the law, and the spell o' pen and ink away from them. But Katie Cheyne! a lassie who has never heard of her grandfather, a creature dropped like a flower seed in a desert, is she decreed to give an heir to the house of Knockhoolie?" "O mither, I'm a born gowk, a predestined gomeral, and doomed to be your sorrow. O can wit or wise words loose me? Try your hand, but be not severe with the lassie, for she's a simple lassie. Slide cannily into the leeside o' her good opinion, and slip this antenuptial halter out o' her hand, and then I shall gang singin' wi' a free foot owre the hill to my cousin of Glenpether." "Spoken like thy mother's son! O that you had ever such a sense of your born dignity! O that you would leave off the vulgar pursuits of the quoits, and pitch the bar, and hap-step-and-loup, and learn to speak the language of polished life. Learn to think much and say little, and

look as if you knew everything, so that the reputation of wisdom may remain with the house of Knockhoolie."

SCENE III.

"Well, mither, what says Katie? O the simple slut! O the young uninstructed innocent! 'Can lambs like other creatures better than their mothers, Duncan?' She's as sweet as a handful of unpressed curd, and as new to the world as fresh-kirned butter. But solemn engagement—what says she to the solemn engagement?" "Little, Duncan, very little; first she put one hand to her eye, and then another, and at last said, 'He made it, and he may undo it, but I maun hae his ain word for't, for mithers are mithers, and may be wilfu'." "O, then, I have got this matrimonial hap-shackle off, and am free. Losh, how light I am! I think I have wings on. Now I can flee east, and flee wast, here a word and there a word, step afore the lasses as crouse as a cock with a double kame on. I'll make them sigh at their suppers." "You have reason, my son, to be lifted up of heart, you can now act as becomes your mother's house. What colour had your cousin of Glenpether when you steppit ben wi' the kind word and the well-bred bow?" "Colour! just the auld colour, a kind o' dun and yellow. But ye see there was a great deal o' blushing and snirting, and bits o' made coughs, as if to keep down a thorough guffaw. I have nae notion o' courting ladies." "Tell me, Duncan, how you demeaned yourself, and how your cousin received you." "That's a lang story, mither, and a mis-red ane. I rappit an' I whistlet, and wha should come to the door but a dink and sonsie lassie, ane Bell Macara. 'Is Miss Mattie at home?' says I; 'Deed is she,' said the lass, as nice a lassie as well could be. So you think, mither, that Katie Cheyne will free me?" "No doubt of it, Duncan, my child; well, what next?" "Well, this Bell Macara says to me—I wish you had seen her, mother, a quean wi' spunk and smeddum; and then her tongue: says Bell, says she, 'Yes, sir, she is at hame, will you walk into the kitchen till I inform her?' The kitchen, thinks I, is a step beneath me; however, she gied me sic a look; sae into the kitchen went I, shoulder to shoulder wi' Bell Macara." "O son Duncan, ye will break my heart; a kitchen wench, and you a son of the house of Knockhoolie!" "'If you are not in a hurry, sir,'" says Bell Macara, 'I have a bakin' o' bread to put to the fire.' 'I *am* in a great hurry,' says I. 'No doubt on't,' said she, 'sir'—she aye sirred me—'they are aye in the greatest haste that hae least to do.' She's a queer weel-faured quean now, this Bell Macara, and has a gift at haurning bread." "Son, son, tell me what passed between you and your lady cousin, or hold your peace for ever." "O but I maun relate baith courtships, for that ane has a natural reference to the other." "Both courtships! Have you courted both maid and mistress?" "Mither, mither, be reasonable now, if ye ever saw a lass, bonnie belike, skilful wi' her een, mischievous wi' her tongue, spreading out a' her loveliness before ye, like Laird Dobie's peacock's tail." "How, Duncan, can ye speak so to me, one of the daughters of the house of Knockhoolie?" "Daughter? ay! but had ye been ane o' its sons! Or, what would please me better, were you as young as ye hae been, and as well-faur'd, wi' an auld-farrand tongue and twa een that could look the lark out o' the lift, and you to meet a pleasant lad, wi' love strong within him, ah, mither!" "My dear son, my dear son, why remind me of other days? let all byganes be byganes."

"There now, I kenned nature would speak, in spite of you; and was I to blame for an hour's daffin' wi' bonnie Bell Macara? I am free to own, but a man canna help his nature, I have a wonderfu' turn for fallin' in love. So, says Bell Macara to me—this was the hinderend of all, says Bell to me, 'If ye miss a kind reception up stairs, ye may come down again, and gie a poor body a fleein' bode.' 'There's my thumb on't,' says I, and I walked up stairs wi' her, hand for hand. Then, ye see, she opened the door o' my lady cousin's room, and cried out, 'Mr. Duncan Stewart, ma'am, from Knockhoolie,' and in I gaed, my bonnet in my hand, my best plaid wrapped about me, wi' beck and wi' binge, lookin' this way and that way." "Duncan Stewart, are ye ravin,' a gray plaid, and becking and binging! had you both your dogs with you?" "I wish they had been, poor dumb creatures; but I did my best without them. Bell Macara lookit at my cousin, and my cousin at Bell Macara—that queer kind of look when, without speaking, lasses say sic a ane's a sumph, or sic a ane's a sensible fallow. Now Bell Macara's twa een said, 'He's a comical chap; he's no a made-up frae the pan and spoon.' 'Be seated, cousin Duncan,' said my cousin to me, and down she sat on the sofa, and down I clinked beside her. 'Sit still, Mattie,' says I, 'for I have some queer things to say.' 'Say away,' she says, 'what would ye say?' 'I'm no certain yet,' quoth I, 'what I'm going to say, but I ken brawly what I'm going to do.' And afore she either kenned or cared, I had nearly given her a hearty smack that wad hae done her heart gude."

"Ha! ha! well done, Duncan. It was a bold and downright way of beginning to woo, but ladies of our blood love the brave and the bold, though I know such strong measures are opposed by many ladies of quality. Nevertheless, I approve; get on; how did she take it?" "Just middling; she reddened up, called me rude, forward, country-bred, till I was obliged to try my lip on her cheek again, and that sobered her." "Well, Duncan, well, but you should not have been quite so audacious. Men never pity woman's softness, but are rude in the sight of the world." "Na, mither, na; I threw my plaid o'er her, and under that pleasant screen, e'en

put it to my cousin if she could like me. Me rude afore the world! I ken better than that." "There's hope o' you yet, my son; and what said the young lady?" "Young lady! nane sae young, five and thirty, faith! Says she to me, 'I hate plaids.' 'Ye hate plaids,' says I; 'that's queer.' 'No sae queer either,' said she, 'for they make us do things we would never have the face to do without them.' 'O blessings on the shepherd's plaid,' cried I; 'it haps us frae the storm, it is the canopy of kindly hearts; many a sweet and soft word, many a half-unwilling kiss, many a weel fulfilled vow have passed under it. The een o' malice canna glance through it, the stars nor the moon either; its a blessed happing.' 'Ye had better, as ye havena far to gang to grow daft, break into song at once,' said our cousin. 'Thank ye,' said I, and I sang sic a sang, ane made o' the moment, clean aff-loof, none of your long studied, dreigh-of-coming compositions. Na! na! down came the words wi' me, with a gush like a mill shelling. I have verse the natural gate, and ither folk by inoculation. I sang such a song; listen now:—

THE SHEPHERD'S PLAID.

I.

"My blessings on the cozie plaid,
My blessings on the plaidie;
If I had her my plaid has happ'd
I'd be a joyfu' laddie.

II.

"Sweet cakes an' wine with gentlemen
All other fare surpasses,
And sack and sugar wi' auld wives,
But bonnie lads wi' lasses.

III.

"O for a bonnie lad and lass—
And better for a ladie,
There's nought in all the world worth
The shepherd's cozie plaidie."

"Really Duncan, my dear son, there is a rustic glibness about the verses, but do not give up your mind to so common an accomplishment. What said your cousin?" "'Pray, favour me with the chorus,' said she; 'I am fond of choruses.' 'This is the chorus,' said I, and I tried my lip; but aha! she was up—had been disciplined before. 'Off hands,' quoth my cousin, 'and sit at peace till my father comes, else I shall ring for Bell Macara to show you to your own room, where you may cool yourself till my father comes home.' 'Do sae,' says I, 'do sae, I have no objection to the measure, if Bell bears me company;' so I offered to ring the bell, thinking there would be some fun in the change. 'Stay,' said my lady Mat, 'stay,' said she,' and she laid her hand on mine; 'I was going to observe,' said she, 'that Bell Macara is a superior girl.' 'I think so too,' says I, 'shall I ring for her?' 'No,' says my cousin; 'all that I was going to say was that Bell is a good-looking young woman.' 'I told her sae,' says I, 'no an hour since. She is a thrifty girl, and a hard working—she bakes bread weel,' said I. 'She has a very fine eye,' said my cousin. 'Twa o' them,' said I, 'and shiners.' 'Well then, she would make you a capital wife,' says Mattie to me. 'Would she?' said I. 'I wish ye had told me sooner, for I am in a manner disposed of; a woman has a kind o' property in me; I have come under a solemn engagement. Have ye never heard that I am to be married to a certain saucy cousin o' my ain, a great heiress, who has broken the hearts o' three horse-coupers wi' drinkin' her health in brandy?' 'And who is this fair cousin o' yours?' says Miss Mattie to me; I never heard of such a matter.' 'That's queer again,' said I, 'for my mither has talked of it—ay, and she can talk, she talks nought but the wale o' grand words, born gifts, born gifts, and we shouldna be vain. But, as I said, my mither has talked, and I have talked, and the thing's next to certain.' 'But,' said my cousin, 'name her, name her, ye havena mony cousins, and they all have names.' 'And this ane has a name too,' says I, 'but she's no that young, and she's no very bonnie, but the pretty acres about her are the thing. She's rich, and ripe, and disposed to be married.' 'Now,' said she, and her rage nearly reddened her yellow complexion, 'this is some of your mother's idle dreams. She sits building palaces of the imagination. Go and tell her from me, that, though I am *auld*, and *ugly*, and *rich*, and *disposed to be married*, I am no a fool. I'm no sae simple a bird as to big my nest with the gowk.'

"I never loot on I heard her. 'But my cousin,' says I, 'has a waur fault than lack o' beauty, she has a fine gift at scolding, and she rages most delightfully. I maun take her though—canna draw back.' 'Duncan Stewart,' cried she, 'begone! Never shall your cousin give her hand to such a lump of God's unkneaded clay as you—never connect herself with folly, though she is *disposed* to be married. Could I wed a clown, and see his mad mither sitting next me at my table?' 'Who was talking o' your table?' says I; 'the table will be mine, and next me shall my ain auld mither sit. But sit down, Mat, my lass, dinna rin awa.' I trow I answered her." "You behaved very well, my dear Duncan, very well considering. I scorn her personal insinuations. Alas! the children of this generation have not the solid qualities of those of the last. You have other cousins, Duncan, my son; cousins with land and houses, who love your mother for her mind and her sense of family dignity. Ye must not lay a dog in a deer's den; ye must always lay out your affections on birth and breeding." "My father was a shepherd, mither, spelt the Bible as he read it, drank hard at clipping-time and lambing-time, when the heather was in blossom and when the snaw was on the ground. Was he a man o' birth and breeding?" "Duncan, I doubt ye are incapable of comprehending the feeling which influ-

ences those of ancestry and elevation of soul. I married your father for his good sense and good taste; *he* never made love to low-bred maidens." "An excellent apology for all manner of marriages, mither. Bell Macara, now, is a lass o' taste, and so is Jenny Ste'enson, and poor Katie Cheyne has the best taste of a'; but I hae shaken mysel' free o' Katie—I wrote her such a letter, ye never saw such words, it will drive her to dictionar' and grammar, ne'er ane o' less length than her ain words 'solemn engagement,' and as high sounding as 'tremendous.' They were all nice long-nebbit words, and I'm only afraid mither, I'll awa' to Kate Cheyne—its time I were awa'." "Truly is it, Duncan, and of that I am come to speak; she bids you to her bridal. She is to be wedded at twelve o'clock to a man of her own degree, Colonel Clapperton's grieve, Jock Hutcheson—Jenny Davidson's Jock—like aye draws to like." "Jock Hutcheson, mither,—what! lang Jock Hutcheson—that can never be! He's naebody, ye may say—lang, and black, and tinkler-looking—and has thrashen me twenty times—it canna be him." "But it is him, Duncan, and glad I am of it; so get down the saddle wi' the plated stirrups—the silver's sore gone—still they *were* plated—and catch the horse on the common, wisp it down, and ride like your ancestors of old—cock your bonnet, and wag your arm manfully." "Mither, I'll be married too—married I shall be—married if there's a willing lass in the country side, and as muckle law in the land. Married I *shaal* be—I'm as fixed as Queensberry, as Criffel, as Skiddaw-fell—O for the names of more mountains!" "Duncan, dear Duncan, be guided; are ye mad?" "Yes, I'm mad; d'ye think the marrying fit would ever come on me unless the mad fit came afore it?" "Now then, my son, be ruled; throw not away the last child of an ancient line on nameless queans; wed in your degree. It would be a pity to see an old inheritance like mine going to children of some lass whose kin cannot be counted." "It's easy talking, mither; will a born lady, wi' as muckle sense as a hen could haud in her steekit nieve, tak' Duncan Stewart? I maun marry them that will marry me. I hear the trampling of horses." "Horses, ay, here's horses—here's your full cousin, Grizel Tungtakit of Tungtakit, riding on her Galloway nag away to Kate Cheyne's penny-wedding, with her lang riding habit and her langer pedigree. She's a perfect princess, and come to the years of discretion—with a colour in her cheek to stand wind and rain. Take her, Duncan, take her! she's lady of Tungtakit; a fair inheritance—feeds six ewes in a dropping year. Take her, Duncan, take her!" "Tak' her! no, an she were heiress of all the sun shines on. Take *her!* she has a heart that wad hunger me and a tongue that wad clatter me to death. Cousins are closers, mither—cousins are closers—the mad fit o' wedlock's more composed sin' ye spak! I think I may shoot owre till winter. I wadna thought o' marrying at a' if that daft hempie Kate Cheyne hadna put it into my head. I'll owre the hill to the Elfstane Burn, and grip a dizen o' trouts for our dinner, and let the bridal train ride by. I wonder if Kate will be wedded in her green gown—and if Jock Young of Yetherton will be best man."

ALICE AND THE LONG PACK.

The long Pack

THE LONG PACK.

In the year 1723, Colonel Ridley returned from India with what in those days was accounted an immense fortune, and retired to a country seat on the banks of North Tyne, in Northumberland. The house was rebuilt and furnished with everything elegant and costly; and, amongst others, a service of plate supposed to be worth £1000. He went to London annually with his family, during a few of the winter months, and at these times there were but few left at his country house. At the time we treat of, only three domestics remained there; a maid-servant, whose name was Alice, kept the house, and there were besides an old man and a boy. The one thrashed the corn, and the other took care of some cattle; for the two ploughmen were boarded in houses of their own.

One afternoon, as Alice was sitting spinning some yarn for a pair of stockings to herself, a pedlar entered the hall with a comical pack on his back. Alice had seen as long a pack, and as broad a pack; but a pack equally long, broad, and thick, she declared she never saw. It was about the middle of winter, when the days were short, and the nights cold, long, and wearisome. The pedlar was a handsome, well-dressed man, and very likely to be a very agreeable companion for such a maid as Alice, on such a night as that; yet Alice declared, that from the very first she did not like him greatly, and though he introduced himself with a little ribaldry, and a great deal of flattery interlarded, yet when he came to ask a night's lodging he met with a peremptory refusal; he jested on the subject, said he believed she was in the right, for that it would scarcely be safe to trust him under the same roof with such a sweet and beautiful creature. But all would not do. "No, she would not consent to his staying there." "But are you really going to put me away to-night?" "Yea." "Indeed, my dear girl, you must not be so unreasonable; I am come straight from Newcastle, where I have been purchasing a fresh stock of goods, which are so heavy that I cannot travel far with them, and as the people around are all of the poorer sort, I will rather make you a present of the finest shawl in my pack before I go further." At the mentioning of the shawl, the picture of deliberation was portrayed in lively colours on Alice's face for a little; but her prudence overcame. "No, she was but a servant, and had orders to harbour no person about the house but such as came on business, nor these either, unless she was well acquainted with them." "What the worse can you, or your master, or any one else be, of suffering me to tarry until the morning?" "I entreat you do not insist, for here you cannot be." "But, indeed, I am not able to carry my goods further to-night." "Then you must leave them, or get a horse to carry them away." "Of all the sweet inflexible beings that ever were made, you certainly are the chief. But I cannot blame you; your resolution is just and right. Well, well, since no better may be, I must leave them, and go search for lodgings myself somewhere else, for, fatigued as I am, it is as much as my life is worth to endeavour carrying them further." Alice was rather taken at her word: she wanted to have nothing to do with his goods: the man was displeased at her, and might accuse her of stealing some of them; but it was an alternative she had proposed, and against which she could start no plausible objection; so she consented, though with much reluctance. "But the pack will be better out of your way," said he, "and safer, if you will be so kind as lock it by in some room or closet." She then led him into a low parlour, where he placed it carefully on two chairs, and went his way, wishing Alice a good night.

When Alice and the pack were left together in the large house by themselves, she felt a kind of undefined terror coming over her mind about it. "What can be in it," said she to herself, "that makes it so heavy? Surely when the man carried it this length, he might have carried it farther too—it is a confoundedly queer pack; I'll go and look at it once again, and see what I think is in it; and suppose I should handle it all around, I may then perhaps have a good guess what is in it."

Alice went cautiously and fearfully into the parlour and opened a wall press—she wanted nothing in the press, indeed she never looked into it, for her eyes were fixed on the pack, and the longer she looked at it, she liked it the worse; and as to handling it, she would not have touched it for all that it contained. She came again into the kitchen and conversed with herself. She thought of the man's earnestness to leave it—of its monstrous shape, and every circumstance connected with it. They were all mysterious, and she was convinced in her own mind, that there was something *uncanny*, if not unearthly, in the pack.

What surmises will not fear give rise to in the mind of a woman! She lighted a moulded candle, and went again into the parlour, closed the window shutters, and barred them; but before she came out,

she set herself upright, held in her breath, and took another steady and scrutinized look of the pack. God of mercy! She saw it moving, as visibly as she ever saw anything in her life. Every hair on her head stood upright. Every inch of flesh on her body crept like a nest of pismires. She hasted into the kitchen as fast as she could, for her knees bent under the terror that had overwhelmed the heart of poor Alice. She puffed out the candle, lighted it again, and, not being able to find a candlestick, though a dozen stood on the shelf in the fore kitchen, she set it in a water jug, and ran out to the barn for old Richard. "Oh Richard! Oh, for mercy, Richard, make haste, and come into the house. Come away, Richard." "Why, what is the matter, Alice? what is wrong?" "Oh Richard! a pedlar came into the hall entreating for lodgings. Well, I would not let him stay on any account, and, behold, he has gone off and left his pack." "And what is the great matter in that," said Richard. "I will wager a penny he will look after it, before it shall look after him." "But, oh Richard, I tremble to tell you! We are all gone, for it is a living pack." "A living pack!" said Richard, staring at Alice, and letting his chops fall down. Richard had just lifted his flail over his head to begin threshing a sheaf; but when he heard of a living pack, he dropped one end of the hand-staff to the floor, and, leaning on the other, took such a look at Alice. He never took such a look at her in his life, "A living pack!" said Richard. "Why, the woman is mad, without all doubt." "Oh Richard! come away. Heaven knows what is in it! but I saw it moving as plainly as I see you at present. Make haste and come away, Richard." Richard did not stand to expostulate any longer, nor even to put on his coat, but followed Alice into the house, assuring her by the way, that it was nothing but a whim, and of a piece with many of her phantasies. "But," added he, "of all the foolish ideas that ever possessed your brain, this is the most unfeasible, unnatural, and impossible. How can a pack, made up of napkins, and muslins, and corduroy breeches, perhaps, ever become alive? It is even worse than to suppose a horse's hair will turn an eel." So saying, he lifted the candle out of the jug, and, turning about, never stopped till he had his hand upon the pack. He felt the deals that surrounded its edges to prevent the goods being rumpled and spoiled by carrying, the cords that bound it, and the canvas in which it was wrapped. "The pack was well enough; he found nought about it that other packs wanted. It was just like other packs, made up of the same stuff. He saw nought that ailed it. And a good large pack it was. It would cost the honest man £200, if not more. It would cost him £300 or £350 if the goods were fine. But he would make it all up again by cheating fools, like Alice, with his gewgaws." Alice testified some little disappointment at seeing Richard unconvinced, even by ocular proof. She wished she had never seen him or it however, for she was convinced there was something mysterious about it; that they were stolen goods, or something that way; and she was terrified to stay in the house with it. But Richard assured her the pack was a right enough pack.

During this conversation in comes Edward. He was a lad about sixteen years of age, son to a coal-driver on the border—was possessed of a good deal of humour and ingenuity, but somewhat roguish, forward, and commonly very ragged in his apparel. He was about this time wholly intent on shooting the crows and birds of various kinds, that alighted in whole flocks where he foddered the cattle. He had bought a huge old military gun, which he denominated *Copenhagen*, and was continually thundering away at them. He seldom killed any, if ever; but he once or twice knocked off a few feathers, and, after much narrow inspection, discovered some drops of blood on the snow. He was at this very moment come, in a great haste, for *Copenhagen*, having seen a glorious chance of sparrows, and a Robin-redbreast among them, feeding on the site of a corn rick, but hearing them talk of something mysterious, and a living pack, he pricked up his ears, and was all attention. "Faith, Alice," said he, "if you will let me, I'll shoot it." "Hold your peace, you fool," said Richard. Edward took the candle from Richard, who still held it in his hand, and, gliding down the passage, edged up the parlour door, and watched the pack attentively for about two minutes. He then came back with a spring, and with looks very different from those which regulated his features as he went down. As sure as he had death to meet with he saw it stirring. "Hold your peace, you fool," said Richard. Edward swore again that he saw it stirring; but whether he really thought so, or only said so, is hard to determine. "Faith, Alice," said he again, "if you will let me, I'll shoot it." "I tell you to hold your peace, you fool," said Richard. "No," said Edward, "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety; and I will maintain this to be our safest plan. Our master's house is consigned to our care, and the wealth that it contains may tempt some people to use stratagems. Now, if we open up this man's pack, he may pursue us for damages to any amount, but if I shoot it what amends can he get of me! If there is anything that should not be there, Lord, how I will pepper it! And if it is lawful goods, he can only make me pay for the few that are damaged, which I will get at valuation; so, if none of you will acquiesce, I will take all the blame upon myself, and ware a shot upon it." Richard said, whatever was the consequence, he would be blameless. A half delirious smile rather distorted than beautified Alice's face, but Edward took it for an assent to what he had been advancing, so, snatching up *Copenhagen* in one hand, and the candle in the other, he hasted down the passage, and, without

hesitating one moment, fired at the pack. Gracious heaven! The blood gushed out upon the floor like a torrent, and a hideous roar, followed by the groans of death, issued from the pack. Edward dropped *Copenhagen* upon the ground and ran into the kitchen like one distracted. The kitchen was darkish, for he had left the candle in the parlour; so, taking to the door, without being able to utter a word, he ran to the hills like a wild roe, looking over each shoulder, as fast as he could turn his head from the one side to the other. Alice followed as fast as she could, but lost half the way of Edward. She was all the way sighing and crying most pitifully. Old Richard stood for a short space rather in a state of petrifaction, but at length, after some hasty ejaculations, he went into the parlour. The whole floor flowed with blood. The pack had thrown itself on the ground; but the groans and cries were ceased, and only a kind of guttural noise was heard from it. Knowing that then something must be done, he ran after his companions, and called on them to come back. Though Edward had escaped a good way, and was still persevering on, yet, as he never took time to consider of the utility of anything, but acted from immediate impulse, he turned, and came as fast back as he had gone away. Alice also came homeward, but more slowly, and crying even more bitterly than before. Edward overtook her, and was holding on his course; but as he passed, she turned away her face, and called him a murderer. At the sound of this epithet, Edward made a dead pause, and looked at Alice with a face much longer than it used to be. He drew in his breath twice, as if going to speak, but he only swallowed a great mouthful of air, and held his peace.

They were soon all three in the parlour, and in no little terror and agitation of mind unloosed the pack, the principal commodity of which was a stout young man, whom Edward had shot through the heart, and thus bereaved of existence in a few minutes. To paint the feelings, or even the appearance of young Edward during this scene, is impossible; he acted little, spoke less, and appeared in a hopeless stupor; the most of his employment consisted in gulping down mouthfuls of breath, wiping his eyes, and staring at his associates.

It is most generally believed, that when Edward fired at the pack, he had not the most distant idea of shooting a man; but seeing Alice so jealous of it, he thought the colonel would approve of his intrepidity, and protect him from being wronged by the pedlar; and besides he had never got a chance of a shot at such a large thing in his life, and was curious to see how many folds of the pedlar's fine haberdashery ware *Copenhagen* would drive the drops through; so that, when the stream of blood burst from the pack, accompanied with the dying groans of a human being, Edward was certainly taken by surprise, and quite confounded; he indeed asserted, as long as he lived, that he saw something stirring in the pack, but his eagerness to shoot, and his terror on seeing what he had done, which was no more than what he might have expected, had he been certain he saw the pack moving, makes this asseveration very doubtful. They made all possible speed in extricating the corpse, intending to call medical assistance, but it was too late; the vital spark was gone for ever. "Alas!" said old Richard, heaving a deep sigh, "poor man, 'tis all over with him! I wish he had lived a little longer to have repented of this; for he has surely died in a bad cause. Poor man! he was *somebody's* son, and no doubt dear to them, and nobody can tell how small a crime this hath, by a regular gradation, become the fruits of." Richard came twice across his eyes with the sleeve of his shirt, for he still wanted the coat; a thought of a tender nature shot through his heart. "Alas, if his parents are alive, how will their hearts bear this, poor creatures!" said Richard, weeping outright, "poor creatures! God pity them!"

The way that he was packed up was artful and curious. His knees were brought up towards his breast, and his feet and legs stuffed in a wooden box; another wooden box, a size larger, and wanting the bottom, made up the vacancy betwixt his face and knees, and there being only one fold of canvass around this, he breathed with the greatest freedom; but it had undoubtedly been the heaving of his breast which had caused the movement noticed by the servants. His right arm was within the box, and to his hand was tied a cutlass, with which he could rip himself from his confinement at once. There were also four loaded pistols secreted with him, and a silver wind-call. On coming to the pistols and cutlass, "Villain," said old Richard, "see what he has here. But I should not call him villain," said he again, softening his tone; "for he is now gone to answer at that bar where no false witness, nor loquacious orator, can bias the justice of the sentence pronounced on him. *We* can judge only from appearances, but thanks to our kind Maker and Preserver, that he was discovered, else it *is probable* that none of us should have again seen the light of day." These moral reflections, from the mouth of old Richard, by degrees raised the spirits of Edward: he was bewildered in uncertainty, and had undoubtedly given himself up for lost; but he now began to discover that he had done a meritorious and manful action, and, for the first time since he had fired the fatal shot, ventured to speak. "Faith, it was lucky that I shot then," said Edward; but neither of his companions answered either good or bad. Alice, though rather grown desperate, behaved and assisted at this bloody affair better than might have been expected. Edward surveyed the pistols all round, two of which were of curious workmanship. "But what do you think he was going to do with all these?" said Edward. "I think you need not ask that," Richard answered. "Faith, it was a mercy that I shot, after all," said Edward; "for

if we *had* loosed him out, we should have all been dead in a minute. I have given him a devil of a broadside, though. But look ye, Richard, Providence has directed me to the right spot, for I might as readily have lodged the contents of *Copenhagen* in one of these empty boxes." "It has been a deep laid scheme," said Richard, "to murder us, and rob our master's house; there must certainly be more concerned in it than these two."

Ideas beget ideas, often quite different, and then others again in unspeakable gradation, which run through and shift in the mind with as much velocity as the streamers around the pole in a frosty night. On Richard's mentioning more concerned, Edward instantaneously thought of a gang of thieves by night. How he would break the leg of one, shoot another through the head, and scatter them like chaff before the wind. He would rather shoot one robber on his feet or on horseback than ten lying tied up in packs; and then what a glorious prey of pistols he would get from the dead rascals—how he would prime and load, and fire away with perfect safety from within! How Alice would scream, and Richard would pray, and all would go on with the noise and rapidity of a windmill, and he would acquire everlasting fame. So high was the young and ardent mind of Edward wrought up by this train of ideas, that he was striding up and down the floor, while his eyes gleamed as with a tint of madness. "Oh! if I had but plenty guns, and nothing ado but to shoot, how I would pepper the dogs!" said he with great vehemence, to the no small astonishment of his two associates, who thought him gone mad. "What can the fool mean?" said old Richard, "What can he ail at the dogs?" "Oh, it is the robbers that I mean," said Edward. "What robbers, you young fool?" said Richard. "Why, do not you think that the pedlar will come back at the dead of the night to the assistance of his friend, and bring plenty of help with him too?" said Edward. "There is not a doubt of it," said Old Richard. "There is not a doubt of it," said Alice; and both stood up stiff with fear and astonishment. "Oh! merciful heaven! what is to become of us?" said Alice again, "What are we to do?" "Let us trust in the Lord," said old Richard. "I intend in the first place, to trust in old *Copenhagen*," said Edward, putting down the frizzel, and making it spring up again with a loud snap five or six times. "But, goodness! what are we thinking about? I'll run and gather in all the guns in the country." The impulse of the moment was Edward's monitor. Off he ran like fire, and warned a few of the colonel's retainers, who he knew kept guns about them; these again warned others, and at eight o' clock they had twenty-five men in the house, and sixteen loaded pieces, including *Copenhagen*, and the four pistols found on the deceased. These were distributed amongst the front windows in the upper stories, and the rest, armed with pitchforks, old swords, and cudgels, kept watch below. Edward had taken care to place himself, with a comrade, at a window immediately facing the approach to the house, and now, backed as he was by such a strong party, grew quite impatient for another chance with his redoubted *Copenhagen*. All, however, remained quiet, until an hour past midnight, when it entered into his teeming brain to blow the thief's silver wind-call, so without warning any of the rest, he set his head out at the window, and blew until all the hills and woods around yelled their echoes. This alarmed the guards, as not knowing the meaning of it; but how were they astonished at hearing it answered by another at no great distance. The state of anxiety into which this sudden and unforeseen circumstance threw our armed peasants was intense. The fate of their master's great wealth, and even their own fates, was soon to be decided, and none but *he* who surveys and overrules futurity could tell what was to be the issue. Every breast heaved quicker, every breath was cut short, every gun was cocked and pointed toward the court-gate, every orb of vision was strained to discover the approaching foe by the dim light of the starry canopy, and every ear expanded to catch the distant sounds as they floated on the slow frosty breeze.

The suspense was not of long continuance. In less than five minutes the trampling of horses was heard, which increased as they approached to the noise of thunder, and in due course, a body of men on horseback, according to the account given by the colonel's people, exceeding their own number, came up at a brisk trot, and began to enter the court-gate. Edward, unable to restrain himself any longer, fired *Copenhagen* in their faces: one of the foremost dropped, and his horse made a spring towards the hall door. This discharge was rather premature, as the wall still shielded a part of the gang from the windows. It was, however, the watchword to all the rest, and in the course of two seconds, the whole sixteen guns were discharged at them. Before the smoke dispersed they were all fled, no doubt greatly amazed at this reception. Edward and his comrade ran down stairs to see how matters stood, for it was their opinion that they had shot them every one, and that their horses had taken fright at the noise, and galloped off without them; but the club below warmly protested against their opening any of the doors till day, so they were obliged to betake themselves again to their berth up stairs.

Though our peasants had gathered up a little courage and confidence in themselves, their situation was curious, and to them a dreadful one. They saw and heard a part of their fellow-creatures moaning and expiring in agonies in the open air, which was intensely cold, yet durst not go to administer the least relief, for fear of a surprise. An hour or two after this great brush, Edward and his messmate descended again, and begged hard for leave to go and reconnoitre for a few minutes, which after some

disputes was granted. They found only four men fallen, who appeared to be all quite dead. One of them was lying within the porch. "Faith," said Edward, "here's the chap that I shot." The other three were without, at a considerable distance from each other. They durst not follow their track farther, as the road entered betwixt groves and trees, but retreated into their posts without touching anything.

About an hour before day, some of them were alarmed at hearing the sound of horses' feet a second time, which, however, was only indistinct, and heard at considerable intervals, and nothing of them ever appeared. Not long after this, Edward and his friend were almost frightened out of their wits, at seeing, as they thought, the dead man within the gate endeavouring to get up and escape. They had seen him dead, lying surrounded by a deluge of congealed blood; and nothing but the ideas of ghosts and hobgoblins entering their brains, they were so indiscreet as never to think of firing, but ran and told the tale of horror to some of their neighbours. The sky was by this time grown so dark, that nothing could be seen with precision, and they all remained in anxious incertitude, until the opening day discovered to them, by degrees, that the corpses were removed, and nothing left but large sheets of frozen blood; and the morning's alarms by the ghost and the noise of horses had been occasioned by some of the friends of the men that had fallen conveying them away for fear of a discovery.

Next morning the news flew like fire, and the three servants were much incommoded by crowds of idle and officious people that gathered about the house, some inquiring after the smallest particulars, some begging to see the body that lay in the parlour, and others pleased themselves with poring over the sheets of crimson ice, and tracing the drops of blood on the road down the wood. The colonel had no country factor, nor any particular friend in the neighbourhood; so the affair was not pursued with that speed which was requisite to the discovery of the accomplices, which, if it had, would have been productive of some very unpleasant circumstances, by involving sundry respectable families, as it afterwards appeared but too evidently. Dr. Herbert, the physician who attended the family occasionally, wrote to the colonel, by post, concerning the affair, but though he lost no time, it was the fifth day before he arrived. Then indeed advertisements were issued and posted up in all public places, offering rewards for a discovery of any person killed or wounded of late. All the dead and sick within twenty miles were inspected by medical men, and a most extensive search was made, but to no purpose. It was too late; all was secured. Some indeed were missing, but plausible pretences being made for their absence, nothing could be done. But certain it is, sundry of these were never seen any more in the country, though many of the neighbourhood declared they were such people as nobody could suspect.

The body of the unfortunate man who was shot in the pack lay open for inspection a fortnight, but none would ever acknowledge so much as having seen him. The colonel then caused him to be buried at Ballingham, but it was confidently reported that his grave was opened and his corpse taken away. In short, not one engaged in this base and bold attempt was ever discovered. A constant watch was kept by night for some time. The colonel rewarded the defenders of his house liberally. Old Richard remained in the family during the rest of his life, and had a good salary for only saying prayers amongst the servants every night. Alice was married to a tobacconist at Hexham. Edward was made the colonel's gamekeeper, and had a present of a fine gold-mounted gun given him. His master afterwards procured him a commission in a regiment of foot, where he suffered many misfortunes and disappointments. He was shot through the shoulder at the battle of Fontenoy, but recovered, and retiring on half-pay, took a small farm on the Scottish side. His character was that of a brave, but rash officer, kind, generous, and open-hearted in all situations. I have often stood at his knee, and listened with wonder and amazement to his stories of battles and sieges, but none of them ever pleased me better than that of the *Long Pack*.

Alas! his fate is fast approaching to us all! He hath many years ago submitted to the conqueror of all mankind. His brave heart is now a clod of the valley, and his gray hairs recline in peace on that pillow from which his head shall be raised only when time shall be no more.

A COUNTRY FUNERAL.

On the 10th of April, 1810, I went with my father to the funeral of George Mouncie, who had been removed by a sudden death, from the head of a large family, now left in very narrow circumstances. As he had, however, during his life, been held in high estimation for honesty and simplicity of character, many attended to pay the last sad duty to departed worth. We were shown one by one, as we arrived, into a little hovel where the cows were wont to stand, although it was a pleasant day, and we would have been much more comfortable on the green; but it is held highly indecorous to give the entertainment at a burial without doors, and no one will submit to it.

We got each of us a glass of whisky as we entered, and then sat conversing, sometimes about common topics, but for the most part about our respective parish ministers, what subjects they had of late been handling, and how they had succeeded. Some of them remembered all the texts with the greatest exactness for seasons by-gone, but they could only remark, on many of them, that such a one made much or little of it.

One man said, in the course of some petty argument, "I do not deny it, David, your minister is a very good man, and a very clever man too; he has no fault but one." "What is that?" said David. "It is patronage," said the other. "Patronage!" said David, "that cannot be a fault." "Not a fault, sir? But I say it is a fault, and one that you and every one who encourages it, by giving it your countenance, will have to answer for. Your minister can never be a good shepherd, for he was not chosen by the flock." "It is a bad simile," said David; "the flock never chooses its own shepherd, but the owner of the flock." The greatest number of the inhabitants of that district being dissenters from the Established church, many severe reflections were thrown out against the dangerous system of patronage, while no one ventured to defend it save David, who said, that if one learned man was not capable of making choice for a parish, the populace was much less so, and proved, from Scripture, that man's nature was so corrupted, that he was unable to make a wise choice for himself, and maintained that the inhabitants of this country ought to be thankful that the legislature had taken the task out of their hands.

As a further proof of the justice of his argument, he asked whether Jesus of Nazareth or Mahomet was the best preacher? The other answered that none but a reprobate would ask the question. "Very well," said David; "Mahomet was one of your popular preachers; was followed and adored by the multitude wherever he went, while he who spoke as never man spake was despised and rejected. Mahomet gained more converts to his religion in his life-time than has been gained to the true religion in 1800 years. Away with your popular preachers, friend! they are bruised reeds." His antagonist was nonplussed: he could only answer, "Ah! David, David, ye're on the braid way."

The women are not mixed with the men at these funerals, nor do they accompany the corpse to the place of interment; but in Nithsdale and Galloway, all the female friends of the family attend at the house, sitting in an apartment by themselves. The servers remark that in their apartment the lamentations for the family loss are generally more passionate than in the other.

The widow of the deceased, however, came in amongst us to see a particular friend, who had travelled far to honour the memory of his old and intimate acquaintance. He saluted her with great kindness, and every appearance of heartfelt concern for her misfortunes. The dialogue between them interested me; it was the language of nature, and no other spoke a word while it lasted.

"Ah! James," said she, "I did not think, the last time I saw you, that our next meeting would be on so mournful an occasion: we were all cheerful then, and little aware of the troubles awaiting us! I have since that time suffered many hardships and losses, James, but all of them were light to this." She wept bitterly; James endeavoured to comfort her, but he was nearly as much affected himself. "I do not repine," said she, "since it is the will of Him who orders all things for the best purposes, and to the wisest ends: but, alas! I fear I am ill fitted for the task which Providence has assigned me!" With that she cast a mournful look at two little children who were peeping cautiously into the shiel. "These poor fatherless innocents," said she, "have no other creature to look to but me for anything; and I have been so little used to manage family affairs, that I scarcely know what I am doing; for he was so careful of us all—so kind! and so good!" "Yes," said James, wiping his eyes, "if he was not a good man, I know few who were so! Did he suffer much in his last illness?" "I knew not what he suffered," returned she, "for he never complained. I now remember all the endearing

things that he said to us, though I took little heed to them then, having no thoughts of being so soon separated from him. Little did I think he was so ill! though I might easily have known that he would never murmur nor repine at what Providence appointed him to endure. No, James, he never complained of anything. Since the time our first great worldly misfortune happened, we two have sat down to many a poor meal, but he was ever alike cheerful and thankful to the Giver.

"He was only ill four days, and was out of his bed every day: whenever I asked him how he did, his answer uniformly was, 'I am not ill now.' On the day preceding the night of his death, he sat on his chair a full hour speaking earnestly all the while to the children. I was busy up and down the house, and did not hear all; but I heard him once saying that he might soon be taken from them, and then they would have no father but God: but that He would never be taken from them, nor ever would forsake them, if they did not first forsake him. 'He is a kind indulgent Being,' continued he, 'and feeds the young ravens, and all the little helpless animals that look and cry to him for food; and you may be sure that he will never let the poor orphans, who pray to him want.

"'Be always dutiful to your mother, and never refuse to do what she bids you on any account; for you may be assured that she has no other aim than your good; confide all your cares and fears in her bosom, for a parent's love is steadfast; misfortune may heighten but cannot cool it.'

"When he had finished, he drew his plaid around his head, and went slowly down to the little dell, where he used every day to offer up his morning and evening prayers, and where we have often sat together on Sabbath afternoons, reading verse about with our children in the Bible. I think he was aware of his approaching end, and was gone to recommend us to God; for I looked after him, and saw him on his knees.

"When he returned, I thought he looked extremely ill, and asked him if he was grown worse. He said he was not like to be quite well, and sat down on his chair, looking ruefully at the children and sometimes at the bed. At length he said feebly, 'Betty, my dear, make down the bed, and help me to it—it will be the last time.' These words went through my head and heart like the knell of death. All grew dark around me, and I knew not what I was doing.

"He spoke very little after that, saving that at night he desired me, in a faint voice, not to go to my bed, but sit up with him; 'for,' said he, 'it is likely you may never need to do it again.' If God had not supported me that night, James, I could not have stood it, for I had much, much to do! A little past midnight my dear husband expired in my arms, without a groan or a struggle, save some convulsive grasps that he gave my hand. Calm resignation marked his behaviour to the last. I had only one acquaintance with me, and she was young. The beds face towards each other, you know, and little John, who was lying awake, was so much shocked by a view which he got of the altered visage of his deceased parent, that he sprung from his bed in a frenzy of horror, and ran naked into the fields, uttering the most piercing and distracted cries. I was obliged to leave the young woman with the corpse and the rest of the children, and pursue the boy; nor was it till after running nearly a mile that I was able to catch him. The young woman had been seized with a superstitious terror in my absence, and was likewise fled; for, on my return, I found no creature in my dwelling but my dead husband and five sleeping infants. The boy next day was in a burning fever. O James! well may the transactions of that night be engraved on my memory for ever; yet, so bewildered were all the powers of my mind, that on looking back, they appear little otherwise than as a confused undefined shadow of something removed at a great distance."

Her heart was full, and I do not know how long she might have run on, had not one remarked that the company were now all arrived, and there was no more time to lose. James then asked a blessing, which lasted about ten minutes. The bread and wine were served plentifully around—the coffin was brought out, covered, and fixed on poles—the widow supported that end of it where the head of her late beloved partner lay, until it passed the gateway—then she stood looking wistfully after it, while the tears flowed plentifully from her eyes. A turn in the wood soon hid it from her sight for ever. She gave one short look up to heaven, and returned weeping into her cottage.

THE SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR.

CHAPTER I.

ROB DODDS.

It was on the 13th of February, 1823, on a cold stormy day, the snow lying from one to ten feet deep on the hills, and nearly as hard as ice, when an extensive store-farmer in the outer limits of the county of Peebles went up to one of his led farms, to see how his old shepherd was coming on with his flocks. A partial thaw had blackened some spots here and there on the brows of the mountains, and over these the half-starving flocks were scattered, picking up a scanty sustenance, while all the hollow parts, and whole sides of mountains that lay sheltered from the winds on the preceding week, when the great drifts blew, were heaped and overheaped with immense loads of snow, so that every hill appeared to the farmer to have changed its form. There was a thick white haze on the sky, corresponding exactly with the wan frigid colour of the high mountains, so that in casting one's eye up to the heights, it was not apparent where the limits of the earth ended, and the heavens began. There was no horizon—no blink of the sun looking through the pale and impervious mist of heaven; but there, in that elevated and sequestered *hope*, the old shepherd and his flock seemed to be left out of nature and all its sympathies, and embosomed in one interminable chamber of waste desolation. So his master thought; and any stranger beholding the scene would have been still more deeply impressed that the case was so in reality.

But the old shepherd thought and felt otherwise. He saw God in the clouds, and watched his arm in the direction of the storm. He perceived, or thought he perceived, one man's flocks suffering on account of their owner's transgression; and though he bewailed the hardships to which the poor harmless creatures were reduced, yet he acknowledged in his heart the justness of the punishment. "These temporal scourges are laid upon sinners in mercy," said he, "and it will be well for them if they get so away. It will teach them in future how to drink and carouse, and speak profane things of the name of Him in whose hand are the issues of life, and to regard his servants as the dogs of their flock."

Again he beheld from his heights, when the days were clear, the flocks of others more favourably situated, which he interpreted as a reward for their acts of charity and benevolence; for this old man believed that all temporal benefits are sent to men as a reward for good works; and all temporal deprivations as a scourge for evil ones.

"I hae been a herd in this hope, callant and man, for these fifty years now, Janet," said he to his old wife, "and I think I never saw the face of the country look waur."

"Hout, gudeman, it's but a clud o' the despondency o' auld age come ower your een; for I hae seen waur storms than this, or else my sight deceives me. This time seven and thirty years, when you and I were married, there was a deeper and a harder snaw baith, than this. There was mony a burn dammed up wi' dead hogs that year! And what say ye to this time nine years, gudeman?"

"Ay, ay, Janet, these were hard times when they were present. But I think there's something in our corrupt nature that gars us aye trow the present burden is the heaviest. However, it is either my strength failing, that I canna won sae weel through the snaw, or I never saw it lying sae deep before. I canna steer the poor creatures frae ae knowe-head to another, without rowing them ower the body. And sometimes when they wad spraughle away, then I stick firm and fast mysel, and the mair I fight to get out, I gang aye the deeper. This same day, nae farther gane, at ae step up in the Gait Cleuch, I slumpit in to the neck. Peace be wi' us, quo' I to myself, where am I now? If my auld wife wad but look up the hill, she wad see nae mair o' her poor man but the bannet. Ah! Janet, Janet, I'm rather feared that our Maker has a craw to pook wi' us even now!"

"I hope no, Andrew; we're in good hands; and if he should e'en see meet to pook a craw wi' us, he'll maybe fling us baith the bouk and the feathers at the end. Ye shouldna repine, gudeman. Ye're something ill for thrawing your mou' at Providence now and then."

"Na, na, Janet; far be't frae me to grumble at Providence. I ken ower weel that the warst we get is far aboon our merits. But it's no for the season that I'm sae feared—that's ruled by Ane that canna err; only, I dread that there's something rotten in the government or the religion of the country, that lays it under His curse. There's my fear, Janet. The scourge of a land often fa's on its meanest creatures first, and advances by degrees, to gie the boonest orders o' society warning and time to repent. There, for instance, in the saxteen and seventeen, the scourge fell on our flocks and our herds. Then, in

aughteen and nineteen, it fell on the weavers—they're the neist class, ye ken; then our merchants—they're the neist again; and last of a' it has fallen on the farmers and the shepherds—they're the first and maist sterling class of a country. Na, ye needna smudge and laugh, Janet; for it's true. They *are* the boonmost, and hae aye been the boonmost sin' the days o' Abel; and that's nae date o' yesterday. And ye'll observe, Janet, that whenever they began to fa' low, they gat aye another lift to keep up their respect. But I see our downfa' coming on us wi' rapid strides. There's a heartlessness and apathy croppen in amang the sheep farmers, that shows their warldly hopes to be nearly extinct. The maist o' them seem no to care a bodle whether their sheep die or live. There's our master, for instance; when times were gaun weel, I hae seen him up ilka third day at the farthest in the time of a storm, to see how the sheep were doing; and this winter I hae never seen his face sin' it came on. He seems to hae forgotten that there are sic creatures existing in this wilderness as the sheep and me. His presence be about us, gin there be nae the very man come by the window!"

Janet sprang to her feet, swept the hearth, set a chair on the cleanest side, and wiped it with her check apron, all ere one could well look about him.

"Come away, master; come in by to the fire here; lang-lookit-for comes at length."

"How are you, Janet?—still living, I see. It is a pity that you had not popped off before this great storm came on."

"Dear, what for, master?"

"Because, if you should take it into your head to coup the creels just now, you know it would be out of the power of man to get you to a Christian burial. We would be obliged to huddle you up in the nook of the kail-yard.

"Ah, master, what's that you're saying to my auld wife? Aye the auld man yet, I hear! a great deal o' the leaven o' corrupt nature aye sprouting out now and then. I wonder you're no feared to speak in that regardless manner in these judgment-looking times."

"And you are still the old man too, Andrew; a great deal of cant and hypocrisy sprouting out at times. But tell me, you old sinner, how has your Maker been serving you this storm? I have been right terrified about your sheep; for I know you will have been very impertinent with him of evenings.

"Hear to that now! There's no hope, I see! I thought to find you humbled wi' a' thir trials and warldly losses; but I see the heart is hardened like Pharaoh's, and you will not let the multitude of your sins go. As to the storm, I can tell you, my sheep are just at ane mae wi't. I am waur than ony o' my neighbours, as I lie higher on the hills; but I may hae been as it chanced for you; for ye hae nae never lookit near me mair than you had had no concern in the creatures."

"Indeed, Andrew, it is because neither you nor the creatures are much worth looking after now-a-days. If it hadna been the fear I was in for some mishap coming over the stock, on account of these hypocritical prayers of yours, I would not have come to look after you so soon."

"Ah, there's nae mense to be had o' you! It's a good thing I ken the heart's better than the tongue, or ane wad hae little face to pray either for you or aught that belangs t'ye. But I hope ye hae nae been the waur o' auld Andrew's prayers as yet. An some didna pray for ye, it wad maybe be the waur for ye. I prayed for ye when ye couldna pray for yoursel, and had hopes that, when I turned auld and doited, you might say a kind word for me; but I'm fear'd that warld's wealth and warld's pleasures hae been leading you ower lang in their train, and that you hae been trusting to that which will soon take wings and flee away."

"If you mean riches, Andrew, or warld's wealth, as you call it, you never said a truer word in your life; for the little that my forbears and I have made, is actually, under the influence of these long prayers of yours, melting away from among my hands faster than ever the snow did from the dyke."

"It is perfectly true what you're saying, master. I ken the extent o' your bits o' sales weel enough, and I ken your rents; and weel I ken you're telling me nae lee. And it's e'en a hard case. But I'll tell you what I would do—I would throw their tacks in their teeth, and let them mak aught o' them they likit."

"Why, that would be ruin at once, Andrew, with a vengeance. Don't you see that stocks of sheep are fallen so low, that if they were put to sale, they would not pay more than the rents, and some few arrears that every one of us have got into; and thus, by throwing up our farms, we would throw ourselves out beggars? We are all willing to put off the evil day as long as we can, and rather trust to long prayers for a while."

"Ah! you're there again, are you?—canna let alane profanity! It's hard to gar a wicked cout leave off flinging. But I can tell you, master mine—an you farmers had made your hay when the sun shone, ye might a' hae sitten independent o' your screwing lairds, wha are maistly sair out at elbows; and ye ken, sir, a hungry louse bites wicked sair. But this is but a just judgment come on you for your behaviour. Ye had the gaun days o' prosperity for twenty years! But instead o' laying by a little for a sair leg, or making provision for an evil day, ye gaed on like madmen. Ye biggit houses, and ye plantit vineyards, and threw away money as ye had been sawing sklate-stanes. Ye drank wine, and ye drank punch; and ye roared and ye sang, and spake unseemly things. And did ye never think there was an ear that heard, and an ee that saw a' thae things? And did ye never think that they wad be visited on your heads some day when ye couldna

play paw to help yoursels? If ye didna think sae then, ye'll think sae soon. And ye'll maybe see the day when the like o' auld Andrew, wi' his darned hose, and his cloutit shoon; his braid bannet, instead of a baiver; his drink out o' the clear spring, instead o' the punch bowl; and his good steeve aitmeal parritch and his horn spoon, instead o' the draps o' tea that cost sae muckle—I say, that sic a man wi' a' thae, and his worthless prayers to boot, will maybe keep the crown o' the causey langer than some that carried their heads higher."

"Hout fie, Andrew!" quoth old Janet; "Gudeness be my help, an I dinna think shame o' you! Our master may weel think ye'll be impudent wi' your Maker; for troth you're very impudent wi' himsel. Dinna ye see that ye hae made the douce sonsy lad that he disna ken where to look?"

Ay, Janet, your husband may weel crack. He kens he has feathered his nest aff my father and me. He is independent, let the world wag as it will."

"It's a' fairly come by, master, and the maist part o't came through your ain hands. But my bairns are a' doing for themsels, in the same way that I did; and if twa or three hunder pounds can beet a myster for you in a strait, ye sanna want it, come of a' what will."

"It is weel said of you, Andrew, and I'm obliged to you. There is no class of men in this kingdom so independent as you shepherds. You have your sheep, your cow, your meal and potatoes; a regular income of from sixteen to thirty pounds yearly, without a farthing of expenditure, except for shoes; for your clothes are all made at home. If you would even wish to spend it, you cannot get an opportunity, and every one of you is rich who has not lost money by lending it. It is therefore my humble opinion, that all the farms over this country will soon change occupants; and that the shepherds must ultimately become the store-farmers."

"I hope in God I'll never live to see that, master, for the sake of them that I and mine hae won our bread frae, as weel as some others that I hae a great respect for. But that's no a thing that hasna happened afore this day. It is little mair than a hundred and forty years sin' a' the land i' this country changed masters already; sin' every farmer in it was reduced, and the farms were a' ta'en by common people and strangers at half naething. The Welshes came here then, out o' a place they ca' Wales, in England; the Andersons came frae a place they ca' Rannoch, some gate i' the north; and your ain family came first to this country then frae some bit lairdship near Glasgow. There were a set o' M'Gregors and M'Dougals said to have been great thieves, came into Yarrow then, and changed their names to Scotts; but they didna thrive; for they warna likit, and the hinder end o' them were in the Catslackburn. They ca'd them aye the Pinolys, frae the place they came frae; but I dinna ken where it was. The Ballantynes came frae Galloway; and for as flourishing folks as they are now, the first o' them came out at the Birkhill-path, riding on a haltered pony, wi' a goat-skin aneath him for a saddle. The Cunninghams likewise began to spread their wings at the same time; they sprang a' frae a little fat curate that came out o' Glencairn to Ettrick. But that's nae disparagement to ony o' thae families; for an there be merit at a' inherent in man as to warldly things, it is certainly in raising himsel frae naething to respect. There is nae very ancient name among a' our farmers now, but the Tweedies and the Murrays; I mean of them that anciently belanged to this district. The Tweedies are very auld, and took the name frae the water. They were lairds o' Drummelzier hunders o' years afore the Hays got it, and hae some o' the best blood o' the land in their veins; and sae also have the Murrays; but the maist part o' the rest are upstarts and come-o'-wills. Now ye see, for as far outbye as I live, I can tell ye some things that ye dinna hear amang your drinking cronies."

"It is when you begin to these old traditions that I like to listen to you, Andrew. Can you tell me what was the cause of such a complete overthrow of the farmers of that age?"

"Oh, I canna tell, sir—I canna tell; some overturn o' affairs like the present, I fancy. The farmers had outher lost a' their sheep, or a' their siller, as they are like to do now; but I canna tell how it was; for the general change had ta'en place, for the maist part, afore the Revolution. My ain grandfather, who was the son of a great farmer, hired himsel for a shepherd at that time to young Tam Linton; and mony ane was wae for the downcome. But, speaking o' that, of a' the downcomes that ever a country kenn'd in a farming name, there has never been aught like that o' the Lintons. When my grandfather was a young man, and ane o' their herds, they had a' the principal store-farms o' Ettrick Forest, and a part in this shire. They had, when the great Mr. Boston came to Ettrick, the farms o' Blackhouse, Dryhope, Henderland, Chapel Hope, Scabcleuch, Shorthope, Midgehope, Meggatknowes, Buccleuch, and Gilmanscleugh, that I ken of, and likely as mony mae, and now there's no a man o' the name in a' the bounds aboon the rank of a cowherd. Thomas Linton rode to kirk and market wi' a liveryman at his back; but where is a' that pride now?—a' buried in the mools wi' the bearers o't: and the last representative o' that great overgrown family, that laid house to house, and field to field, is now sair gane on a wee, wee farm o' the Duke o' Buccleuch's. The ancient curse had lighted on these men, if ever it lighted on men in this world. And yet they were reckoned good men, and kind men, in their day; for the good Mr. Boston wrote an epitaph on Thomas, in metre, when he died; and though I have read it a hunder times in St. Mary's kirkyard, where it is to be seen to this day, I canna say it ower. But it says that he was eyes to the blind,

and feet to the lame, and that the Lord would requite him in a day to come, or something to that purpose. Now that said a great deal for him, master, although Providence has seen meet to strip his race of a' their warldly possessions. But take an auld fool's advice, and never lay farm to farm, even though a fair opportunity should offer; for, as sure as He lives who pronounced that curse, it will take effect. I'm an auld man, and I hae seen mony a dash made that way; but I never saw ane o' them come to good! There was first Murray of Glenrath; why, it was untelling what land that man possessed. Now his family has not a furr in the twa counties. Then there was his neighbour Simpson of Posso; I hae seen the day that Simpson had two-and-twenty farms, the best o' the twa counties, and a' stockit wi' good sheep. Now there's no a drap o' *his* blood has a furr in the twa counties. Then there was Grieve of Willenslee; ane wad hae thought that body was gaun to take the haill kingdom. He was said to have had ten thousand sheep a' on good farms at ae time. Where are they a' now? Neither *him* nor *his* hae a furr in the twa counties. Let me tell ye, master—for ye're but a young man, and I wad aye fain have ye to see things in a right line—that ye may blame the wars; ye may blame the government; and ye may blame the parliamenters: but there's a hand that rules higher than a' these; and gin ye dinna look to that, ye'll never look to the right source either o' your prosperity or adversity. And I sairly doubt that the pride o' the farmers has been raised to ower great a pitch, that Providence has been brewing a day of humiliation for them, and that there will be a change o' hands aince mair, as there was about this time hunder and forty years."

"Then I suppose you shepherds expect to have century about with us, or so? Well, I don't see anything very unfair in it."

"Ay, but I fear we will be as far aneath the right medium for a while as ye are startit aboon it. We'll make a fine hand doing the honours o' the grand mansion-houses that ye hae biggit for us; the cavalry exercises; the guns and the pointers; the wine and the punch drinking; and the singing o' the deboshed sangs! But we'll just come to the right set again in a generation or twa; and then, as soon as we get ower hee, we'll get a downcome in our turn. But, master, I say, how will you grand gentlemen tak wi' a shepherd's life? How will ye like to be turned into reeky holes like this, where ye can hardly see your finger afore ye, and be reduced to the parritch and the horn spoon?"

"I cannot tell, Andrew. I suppose it will have some advantages; it will teach us to say long prayers to put off the time; and if we should have the misfortune afterwards to pass into *the bad place* that you shepherds are all so terrified about, why, we will scarcely know any difference. I account that a great advantage in dwelling in such a place as this. We'll scarcely know the one place from the other."

"Ay, but oh what a surprise ye will get when ye step out o' ane o' your grand palaces into hell! And gin ye dinna repent in time, ye'll maybe get a little experiment o' that sort. Ye think ye hae said a very witty thing there: but a' profane wit is sinfu'; and whatever is sinfu' is shamefu'; and therefore it never suits to be said either afore God or man. Ye are just a good standing sample o' the young tenantry o' Scotland at this time. Ye're ower genteel to be devout, and ye look ower high, and depend ower muckle on the arm o' flesh, to regard the rod and Him that hath appointed it. But it will fa' wi' the mair weight for that! A blow that is seen coming may be wardit off; but if ane's sae proud as not to regard it, it's the less scaith that he suffer."

"I see not how any man can ward off this blow, Andrew. It has gathered its overwhelming force in springs over which we have no control, and is of that nature that no industry of man can avail against it; exertion is no more than a drop in the bucket: and I greatly fear that this grievous storm is come to lay the axe to the root of the tree."

"I'm glad to hear, however, that you hae some scripture phrases at your tongue-roots. I never heard you use ane in a serious mode before; and I hope there will be a reformation yet. If adversity hae that effect, I shall willingly submit to my share o' the loss if the storm should lie still for a while, and cut off a wheen o' the creatures, that ye aince made eedals o', and now dow hardly bide to see. But that's the gate wi' a' things that ane sets up for warldly worship in place o' the true object; they turn a' out curses and causes o' shame and disgrace. As for warding off the blow, master, I see no resource but throwing up the farms ilk ane, and trying to save a remnant out o' the fire. The lairds want naething better than for ye to rin in arrears; then they will get a' your stocks for neist to naething, and have the land stockit themsels as they had langsyne; and you will be their keepers, or vassals, the same as we are to you at present. As to hinging on at the present rents, it is madness—the very extremity of madness. I hae been a herd here for fifty years, and I ken as weel what the ground will pay at every price of sheep as you do, and I daresay a great deal better. When I came here first, your father paid less than the third of the rent that you are bound to pay; sheep of every description were dearer, lambs, ewes, and wedders; and I ken weel he was making no money of it, honest man, but merely working his way, with some years a little over, and some naething. And how is it possible that you can pay three times the rent at lower prices of sheep? I say the very presumption of the thing is sheer madness. And it is not only this farm, but you may take it as an average of all the farms in the country, that *before the French war began, the sheep were dearer than they*

are now; the farms were not above one-third of the rents at an average, and the farmers were not making any money. They have lost their summer day during the French war, which will never return to them; and the only resource they have, that I can see, is to abandon their farms in time, and try to save a remnant.

"Things will come to their true level presently, but not afore the auld stock o' farmers are crushed past rising again. And then I little wat what's to come o' ye; for an we herds get the land, we *winna* employ you as our shepherds, that you may depend on."

"Well, Andrew, these are curious facts that you tell me of the land having all changed occupiers about a certain period. I wish you could have stated the causes with certainty. Was there not a great loss on this farm once, when it was said the burn was so dammed up with dead carcasses that it changed its course?"

"Ay, but that's quite a late story. It happened in my own day, and I believe mostly through mischance. That was the year Rob Dodds was lost in the Earny-Cleuch. I remember it, but cannot tell what year it was, for I was but a little bilsh of a callant then."

"Who was Rob Dodds? I never heard of the incident before."

"Ay, but your father remembered it weel; for he sent a' his men mony a day to look for the corpse, but a' to nae purpose. I'll never forget it; for it made an impression on me sae deep that I couldna get rest i' my bed for months and days. He was a young handsome bonny lad, an honest man's only son, and was herd wi' Tam Linton in the Birkhill. The Lintons were sair come down then; for this Tam was a herd, and had Rob hired as his assistant. Weel, it sae happened that Tam's wife had occasion to cross the wild heights atween the Birkhill and Tweedsmuir, to see her mother, or sister, on some express, and Tam sent the young man wi' her to see her ower Donald's Cleuch Edge. It was in the middle o' winter, and, if I mind right, this time sixty years. At the time they set out, the morning was calm, frosty, and threatening snaw, but the ground clear of it. Rob had orders to set his mistress to the height and return home; but by the time they had got to the height, the snaw had come on, so the good lad went all the way through Guemshope with her, and in sight of the water o' Fruid. He crossed all the wildest o' the heights on his return in safety; and on the Middle-End, west of Loch-Skene, he met with Robin Laidlaw, that went to the Highlands and grew a great farmer after that. Robin was gathering the Polmoody ewes; and as they were neighbours, and both herding to ae master, Laidlaw testified some anxiety lest the young man should not find his way hame; for the blast had then come on very severe. Dodds leugh at him, and said, 'he was nae mair feared for finding the gate hame, than he was for finding the gate to his mouth when he was hungry.' 'Weel, weel,' quo' Robin, 'keep the band o' the hill a' the way, for I hae seen as clever a fellow waured on sic a day; and be sure to hund the ewes out o' the Brand-Law Scores as ye gang by.' 'Tammy charged me to bring back a beckfu' o' peats wi' me,' said he; 'but I think I'll no gang near the peat stack the day.' 'Na,' quo' Robin, 'I think ye'll no be sae mad!' 'But, O man,' quo' the lad, 'hae ye ony bit bread about your pouches! for I'm unco hungry. The wife was in sic a hurry that I had to come away without getting ony breakfast, and I had sae far to gang wi' her that I'm grown unco toom i' the inside.' 'The fient ae inch hae I, Robie, my man, or you should hae had it,' quo' Laidlaw. 'But an that be the case, gang straight hame, and never heed the ewes, come o' them what will.' 'O there's nae fear!' said he. 'I'll turn the ewes, and be hame in good time too.' And with that he left Laidlaw, and went down the Middle-Craig-End, jumping and playing in a frolicsome way over his stick. He had a large lang nibbit staff in his hand, which Laidlaw took particular notice of, thinking it would be a good help for the young man in the rough way he had to gang.

"There was never another word about the matter till that day eight-days. The storm having increased to a terrible drift, the snaw had grown very deep, and the herds, wha lived about three miles sindry, hadna met for a' that time. But that day Tam Linton and Robin Laidlaw met at the Tail Burn; and after cracking a lang time thegether, Tam says to the tither, just as it war by chance, 'Saw ye naething o' our young dinnagood this day eight-days, Robin? He gaed awa that morning to set our gudewife ower the height, and has never sin' that time lookit near me, the careless rascal!'

"'Tam Linton, what's that you're saying! what's that I hear ye saying, Tam Linton?' quo' Robin, wha was dung clean stupid wi' horror. 'Hae ye never seen Rob Dodds, sin' that morning he gaed away wi' your wife?'

"'Na, never,' quo' the tither.

"'Why then, sir, let me tell ye, you'll never see him again in this world alive,' quo' Robin; 'for he left me on the Middle-End on his way hame that day at eleven o'clock, just as the day was coming to the warst. But, Tam Linton, what was't ye war saying? Ye're telling me what canna be true. Do ye say that ye haena seen Rob Dodds sin' that day?'

"'Haena I tauld ye that I hae never seen his face sinsyne?' quo' Linton.

"'Sae I hear ye saying,' quo' Robin again. 'But ye're telling me a downright made lee. The thing's no possible; for ye hae the very staff i' your hand that he had in his when he left me in the drift that day.'

"'I ken naething about sticks or staves, Robin

Laidlaw,' says Tam, looking rather like ane catched in an ill turn. 'The staff wasna likely to come hame without the owner, and I can only say, I hae seen nae mair o' Rob Dodds sin' that morning; and I had thoughts that, as the day grew sae ill, he had hadden forrit a' the length wi' our wife, and was biding wi' her folks a' this time to bring her hame again when the storm had settled.'

"'Na, na, Tam, ye needna get into ony o' thae lang-windit stories wi' me,' quo' Robin, 'for I tell ye that's the staff Rob Dodds had in his hand when I last saw him; so you have either seen him dead or living—I'll give my oath to that.'

"'Ye had better take care what ye say, Robin Laidlaw,' says Tam, very fiercely, 'or I'll maybe make ye blithe to eat in your words again.'

"'What I hae said I'll stand to, Tam Linton,' says Robin. 'And mair than that,' says he: 'if that young man has come to an untimely end, I'll see his blood required at your hand.'

"Then there was word sent away to the Hophouse to his parents, and ye may weel ken, master, what heavy news it was to them, for Rob was their only son; they had gien him a good education, and muckle, muckle they thought o' him; but naething wad serve him but he wad be a shepherd. His father came wi' the maist pairt o' Ettrick parish at his back, and mony sharp and threatening words past atween him and Linton; but what could they make o't? The lad was lost, and nae law, nor nae revenge could restore him again; sae they had naething for't, but to spread athwart a' the hills looking for the corpse. The haill country raise for ten miles round, on ane or twa good days that happened, but the snaw was still lying, and a' their looking was in vain. Tam Linton wad look nane. He took the dorts, and never heeded the folk mair than they hadna been there. A' that height atween Loch Skene and the Birkhill was just moving wi' folk for the space o' three weeks; for the twa auld folk, the lad's parents, couldna get ony rest, and folk sympatheezed unco muckle wi' them. At length the snaw gaed maistly awa,' and the weather turned fine, and I gaed out ane o' the days wi' my father to look for the body. But, aih wow! I was a feared wight! whenever I saw a bit sod, or a knowe, or a grey stane, I stood still and trembled for fear it was the dead man, and no ae step durst I steer farther, till my father gaed up to a' thae things. I gaed nae mair back to look for the corpse, for I'm sure if we had found the body, I would hae gane out o' my judgment.

"At length everybody tired o' looking, but the auld man himsel. He travelled day after day, ill weather and good weather, without intermission. They said it was the waesomest thing ever was seen, to see that auld gray-headed man gaun sae lang by himsel, looking for the corpse o' his only son! The maist part o' his friends advised him at length to give up the search, as the finding o' the body seemed a thing a'thegither hopeless. But he declared he wad look for his son till the day o' his death, and if he could but find his bones, he would carry them away from the wild moors, and lay them in the grave where he was to lie himsel. Tam Linton was apprehended, and examined afore the sheriff, but nae proof could be led against him, and he wan off. He swore that, as far as he remembered, he got the staff standing at the mouth o' the peat stack, and that he conceived that either the lad or himsel had left it there some day when bringing away a burden of peats. The shepherds' peats had not been led home that year, and the stack stood on a hill-head, half a mile frae the house, and the herds were obliged to carry them home as they needed them.

"But a mystery hung ower that lad's death that was never cleared up, nor ever will a'thegither. Every man was convinced, in his own mind, that Linton knew where the body was a' the time, and also that the young man had not come by his death fairly. It was proved that the lad's dog had come hame several times, and that Tam Linton had been seen kicking it frae about his house, and as the dog could be nowhere all that time but waiting on the body, if that had not been concealed in some more than ordinary way, the dog would at least have been seen. At length, it was suggested to the old man, that dead-lights always hovered over a corpse by night, if the body was left exposed to the air; and it was a fact that two drowned men had been found in a field of whins, where the water had left the bodies, by means of the dead lights, a very short while before. On the first calm night, therefore, the old desolate man went to the Merkside Edge, to the top of a high hill that overlooked all the ground where there was ony likelihood that the dead body would be lying. He watched there the lee-lang night, keeping his eye constantly roaming ower the broken wastes before him, but he never noticed the least glimmer of the dead-lights. About midnight, however, he heard a dog barking; it likewise gae twa or three melancholy yowls, and then ceased. Robin Dodds was convinced it was his son's dog, but it was at such a distance, being about twa miles off, that he couldna be sure where it was, or which o' the hills on the opposite side of the glen it was on. The second night he kept watch on the Path Know, a hill which he supposed the howling o' the dog cam frae. But that hill being all surrounded to the west and north by tremendous ravines and cataracts, he heard nothing o' the dog. In the course of the night he saw, or fancied he saw, a momentary glimmer o' light, in the depth of the great gulf immediately below where he sat, and that at three different times, always in the same place. He now became convinced that the remains o' his son were in the bottom of the linn, a place which he conceived inaccessible to man; it being so deep from the summit where he stood, that the roar o' the waterfall only reached his

ears now and then wi' a loud *whush!* as if it had been a sound wandering across the hills by itsel. But sae intent was Robin on this Willie-an-the-wisp light, that he took landmarks frae the ae summit to the other, to make sure o' the place; and as soon as daylight came, he set about finding a passage down to the bottom of the linn. He effected this by coming to the foot of the linn, and tracing its course backward, sometimes wading in water, and sometimes clambering over rocks, till at length, with a beating heart, he reached the very spot where he had seen the light, and in the gray o' the morning, he perceived something lying there that differed in colour from the iron-hued stones and rocks of which the linn was composed. He was in great astonishment what this could be, for, as he came closer on it, he saw it had no likeness to the dead body of a man, but rather appeared to be a heap o' bedclothes. And what think you it turned out to be? for I see ye're glowring as your een were gaun to loup out. Just neither more nor less than a strong mineral well, or what the doctors ca' a callybit spring, a' boustered about wi' heaps o' soapy, limy kind o' stuff, that it seems had thrown out fiery vapours i' the night-time.

"However, Robin, being unable to do ony mair in the way o' searching, had now nae hope left but in finding his dead son by some kind o' supernatural means. Sae he determined to watch a third night, and that at the very identical peat-stack where it had been said his son's staff was found. He did sae; and about midnight, ere ever he wist, the dog set up a howl close beside him. He called on him by his name, and the dog came, and fawned on his old acquaintance, and whimpered, and whinged, and made sic a wark, as could hardly hae been trowed. Robin keepit haud o' him a' the night, and fed him wi' pieces o' bread, and then as soon as the sun rose, he let him gang, and the poor affectionate creature went straight to his dead master, who, after all, was lying in a little green spritty hollow, not above a musket shot from the peat stack. This rendered the whole affair more mysterious than ever, for Robin Dodds himself, and above twenty men beside, could all have made oath that they had looked into that place again and again so minutely, that a dead bird could not have been there without their having seen it. However, there the body of the youth was gotten, after having been lost for the long space of ten weeks, and not in a state of great decay either, for it rather appeared swollen, as if it had been lying among water.

"Conjecture was now driven to great extremities in accounting for all these circumstances. It was manifest to every one, that the body had not been all the time in that place. But then, where had it been? or what could have been the reasons for concealing it? These were the puzzling considerations. There were a hunder different things suspectit, and mony o' them, I daresay, a hunder miles frae the truth; but on the whole, Linton was sair lookit down on, and almaist perfectly abhorred by the country, for it was weel kenn'd that he had been particularly churlish and severe on the young man at a' times, and seemed to have had a peculiar dislike to him. An it hadna been the wife, wha was a kind considerate sort of a body, if Tam had gotten his will, it was reckoned he wad hae hungered the lad to death. After that, Linton left the place, and gaed away, I watna where; and the country, I believe, came gayan near to the truth o' the story at last.

"There was a girl in the Birkhill house at the time, whether a daughter o' Tam's or no I hae forgot, though I think otherwise. However, she durstna for her life tell a' she kenn'd as lang as the investigation was gaun on; but it at last spunkit out that Rob Dodds had got hame safe eneugh, and that Tam got into a great rage at him because he had not brought a burden o' peats, there being none in the house. The youth excused himself on the score of fatigue and hunger, but Tam swore at him, and said, 'The deil be in your teeth, gin they shall break bread, till ye gang back out to the hill-head and bring a burden o' peats!' Dodds refused, on which Tam struck him, and forced him away, and he went crying and greeting out at the door, but never came back. She also told, that after poor Rob was lost, Tam tried several times to get at his dog to fell it with a stick, but the creature was terrified for him, and made its escape. It was therefore thought, and indeed there was little doubt, that Rob, through fatigue and hunger, and reckless of death from the way he had been guidit, went out to the hill, and died at the peat stack, the mouth of which was a shelter from the drift-wind, and that his cruel master, conscious o' the way in which he had used him, and dreading skaith, had trailed away the body, and sunk it in some pool in these unfathomable linns, or otherwise concealed it, wi' the intention that the world might never ken whether the lad was actually dead or had absconded. If it had not been for the dog, from which it appears he had been unable to conceal it, and the old man's perseverance, to whose search there appeared to be no end, it is probable he would never have laid the body in a place where it could have been found. But if he had allowed it to remain in the first place of concealment, it might have been discovered by means of the dog, and the intentional concealment of the corpse would then have been obvious, so that Linton all that time could not be quite at his ease, and it was no wonder he attempted to fell the dog. But where the body could have been deposited, that the faithful animal was never discovered by the searchers during the day for the space of ten weeks, baffled a' the conjectures that ever could be made.

"The two old people, the lad's father and mother, never got over their loss. They never held up their heads again, nor joined in society ony mair, except in attending divine worship. It might be truly

said o' them, that they spent the few years that they survived their son in constant prayer and humiliation, but they soon died, a short while after ane anither. As for Tam Linton, he left this part of the country, as I told you, but it was said there was a curse hung ower him and his a' his life, and that he never mair did weel. That was the year, master, on which our burn was dammed with the dead sheep, and in fixing the date, you see, I hae been led into a lang story, and am just nae farther wi' the main point than when I began."

"I wish from my heart, Andrew, that you would try to fix a great many old dates in the same manner, for I confess I am more interested in your lang stories, than in either your lang prayers or your lang sermons about repentance and amendment. But pray, you were talking of the judgments that overtook Tam Linton. Was that the same Tam Linton that was precipitated from the Brand Law by the break of a snaw-wreath, and he and all his sheep jammed into the hideous gulf, called the Grey Mare's Tail?"

"The very same, sir; and that might be accountit ane o' the first judgments that befell him; for there were many of his ain sheep in the flock. Tam asserted all his life, that he went into the linn along with his hirsel, but no man ever believed him; for there was not one of the sheep came out alive, and how it was possible for the carl to have come safe out, naebody could see. It was indeed quite impossible; for it had been such a break of snaw as had scarcely ever been seen. The gulf was crammed sae fu' that ane could hae gane ower it like a pendit brig, and no a single sheep could be gotten out, either dead or living. When the thaw came, the burn wrought a passage for itself below the snaw, but the arch stood till summer. I have heard my father oft describe the appearance of that vault as he saw it on his way from Moffat fair. Ane hadna gane far into it, he said, till it turned darkish, like an ill-hued twilight; and sic a like arch o' carnage he never saw! There were limbs o' sheep hinging in a' directions, the snaw was wedged sae firm. Some entire carcasses hung by the neck, some by a spauld; then there was a haill forest o' legs sticking out in ae place, and horns in anither, terribly mangled and broken; and it was a'thegither sic a frightsome-looking place that he was blythe to get out o't again."

After looking at the sheep, tasting old Janet's best kebbuck and oatmeal cakes, and preeing the whisky bottle, the young farmer again set out through the deep snow, on his way home. But Andrew made him promise, that if the weather did not amend, he would come back in a few days and see how the poor sheep were coming on; and, as an inducement, promised to tell him a great many old anecdotes of the shepherd's life.

CHAPTER II.

MR. ADAMSON OF LAVERHOPE.

One of those events that have made the deepest impression on the shepherds' minds for a century bygone, seems to have been the fate of Mr. Adamson, who was tenant in Laverhope for the space of twenty-seven years. It stands in their calendar as an era from which to date summer floods, water-spouts, hail and thunder storms, &c., and appears from tradition to have been attended with some awful circumstances expressive of divine vengeance. This Adamson is represented as having been a man of an ungovernable temper; of irritability so extreme, that no person could be for a moment certain to what excesses he might be hurried. He was otherwise accounted a good and upright man, and a sincere Christian; but in these outbreakings of temper, he often committed acts of cruelty and injustice for which any good man ought to have been ashamed. Among other qualities he had an obliging disposition, there being few to whom a poor man would sooner have applied in a strait. Accordingly, he had been in the habit of assisting a less wealthy neighbour of his with a little credit for many years. This man's name was Irvine, and though he had a number of rich relations, he was never out of difficulties. Adamson, from some whim or caprice, sued this poor farmer for a few hundred merks, taking legal steps against him, even to the very last measures short of poinding and imprisonment. Irvine paid little attention to this, taking it for granted that his neighbour took these steps only for the purpose of inducing his debtor's friends to come forward and support him.

It happened one day about this period, that a thoughtless boy, belonging to Irvine's farm, hunted Adamson's cattle in a way that gave great offence to their owner, on which the two farmers differed, and some hard words passed between them. The next day Irvine was seized and thrown into jail; and shortly after his effects were poinded and sold by auction for ready money. They were consequently thrown away, as the neighbours, not having been forewarned, were wholly unprovided with ready money, and unable to purchase at any price. Mrs. Irvine came to the enraged creditor with a child in her arms, and implored him to put off the sale for a month, that she might try what could be done amongst her friends, to prevent a wreck so irretrievable. He was at one time on the very point of yielding; but some bitter recollections coming over his mind at the moment, stimulated his spleen against her husband, and he resolved that the sale should go on. William Carruders of Grindistone heard the following dialogue between them; and he said that his heart almost trembled within him; for

Mrs. Irvine was a violent woman, and her eloquence did more harm than good.

"Are ye really gaun to act the part of a devil, the day, Mr. Adamson, and turn me and thae bairns out to the bare highroad, helpless as we are? Oh, man, if your bowels binna seared in hell-fire already, take some compassion; for an ye dinna, they *will* be seared afore baith men and angels yet, till that hard and cruel heart o' yours be nealed to an izle."

"I'm gaun to act nae part of a devil, Mrs. Irvine; I'm only gaun to take my ain in the only way I can get it. I'm no baith gaun to tine my siller, and hae my beasts abused into the bargain."

"Ye sall neither lose plack nor bawbee o' your siller, man, if you will gie me but a month to make a shift for it—I swear to you, ye sall neither lose, nor rue the deed. But if ye winna grant me that wee, wee while, when the bread of a haill family depends on it, ye're waur than ony deil that's yammering and cursing i' the bottomless pit."

"Keep your ravings to yoursel, Mrs. Irvine, for I hae made up my mind what I'm to do, and I'll do it; sae it's needless for ye to pit yoursel into a bleeze; for the surest promisers are aye the slackest payers. It isna likely that your bad language will gar me alter my purpose."

"If that *be* your purpose, Mr. Adamson, and if you put that purpose in execution, I wadna change conditions wi' you the day for ten thousand times a' the gear ye are worth. Ye're gaun to do the thing that ye'll repent only ainee, for a' the time that ye hae to exist baith in this world and the neist, and that's a lang, lang forrit and ayond. Ye have assisted a poor honest family for the purpose of taking them at a disadvantage, and crushing them to beggars; and when ane thinks o' that, what a heart you must hae? Ye hae first put my poor man in prison, a place where he little thought and less deserved ever to be; and now ye are reaving his sackless family out o' their last bit o' bread. Look at this bit bonny innocent thing in my arms, how it is smiling on ye? Look at a' the rest standing leaning against the wa's, ilka ane wi' his een fixed on you by way o' imploring your pity! If ye reject thae looks, ye'll see them again in some trying moments, that will bring this ane back to your mind; ye will see them i' your dreams; ye will see them on your death-bed, and ye will *think* ye see them gleaming on ye through the reek o' hell; but it winna be them."

"Haud your tongue, woman, for ye make me feared to hear ye."

"Ay, but better be feared in time, than torfelled for ever. Better conquess your bad humour for ainee, than be conquessed for it through sae mony lang ages. Ye pretend to be a religious man, Mr. Adamson, and a great deal mair sae than your neighbours; do you think that religion teaches you acts o' cruelty like this? Will ye hae the face to kneel afore your Maker this night, and pray for a blessing on you and yours, and that He will forgive you your debts as you forgive your debtors? I hae nae doubt but you will. But aih! how sic an appeal will heap the coals o' divine vengeance on your head, and tighten the belts o' burning yettlin ower your hard heart! Come forrit, bairns, and speak for yourselves, ilk ane o' ye."

"O, Maister Adamson, ye mauna turn my father and mother out o' their house and their farm; or what think ye is to come o' us?" said Thomas.

No consideration, however, was strong enough to turn Adamson from his purpose. The sale went on; and still, on the calling off of every favourite animal, Mrs. Irvine renewed her anathemas.

"Gentlemen, this is the mistress's favourite cow, and gives thirteen pints of milk every day. She is valued in my roup-roll at fifteen pounds; but we shall begin her at ten. Does any body say ten pounds for this excellent cow? ten pounds—ten pounds? Nobody says ten pounds? Gentlemen, this is extraordinary! Money is surely a scarce article here to-day. Well, then, does any gentleman say five pounds to begin this excellent cow that gives twelve pints of milk daily? Five pounds—only five pounds!—Nobody bids five pounds? Well the stock must positively be sold without reserve. Ten shillings for the cow—ten shillings—ten shillings—Will nobody bid ten shillings to set the sail agoing?"

"I'll gie five-and-twenty shillings for her," cried Adamson.

"Thank you, sir. One pound five—one pound five, and just a-going. Once—twice—*thrice*. Mr. Adamson, one pound five."

Mrs. Irvine came forward, drowned in tears, with the babe in her arms, and patting the cow, she said, "Ah, poor lady Bell, this is my last sight o' you, and the last time I'll clap your honest side! And hae we really been deprived o' your support for the miserable sum o' five-and-twenty shillings! My curse light on the head o' him that has done it! In the name of my destitute bairns I curse him; and does he think that a mother's curse will sink fruitless to the ground? Na, na! I see an ee that's looking down here in pity and in anger; and I see a hand that's gathering the bolts o' Heaven thegither, for some purpose that I could divine, but daurna utter. But that hand is unerring, and where it throws the bolt, there it will strike. Fareweel, puir beast, ye hae supplied us wi' mony a meal, but ye will never supply us wi' another."

This sale at Kirkheugh was on the 11th of July. On the day following, Mr. Adamson went up to the folds in the Hope to shear his sheep, with no fewer than twenty-five attendants, consisting of all his own servants and cottars, and about as many neighbouring shepherds whom he had collected, it being customary for the farmers to assist one another reciprocally on these occasions. Adamson continued more than usually capricious and unreasonable all

that forenoon. He was discontented with himself, and when a man is ill pleased with himself, he is seldom well pleased with others. He seemed altogether left to the influences of the wicked one; running about in a rage, finding fault with everything and every person, and at times cursing bitterly, a practice to which he was not addicted; so that the sheep-shearing, that used to be a scene of hiliarity among so many young and old shepherds, lads, lasses, wives, and callants, was that day turned into one of gloom and dissatisfaction.

After a number of other provoking outrages, Adamson at length, with the buisting-iron which he held in his hand, struck a dog belonging to one of his own shepherd boys, till the poor animal fell senseless on the ground, and lay sprawling as in the last extremity. This brought matters to a point which threatened nothing but anarchy and confusion; for every shepherd's blood boiled with indignation, and each almost wished in his heart that the dog had been his own, that he might have retaliated on the tyrant. At the time the blow was struck, the boy was tending one of the fold-doors, and perceiving the plight of his faithful animal, he ran to its assistance, lifted it in his arms, and holding it up to recover its breath, he wept and lamented over it most piteously. "My poor little Nimble!" he cried; "I am feared that mad body has killed ye, and then what am I to do wanting ye? I wad ten times rather he had strucken mysel!"

He had scarce said the words ere his master caught him by the hair of the head with the one hand, and began to drag him about, while with the other he struck him most unmercifully. When the boy left the fold-door, the unshorn sheep broke out, and got away to the hill among the lambs and the clippies; and the farmer being in one of his "mad tantrums," as the servants called them, the mischance had almost put him beside himself; and that boy or man either is in a ticklish case who is in the hands of an enraged person far above him in strength.

The sheep-shearers paused, and the girls screamed, when they saw their master lay hold of the boy. But Robert Johnston, a shepherd from an adjoining farm, flung the sheep from his knee, made the shears ring against the fold dike, and in an instant had the former by both wrists, and these he held with such a grasp, that he took the power out of his arms; for Johnston was as far above the farmer in might as the latter was above the boy.

"Mr. Adamson, what are ye about?" he cried; "hae ye tint your reason a'thegither, that ye are gaun on rampauging like a madman that gate? Ye hae done the thing, sir, in your ill-timed rage that ye ought to be ashamed of baith afore God and man."

"Are ye for fighting, Rob Johnston?" said the farmer, struggling to free himself. "Do ye want to hae a fight, lad? Because if ye do, I'll maybe gie you enough o' that."

"Na, sir, I dinna want to fight; but I winna let you fight either, unless wi' ane that's your equal; sae gie ower spraughling, and stand still till I speak to ye; for an ye winna stand to hear reason, I'll gar ye lie till ye hear it. Do ye consider what ye hae been doing even now? Do ye consider that ye hae been striking a poor orphan callant, wha has neither father nor mother to protect him or to right his wrangs? and a' for naething but a bit start o' natural affection? How wad ye like, sir, an ony body were to guide a bairn o' yours that gate? and ye as little ken what they are to come to afore their deaths, as that boy's parents did when they were rearing and fondling ower him. Fie for shame, Mr. Adamson! fie for shame! Ye first strak his poor dumb brute, which was a greater sin than the tither, for it didna ken what ye were striking it for; and then, because the callant ran to assist the only creature he has on the earth, and I'm feared the only true and faithfu' friend beside, ye claught him by the hair o' the head, and fell to the dadding him as he war your slave! 'Od, sir, my blood rises at sic an act o' cruelty and injustice; and gin I thought ye worth my while, I wad tan ye like a pellet for it."

The farmer struggled and fought so viciously, that Johnston was obliged to throw him down twice over, somewhat roughly, and hold him by main force. But on laying him down the second time, Johnston said, "Now, sir, I just tell ye, that ye deserve to hae your banes weel throoshen; but ye're nae match for me, and I'll scorn to lay a tip on ye. I'll leave ye to Him who has declared himself the stay and shield of the orphan; and gin some visible testimony o' his displeasure dinna come ower ye for the abusing of his ward, I am right sair mista'en."

Adamson, finding himself fairly mastered, and that no one seemed disposed to take his part, was obliged to give in, and went sullenly away to tend the hirsel that stood beside the fold. In the meantime the sheep-shearing went on as before, with a little more of hilarity and glee. It is the business of the lasses to take the ewes, and carry them from the fold to the clippers; and now might be seen every young shepherd's sweetheart or favourite waiting beside him, helping him to clip, or holding the ewes by the hind legs to make them lie easy, a great matter for the furtherance of the operator. Others, again, who thought themselves slighted or loved a joke, would continue to act in a different manner, and plague the youths by bringing them such sheep as it was next to impossible to clip.

'Aih, Jock lad, I hae brought you a grand ane this time! Ye will clank the shears ower her, and be the first done o' them a'!"

"My truly, Jessy, but ye hae gi'en me ane! I declare the beast is woo to the cloots and the een holes; and afore I get the fleece broken up, the rest will be done. Ah, Jessy, Jessy! ye're working for a mischief the day; and ye'll maybe get it."

"She's a braw sonsie sheep, Jock. I ken ye like

to hae your arms weel filled. She'll amaist fill them as weel as Tibby Tod."

"There's for it now! there's for it! What care I for Tibby Tod, dame? Ye are the most jealous elf, Jessy, that ever drew coat ower head. But wha was't that sat half a night at the side of a gray stane wi' a crazy cooper? And wha was't that gae the poor precentor the whiskings, and reduced a' his sharps to downright flats? An ye cast up Tibby Tod ony mair to me, I'll tell something that will gar thae wild een reel i' your head, Mistress Jessy."

"Wow, Jock, but I'm unco wae for ye now. Poor fellow! It's really very hard usage! If ye canna clip the ewe, man, gie me her, and I'll tak her to anither; for I canna bide to see ye sae sair put about. I winna bring ye anither Tibby Tod the day, take my word on it. The neist shall be a real May Henderson o' Firthhopecleuch—ane, ye ken, wi' lang legs, and a good lamb at her fit."

"Gudesake, lassie, haud your tongue, and dinna affront baith yoursel and me. Ye are fit to gar ane's cheek burn to the bane. I'm fairly quashed, and daurna say anither word. Let us therefore hae let-a-be for let-a-be, which is good bairns' agreement, till after the close o' the day sky; and then I'll tell ye my mind."

"Ay, but whilk o' your minds will ye tell me, Jock? For ye will be in five or six different anes afore that time. Ane, to ken your mind, wad need to be tauld it every hour o' the day, and then cast up the account at the year's end. But how wad she settle it then, Jock? I fancy she wad hae to multiply ilk year's minds by dozens, and divide by four, and then we a' ken what wad be the quotients."

"Aih wow, sirs! heard ever ony o' ye the like o' that? For three things the sheep-fauld is disquieted, and there are four which it cannot bear."

"And what are they, Jock?"

"A witty wench, a woughing dog, a waukit-woo'd wedder, and a pair o' shambling shears."

After this manner did the gleesome chat go on, now that the surly goodman had withdrawn from the scene. But this was but one couple; every pair being engaged according to their bisases, and after their kind—some settling the knotty points of divinity; others telling auld warld stories about persecutions, forays, and fairy raids; and some whispering, in half sentences, the soft breathings of pastoral love.

But the farmer's bad humour in the meanwhile was only smothered, not extinguished; and, like a flame that is kept down by an overpowering weight of fuel, wanted but a breath to rekindle it; or like a barrel of gunpowder, that the smallest spark will set in a blaze. That spark unfortunately fell upon it too soon. It came in the form of an old beggar, yclept Patie Maxwell, a well known, and generally a welcome guest, over all that district. He came to the folds for his annual present of a fleece of wool, which had never before been denied him; and the farmer being the first person he came to, he approached him as in respect bound, accosting him in his wonted obsequious way.

"Weel, gudeman, how's a' wi' ye the day?"—(No answer.)—"This will be a thrang day w'ye! How are ye getting on wi' the clipping?"

"Nae the better o' you, or the like o' you. Gang away back the gate ye came. What are you coming doiting up through amang the sheep that gate for, putting them a' tersyversy?"

"Tut, gudeman, what does the sheep mind an auld creeping body like me? I hae done nae ill to your pickle sheep; and as for ganging back the road I cam, I'll do that whan I like, and no till than."

"But I'll make you blythe to turn back, auld vagabond! Do ye imagine I'm gaun to hae a' my clippers and grippers, buisters and binders, laid half idle, gaffing and giggling wi' you?"

"Why, then, speak like a reasonable man and a courteous Christian, as ye used to do, and I'se crack wi' yoursel, and no gang near them."

"I'll keep my Christian cracks for others than auld Papist dogs, I trow."

"Wha do ye ca' auld Papist dogs, Mr. Adamson! Wha is it that ye mean to denominate by that fine-sounding title?"

"Just you, and the like o' ye, Pate. It is weel kenn'd that ye are as rank a Papist as ever kissed a crosier, and that ye were out in the very fore-end o' the unnatural Rebellion, in order to subvert our religion and place a Popish tyrant on the throne. It is a shame for a Protestant parish like this to support ye, and gie you as liberal awmosses as ye were a Christian saint. For me, I can tell you, ye'll get nae mae at my hand; nor nae rebel Papist loun amang ye."

"Dear sir, ye're surely no yoursel the day. Ye hae kenn'd I professed the Catholic religion these thretty years—it was the faith I was brought up in, and that in which I shall dee; and ye kenn'd a' that time that I was out in the Forty-Five wi' Prince Charles, and yet ye never made mention o' the facts nor refused me any awmos till the day. But as I hae been obliged t'ye, I'll haud my tongue; only, I wad advise ye as a friend, whenever ye hae occasion to speak of ony community of brother Christians, that ye will in future hardly make use o' siccan harsh terms. Or, if ye will do't, tak care wha ye use them afore, and let it no be to the face o' an auld veteran."

"What, ye auld profane wafer-eater and worshipper of graven images, dare ye heave your pikit knot at me?"

"I hae heaved baith sword and spear against mony a better man; and, in the cause o' my religion, I'll do it again."

He was proceeding, but Adamson's choler rising to an ungovernable height, he drew a race, and running against the gaberlunzie with his whole force, made him fly heels-over-head down the hill.

The old man's bonnet flew off, his meal-pocks were scattered about, and his mantle, with two or three small fleeces of wool in it, rolled down into the burn.

The servants observed what had been done, and one elderly shepherd said, "In troth, sirs, our master is no himsel the day. He maun really be looked to. It appears to me, that sin' he roupit out yon poor family yesterday, the Lord has ta'en his guiding arm frae about him. Rob Johnston, ye'll be obliged to rin to the assistance o' the auld man."

"I'll trust the auld Jacobite for another shake wi' him yet," said Rob, "afore I steer my fit; for it strikes me if he hadna been ta'en unawares, he wad hardly hae been sae easily coupit."

The gaberlunzie was considerably astounded and stupefied when he first got up his head; but finding all his bones whole, and his old frame disencumbered of every superfluous load, he sprang to his feet, shook his gray burly locks, and cursed the aggressor in the name of the Holy Trinity, the Mother of our Lord, and all the blessed Saints above. Then approaching him with his cudgel heaved, he warned him to be on his guard, or make out of his reach, else he would send him to eternity in the twinkling of an eye. The farmer held up his staff across to defend his head against the descent of old Patie's piked kent, and at the same time made a break in, with intent to close with his assailant; but, in so doing, he held down his head for a moment, on which the gaberlunzie made a swing to one side, and lent Adamson such a blow over the neck, or back part of the head, that he fell violently on his face, after running two or three steps precipitately forward. The beggar, whose eyes gleamed with wild fury, while his gray locks floated over them like a winter cloud over two meteors of the night, was about to follow up his blow with another more efficient one on his prostrate foe; but the farmer, perceiving these unequivocal symptoms of danger, wisely judged that there was no time to lose in providing for his own safety, and, rolling himself rapidly two or three times over, he got to his feet, and made his escape, though not before Patie had hit him what he called "a stiff lounder across the rumple."

The farmer fled along the brae, and the gaberlunzie pursued, while the people at the fold were convulsed with laughter. The scene was highly picturesque, for the beggar could run none, and still the faster that he essayed to run, he made the less speed. But ever and anon he stood still, and cursed Adamson in the name of one or other of the saints or apostles, brandishing his cudgel, and stamping with his foot. The other, keeping still at a small distance, pretended to laugh at him, and at the same time uttered such bitter abuse against the Papists in general, and old Patie in particular, that, after the latter had cursed himself into a proper pitch of indignation, he always broke at him again, making vain efforts to reach him one more blow. At length, after chasing him by these starts about half a mile, the beggar returned, gathered up the scattered implements and fruits of his occupation, and came to the fold to the busy group.

Patie's general character was that of a patient, jocular, sarcastic old man, whom people liked, but dared not much to contradict; but that day his manner and mien had become so much altered, in consequence of the altercation and conflict which had just taken place, that the people were almost frightened to look at him; and as for social converse, there was none to be had with him. His countenance was grim, haughty, and had something satanic in its lines and deep wrinkles; and ever and anon, as he stood leaning against the fold, he uttered a kind of hollow growl, with a broken interrupted sound, like a war-horse neighing in his sleep, and then muttered curses on the farmer.

The old shepherd before mentioned ventured, at length, to caution him against such profanity, saying, "Dear Patie, man, dinna sin away your soul, venting siccan curses as these. They will a' turn back on your ain head; for what harm can the curses of a poor sinfu' worm do to our master?"

"My curse, sir, has blasted the hopes of better men than either you or him," said the gaberlunzie in an earthquake voice, and shivering with vehemence as he spoke. "Ye may think the like o' me can hae nae power wi' Heaven; but an I hae power wi' hell, it is sufficient to cow ony that's here. I sanna brag what effect my curse will have, but I shall say this, that either your master or ony o' his men had as good have auld Patie Maxwell's blessing as his curse ony time, Jacobite and Roman Catholic though he be."

It now became necessary to bring into the fold the sheep that the farmer was tending; and they were the last hirsel that was to shear that day. The farmer's face was reddened with ill-nature; but yet he now appeared to be somewhat humbled, by reflecting on the ridiculous figure he had made. Patie sat on the top of the fold-dike, and from the bold and hardy asseverations that he made, he seemed disposed to provoke a dispute with any one present who chose to take up the cudgels. While the shepherds, under fire of the gaberlunzie's bitter speeches, were sharping their shears, a thick black cloud began to rear itself over the height to the southward, the front of which seemed to be boiling —both its outsides rolling rapidly forward, and again wheeling in toward the centre. I have heard old Robin Johnston, the stout young man mentioned above, but who was a very old man when I knew him, describe the appearance of the cloud as greatly resembling a whirlpool made by the eddy of a rapid tide or flooded river; and he declared, to his dying day, that he never saw aught in nature have a more ominous appearance. The gaberlunzie was the first to notice it, and drew the attention of the rest to-

wards that point of the heavens by the following singular and profane remark:—"Aha, lads, see what's coming yonder. Yonder's Patie Maxwell's curse coming rowing and reeling on ye already; and what will ye say an the curse of God be coming backing it?"

"Gudesake, haud your tongue, ye profane body; ye mak me feared to hear ye," said one. "It's a strange delusion to think that a Papish can hae ony influence wi' the Almighty, either to bring down his blessing or his curse."

"Ye speak ye ken nae what, man," answered Pate; "ye hae learned some rhames frae your poor cauld-rife Protestant Whigs about Papists and Antichrist and children of perdition; yet it is plain that ye haena ae spark o' the life or power o' religion in your whole frame, and dinna ken either what's truth or what's falsehood. Ah! yonder it is coming, grim and gurly! Now I hae called for it, and it is coming; let me see if a' the Protestants that are of ye can order it back, or pray it away again! Down on your knees, ye dogs, and set your mows up against it, like as many spiritual cannon, and let me see if you have influence to turn aside ane o' the hailstanes that the deils are playing at chucks wi' in yon dark chamber!"

"I wadna wonder if our clipping were cuttit short," said one.

"Na, but I wadna wonder if something else were cuttit short," said Patie; "What will ye say an some o' your weazons be cuttit short? Hurraw! yonder it comes! Now, there will be sic a hurly-burly in Laverhope as never was sin' the creation o' man!"

The folds of Laverhope were situated on a gentle, sloping plain, in what is called "the forkings of a burn." Laver-burn runs to the eastward, and Widehope-burn runs north, meeting the other at a right angle, a little below the folds. It was around the head of this Widehope that the cloud first made its appearance, and there its vortex seemed to be impending. It descended lower and lower, with uncommon celerity, for the elements were in a turmoil. The cloud laid first hold of one height, then of another, till at length it closed over and around the pastoral group, and the dark Hope had the appearance of a huge chamber hung with sackcloth. The big clear drops of rain soon began to descend, on which the shepherds covered up the wool with blankets, then huddled together under their plaids at the side of the fold, to eschew the speat, which they saw was going to be a terrible one. Patie still kept undauntedly to the top of the dike, and Mr. Adamson stood cowering at the side of it, with his plaid over his head, at a little distance from the rest. The hail and rain mingled, now began to descend in a way that had been seldom witnessed; but it was apparent to them all that the tempest raged with much greater fury in Widehope-head to the southward. Anon a whole volume of lightning burst from the bosom of the darkness, and quivered through the gloom, dazzling the eyes of every beholder—even old Maxwell clapped both his hands on his eyes for a space; a crash of thunder followed the flash, that made all the mountains chatter, and shook the firmament so, that the density of the cloud was broken up; for, on the instant that the thunder ceased, a rushing sound began in Widehope, that soon increased to a loudness equal to the thunder itself; but it resembled the noise made by the sea in a storm. "Holy Virgin!" exclaimed Patie Maxwell, "What is this? What is this! I declare we're a' ower lang here, for the dams of heaven are broken up;" and with that he flung himself from the dike, and fled toward the top of a rising ground. He knew that the sound proceeded from the descent of a tremendous waterspout; but the rest, not conceiving what it was, remained where they were. The storm increased every minute, and in less than a quarter of an hour after the retreat of the gaberlunzie, they heard him calling out with the utmost earnestness; and when they eyed him, he was jumping like a madman on the top of the hillock, waving his bonnet, and screaming out, "Run, ye deil's buckies! Run for your bare lives!" One of the shepherds, jumping up on the dyke to see what was the matter, beheld the burn of Widehope coming down in a manner that could be compared to nothing but an ocean, whose boundaries had given way, descending into the abyss. It came with a cataract front more than twenty feet deep, as was afterwards ascertained by measurement; for it left sufficient marks to enable men to do this with precision. The shepherd called for assistance, and leaped into the fold to drive out the sheep; and just as he got the foremost of them to take the door, the flood came upon the head of the fold, on which he threw himself over the side-wall, and escaped in safety, as did all the rest of the people.

Not so Mr. Adamson's ewes; the greater part of the hirsel being involved in this mighty current. The large fold nearest the burn was levelled with the earth in one second. Stones, ewes, and sheep-house, all were carried before it, and all seemed to bear the same weight. It must have been a dismal sight to see so many fine animals tumbling and rolling in one irresistible mass. They were strong, however, and a few plunged out, and made their escape to the eastward; a great number were carried headlong down, and thrown out on the other side of Laver-burn, upon the side of a dry hill, to which they all escaped, some of them considerably maimed; but the greatest number of all were lost, being overwhelmed among the rubbish of the fold, and entangled so among the falling dykes, and the torrent wheeling and boiling amongst them, that escape was impossible. The wool was totally swept away, and all either lost or so much spoiled, that, when afterwards recovered, it was unsaleable.

When first the flood broke in among the sheep

and the women began to run screaming to the hills, and the despairing shepherds to fly about, unable to do anything, Patie began a laughing with a loud and hellish guffaw, and in that he continued to indulge till quite exhausted. "Ha, ha, ha, ha! what think ye o' the auld beggar's curse now? Ha, ha, ha, ha! I think it has been backit wi' heaven's and the deil's baith. Ha, ha, ha, ha!" And then he mimicked the thunder with the most outrageous and ludicrous jabberings, turning occasionally up to the cloud streaming with lightning and hail, and calling out—"Louder yet, deils! louder yet! Kindle up your crackers, and yerk away! Rap, rap, rap, rap—Ro-ro, ro, ro—Roo—Whush."

"I daresay that body's the vera deevil himsel in the shape o' the auld papish beggar!" said one, not thinking that Patie could hear at such a distance.

"Na, na, lad, I'm no the deil," cried he in answer, "but an I war, I would let you see a stramash! It is a sublime thing to be a Roman Catholic among sae mony weak apostates; but it is a sublimer thing still to be a deil—a master-spirit in a forge like yon. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Take care o' your heads, ye cock-chickens o' Calvin; take care o' the auld coppersmith o' the Black Cludd!"

From the moment that the first thunder-bolt shot from the cloud, the countenance of the farmer was changed. He was manifestly alarmed in no ordinary degree; and when the flood came rushing from the dry mountains, and took away his sheep and his folds before his eyes, he became as a dead man, making no effort to save his store, or to give directions how it might be done. He ran away in a cowering posture, as he had been standing, and took shelter in a little green hollow, out of his servant's view.

The thunder came nearer and nearer the place where the astonished hinds were, till at length they perceived the bolts of flame striking the earth around them in every direction; at one time tearing up its bosom, and at another splintering the rocks. Robin Johnston, in describing it, said that "the thunner-bolts came shimmering out o' the cludd sae thick, that they appeared to be linkit thegither, and fleeing in a' directions. There war some o' them blue, some o' them red, and some o' them like the colour o' the lowe of a candle; some o' them diving into the earth, and some o' them springing up out o' the earth and darting into the heaven." I cannot vouch for the truth of this, but I am sure my informer thought it true, or he would not have told it; and he said further, that when old Patie Maxwell saw it, he cried—"Fie, tak care, cubs o' hell! fie, tak care! cower laigh, and sit sicker; for your auld dam is aboon ye, and aneath ye, and a' round about ye. O for a good wat nurse to spean ye, like John Adamson's lambs! Ha, ha, ha!" The lambs, it must be observed, had been turned out of the fold at first, and none of them perished with their dams.

But just when the storm was at the height, and apparently passing the bounds ever witnessed in these northern climes; when the embroiled elements were in the state of hottest convulsion, and when our little pastoral group were every moment expecting the next to be their last, all at once a lovely "blue bore," fringed with downy gold, opened in the cloud behind, and in five minutes more the sun appeared, and all was beauty and serenity. What a contrast to the scene so lately witnessed!

The most remarkable circumstance of the whole was perhaps the contrast between the two burns. The burn of Laverhope never changed its colour, but continued pure, limpid, and so shallow, that a boy might have stepped over it dry-shod, all the while that the other burn was coming in upon it like an ocean broken loose, and carrying all before it. In mountainous districts, however, instances of the same kind are not unfrequent in times of summer speats. Some other circumstances connected with this storm were also described to me; the storm coming from the south, over a low-lying, wooded, and populous district, the whole of the crows inhabiting it posted away up the glen of Laverhope to avoid the fire and fury of the tempest. "There were thoosands and thoosands came up by us," said Robin, "a' laying theirsels out as they had been mad. And then, whanever the bright bolt played flash through the darkness, ilk ane o' them made a dive and a wheel to avoid the shot; for I was persuaded that they thought a' the artillery and musketry o' the haill country were loosed on them, and that it was time for them to tak the gate. There were likewise several collie dogs came by us in great extremity, hinging out their tongues, and looking aye ower their shouthers, rinning straight on they kenn'd na where; and amang other things, there was a black Highland cow came roaring up the glen, wi' her stake hanging at her neck."

When the gush of waters subsided, all the group, men and women, were soon employed in pulling out dead sheep from among rubbish of stones, banks of gravel, and pools of the burn; and many a row of carcasses was laid out, which at that season were of no use whatever, and of course utterly lost. But all the time they were so engaged, Mr. Adamson came not near them; at which they wondered, and some of them remarked, that "they thought their master was fey the day, mae ways than ane."

"Ay, never mind him," said the old shepherd, "he'll come when he thinks it his ain time; he's a right sair humbled man the day, and I hope by this time he has been brought to see his errors in a right light. But the gaberlunzie is lost too. I think he be sandit in the yird, for I hae never seen him sin' the last great crash o' thunner."

"He'll be gane into the howe to wring his duds," said Robert Johnston, "or maybe to make up matters wi' your master. Gude sauf us, what a profane wretch the auld creature is! I didna think the muckle-horned deil himsel could hae set up his

mou' to the heaven, and braggit and blaspheemed in sic a way. He gart my heart a' grue within me, and dirle as it had been bored wi' red-het eleina."

"Oh, what can ye expect else of a Papish?" said the old shepherd, with a deep sigh: "they're a' deil's bairns ilk ane, and a' employed in carrying on their father's wark. It is needless to expect gude branches frae sic a stock, or gude fruit frae siccan branches."

"There's ae wee bit text that folks should never lose sight o'," said Robin, "and it's this: 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' I think," remarked Robin, when he told the story, "I think that steekit their gabs!"

The evening at length drew on; the women had gone away home, and the neighbouring shepherds had scattered here and there to look after their own flocks. Mr. Adamson's men alone remained, lingering about the brook and the folds, waiting for their master. They had seen him go into the little green hollow, and they knew he was gone to his prayers, and were unwilling to disturb him. But they at length began to think it extraordinary that he should continue at his prayers the whole afternoon. As for the beggar, though acknowledged to be a man of strong sense and sound judgment, he had never been known to say prayers all his life, except in the way of cursing and swearing a little sometimes; and none of them could conjecture what was become of him. Some of the rest, as it grew late, applied to the old shepherd before oft-mentioned, whose name I have forgot, but he had herded with Adamson twenty years—some of the rest, I say, applied to him to go and bring their master away home, thinking that perhaps he was taken ill.

"O, I'm unco laith to disturb him," said the old man; "he sees that the hand o' the Lord has fa'en heavy on him the day, and he's humbling himsel afore him in great bitterness o' spirit, I daresay. I count it a sin to break in on sic devotions as thae."

"Na, I carena if he should lie and pray yonder till the morn," said a young lad; "only I wadna like to gang hame and leave him lying on the hill, if he should hae chanced to turn no weel. See, if nane o' ye will gang and bring him, or see what ails him, I'll e'en gang mysel;" and away he went, the rest standing still to await the issue.

When the lad went first to the brink of the little slack where Adamson lay, he stood a few moments, as if gazing or listening, and then turned his back and fled. The rest, who were standing watching his motions, wondered at this; and they said one to another, that their master was angry at being disturbed, and had been threatening the lad so rudely that it had caused him to take to his heels. But what they thought most strange was, that the lad did not fly towards them, but straight to the hill; nor did he ever so much as cast his eyes in their direction, so deeply did he seem to be impressed with what had passed between him and his master. Indeed it rather appeared that he did not know what he was doing; for, after running a space with great violence, he stood and looked back, and then broke to the hill again—always looking first over the one shoulder, and then over the other. Then he stopped a second time, and returned cautiously towards the spot where his master reclined; and all the while he never so much as once turned his eyes in the direction of his neighbours, or seemed to remember that they were there. His motions were strikingly erratic; for all the way, as he returned to the spot where his master was, he continued to advance by a zigzag course, like a vessel beating up by short tacks; and several times he stood still, as on the very point of retreating. At length he vanished from their sight in the little hollow.

It was not long till the lad again made his appearance, shouting and waving his cap for them to come likewise; on which they all went away to him as fast as they could, in great amazement what could be the matter. When they came to the green hollow, a shocking spectacle presented itself: there lay the body of their master, who had been struck dead by the lightning, and his right side having been torn open, his bowels had gushed out, and were lying beside the body. The earth was rutted and ploughed close to his side, and at his feet there was a hole scooped out, a full yard in depth, and very much resembling a grave. He had been cut off in the act of prayer, and the body was still lying in the position of a man praying in the field. He had been on his knees, with his elbows leaning on the brae, and his brow laid on his folded hands; his plaid was drawn over his head, and his hat below his arm; and this affecting circumstance proved a great source of comfort to his widow afterwards, when the extremity of her suffering had somewhat abated.

No such awful visitation of Providence had ever been witnessed, or handed down to our hands on the ample records of tradition, and the impression which it made, and the interest it excited, were also without a parallel. Thousands visited the spot, to view the devastations made by the flood, and the furrows formed by the electric matter; and the smallest circumstances were inquired into with the most minute curiosity: above all, the still and drowsy embers of superstition were rekindled by it into a flame, than which none had ever burned brighter, not even in the darkest days of ignorance; and by the help of it a theory was made out and believed, that for horror is absolutely unequalled. But as it was credited in its fullest latitude by my informant, and always added by him at the conclusion of the tale, I am bound to mention the circumstances, though far from vouching them to be authentic.

It was asserted, and pretended to have been proved, that old Peter Marwell *was not in the glen of Laverhope that day*, but at a great distance in a

different county, and that it was the devil who attended the folds in his likeness. It was further believed by all the people at the folds, that it was the last explosion of the whole that had slain Mr. Adamson; for they had at that time observed the side of the brae, where the little green slack was situated, covered with a sheet of flame for a moment. And it so happened that thereafter the profane gaberlunzie had been no more seen; and therefore they said—and here was the most horrible part of the story—there was no doubt of his being the devil, waiting for his prey, and that he fled away in that sheet of flame, carrying the soul of John Adamson along with him.

I never saw old Pate Maxwell—for I believe he died before I was born; but Robin Johnston said, that to his dying day, he denied having been within forty miles of the folds of Laverhope on the day of the thunder-storm, and was exceedingly angry when any one pretended to doubt the assertion. It was likewise reported, that at six o'clock in the afternoon a stranger had called on Mrs. Irvine, and told her that John Adamson and a great part of his stock had been destroyed by the lightning and the hail. Mrs. Irvine's house was five miles distant from the folds; and more than that, the farmer's death was not so much as known of by mortal man until two hours after Mrs. Irvine received this information. The storm exceeded anything remembered, either for its violence or consequences, and these mysterious circumstances having been bruited abroad, gave it a hold on the minds of the populace, never to be erased but by the erasure of their existence. It fell out on the 12th of July, 1753.

The death of Mr. Copland of Minnigapp, in Annandale, forms another era of the same sort. It happened, if I mistake not, on the 18th of July, 1804. It was one of those days by which all succeeding thunder-storms have been estimated, and from which they are dated, both as having taken place so many years before, and so long after.

Adam Copland, Esquire of Minnigapp, was a gentleman esteemed by all who knew him. Handsome in his person, and elegant in his manners, he was the ornament of rural society, and the delight of his family and friends; and his loss was felt as no common misfortune. As he occupied a pastoral farm of considerable extent, his own property, he chanced likewise to be out at his folds on the day above-mentioned, with his own servants and some neighbours, weaning a part of his lambs, and shearing a few sheep. About mid-day the thunder, lightning, and hail came on, and deranged their operations entirely; and, among other things, a part of the lambs broke away from the folds, and being in great fright, they continued to run on. Mr. Copland and a shepherd of his, named Thomas Scott, pursued them, and, at the distance of about half a mile from the folds, they turned them, mastered them, after some running, and were bringing them back to the fold, when the dreadful catastrophe happened. Thomas Scott was the only person present, of course; and though he was within a few steps of his master at the time, he could give no account of anything. I am well acquainted with Scott, and have questioned him about the particulars fifty times; but he could not so much as tell me how he got back to the fold; whether he brought the lambs with him or not; how long the storm continued; nor, indeed, anything after the time that his master and he turned the lambs. That circumstance he remembered perfectly, but thenceforward his mind seemed to have become a blank. I should likewise have mentioned, as an instance of the same kind of deprivation of consciousness, that when the young lad who went first to the body of Adamson was questioned why he fled from the body at first, he denied that ever he fled; he was not conscious of having fled a foot, and never would have believed it, if he had not been seen by four eye-witnesses. The only things of which Thomas Scott had any impressions were these: that when the lightning struck his master, he sprung a great height into the air, much higher, he thought, than it was possible for any man to leap by his own exertion. He also thinks that the place where he fell dead was at a considerable distance from that on which he was struck and leaped from the ground; but when I inquired if he judged that it would be twenty yards or ten yards, he could give no answer—he could not tell. He only had an impression that he saw his master spring into the air, all on fire, and on running up to him he found him quite dead. If Scott was correct in this (and he being a man of plain good sense, truth, and integrity, there can scarce be a reason for doubting him), the circumstance would argue that the electric matter by which Mr. Copland was killed issued out of the earth. He was speaking to Scott with his very last breath; but all that the survivor could do, he could never remember what he was saying. Some melted drops of silver were standing on the case of his watch, as well as on some of the buttons of his coat, and the body never stiffened like other corpses, but remained as supple as if every bone had been softened to jelly. He was a married man, scarcely at the prime of life, and left a young widow and only son to lament his loss. On the spot where he fell there is now an obelisk erected to his memory, with a warning text on it, relating to the shortness and uncertainty of human life.

CHAPTER III.

THE SCHOOL OF MISFORTUNE.

Impatience under misfortunes is certainly one of the failings of our nature, which contributes more than

any other to embitter the cup of life, and has been the immediate cause of more acts of desperate depravity than any passion of the human soul. The loss of fortune or favour is particularly apt to give birth to this tormenting sensation, for, as neither the one nor the other occurs frequently without some imprudence or neglect of our own having been the primary cause, so the reflection on that always furnishes the gloomy retrospect with its principal sting.

So much is this the case that I hold it to be a position almost incontrovertible, that out of every twenty worldly misfortunes, nineteen occur in consequence of our own imprudence. Many will tell you it was owing to such and such a friend's imprudence that they sustained all their losses. No such thing. Whose imprudence or want of foresight was it that trusted such a friend, and put it in his power to ruin them, and reduce the families that depended on them for support from a state of affluence to one of penury and bitter regret? If the above position is admitted, then there is, as I have already remarked, but one right and proper way in which misfortunes ought to affect us; namely, by stirring us up to greater circumspection and perseverance. Perseverance is a noble and inestimable virtue! There is scarcely any difficulty or danger that it will not surmount. Whoever observes a man bearing up under worldly misfortunes with undaunted resolution, will rarely fail to see that man ultimately successful. And it may be depended on, that circumspection in business is a quality so absolutely necessary, that without it the success of any one will only be temporary.

The present Laird of J—s—y, better known by the appellation of Old Sandy Singlebeard, was once a common hired shepherd, but he became master of the virtues above recommended, for he had picked them up in the severe school of misfortune. I have heard him relate the circumstances myself, oftener than once. "My father had bought me a stock of sheep," said he, "and fitted me out as a shepherd, and from the profits of these, I had plenty of money to spend and lay out on good clothes, so that I was accounted a thriving lad, and rather a dashing blade among the lasses. Chancing to change my master at a term, I sold my sheep to the man who came in my place, and bought those of the shepherd that went from the flock to which I was engaged. But when the day of payment came, the man who bought my sheep could not pay them, and without that money I had not wherewith to pay mine own. He put me off from week to week, until the matter grew quite distressing, for, as the price of shepherds' stock goes straight onward from one hand to another, probably twenty, or perhaps forty people, were all kept out of their right by this backwardness of my debtor. I craved him for the money every two or three days, grumbled, and threatened a prosecution, till at last my own stock was poinded. Thinking I should be disgraced beyond recovery, I exerted what little credit I had, and borrowed as much as relieved my stock; and then, being a good deal exasperated, resorted immediately to legal measures, as they are called, in order to recover the debt due to me, the non-payment of which had alone occasioned my own difficulties. Notwithstanding every exertion, however, I could never draw a farthing from my debtor, and only got deeper and deeper into expenses to no purpose. Many a day it kept me bare and busy before I could clear my feet, and make myself as free and independent as I was before. This was the beginning of my misfortunes, but it was but the beginning; year after year I lost and lost, until my little all was as good as three times sold off at the ground; and at last I was so reduced, that I could not say the clothes I wore were my own.

"This will never do, thought I; they shall crack well that persuade me to sell at random again. Accordingly, I thenceforth took good care of all my sales that came to any amount. My rule was, to sell my little things, such as wool, lambs, and fat sheep, worth the money, and not to part with them till I got the price in my hand. This plan I never rued, and people finding how the case stood, I had always plenty of merchants, so that I would recommend it to every man who depends for procuring the means of living on business such as mine. What does it signify to sell your stock at a great price, merely for a boast, if you never get the money for it! It will be long ere that make any one rich or independent! This did all very well, but still I found, on looking over my accounts at the end of the year, that there were a great many items in which I was regularly taken in. My shoemaker charged me half-a-crown more for every pair of shoes than I could have bought them for in a market for ready money; the smith, threepence more for shoeing them. My haberdasher's and tailor's accounts were scandalous. In shirts, stockings, knives, razors, and even in shirt-neck buttons, I found myself taken in to a certain amount. But I was never so astonished as to find out, by the plain rules of addition and subtraction, assisted now and then by the best of all practical rules—(I mean the one that says, 'if such a thing will bring such a thing, what will such and such a number bring?')—to find, I say, that the losses and profits in small things actually come to more at the long-run than any casual great slump loss or profit that usually chances to a man in the course of business. Woe to the man who is not aware of this! He is labouring for that which will not profit him. By a course of strict economy, I at length not only succeeded in clearing off the debt I had incurred, but saved as much money as stocked the farm of Windlestrae-knowe. That proved a fair bargain; so, when the lease was out, I took Doddysdamms in with it; and now I am, as you see me, the Laird of J—s—y, and farmer of both these besides. My success has been

wholly owing to this:—misfortune made me cautious—caution taught me a lesson which is not obvious to every one, namely, *the mighty importance of the two right-hand columns in addition.* The two left-hand ones, those of pounds and shillings, every one knows the value of. With a man of any common abilities, those will take care of themselves; but he that neglects the pence and farthings is a goose!"

Any one who reads this will set down old Singlebeard as a miser; but I scarcely know a man less deserving the character. If one is present to hear him settling an account with another, he cannot help thinking him niggardly, owing to his extraordinary avidity in small matters; but there is no man whom customers like better to deal with, owing to his high honour and punctuality. He will not pocket a farthing that is the right of any man living, and he is always on the watch lest some designing fellow overreach him in these minute particulars. For all this, he has assisted many of his poor relations with money and credit, when he thought them deserving it, or judged that it could be of any benefit to them; but always with the strictest injunctions of secrecy, and an assurance that, if ever they hinted the transaction to any one, they forfeited all chance of further assistance from him. The consequence of this has always been, that while he was doing a great deal of good to others by his credit, he was railing against the system of giving credit all the while; so that those who knew him not, took him for a selfish, contracted, churlish old rascal.

He was once applied to in behalf of a nephew, who had some fair prospects of setting up in business. He thought the stake too high, and declined it; for it was a rule with him, never to credit any one so far as to put it in his power to distress him, or drive him into any embarrassment. A few months afterwards, he consented to become bound for one half of the sum required, and the other half was made up by some less wealthy relations in conjunction. The bonds at last became due, and I chanced to be present on a visit to my old friend Singlebeard, when the young man came to request his uncle's quota of the money required. I knew nothing of the matter, but I could not help noticing the change in old Sandy's look the moment that his nephew made his appearance. I suppose he thought him too foppish to be entirely dependent on the credit of others, and perhaps judged his success in business, on that account, rather doubtful. At all events, the old laird had a certain quizzical, dissatisfied look, that I never observed before; and all his remarks were in conformity with it. In addressing the young man, too, he used a degree of familiarity which might be warranted by his seniority and relationship, and the circumstances in which his nephew stood to him as an obliged party; but it was intended to be as provoking as possible, and obviously did not fail to excite a good deal of uneasy feeling.

"That's surely a very fine horse of yours, Jock?" said the laird. "Hech, man, but he is a sleek ane! How much corn does he eat in a year, this hunter of yours, Jock?"

"Not much, sir, not much. He is a very fine horse that, uncle. Look at his shoulder; and see what limbs he has; and what a pastern! How much do you suppose such a horse would be worth now, uncle?"

"Why, Jock, I cannot help thinking he is something like Geordy Dean's daughter-in-law—nought but a spindle-shankit devil! I would not wonder if he had cost you eighteen pounds, that greyhound of a creature?"

"What a prime judge you are! Why, uncle, that horse cost eighty-five guineas last autumn. He is a real blood horse that; and has won a great deal of valuable plate."

"Oh! that indeed alters the case! And have you got all that valuable plate?"

"Nay, nay; it was before he came to my hand."

"That was rather a pity now, Jock—I cannot help thinking that was a great pity; because if you had got the plate, you would have had something you could have called your own. So, you don't know how much corn that fellow eats in a year?"

"Indeed I do not; he never gets above three feeds in a day, unless when he is on a journey, and then he takes five or six."

"Then take an average of four: four feeds are worth two shillings at least, as corn is selling. There is fourteen shillings a week: fourteen times fifty-two—why, Jock, there is £36, 8*s.* for horse's corn; and there will be about half as much, or more, for hay, besides: on the whole, I find he will cost you about £50 a year at livery. I suppose there is an absolute necessity that a manufacturer should keep such a horse?"

"O! God bless you, sir, to be sure. We must gather in money and orders, you know. And then, consider the ease and convenience of travelling on such a creature as that compared with one of your vile lowbred hacks; one goes through the country as he were flying on that animal."

Old Sandy paddled away from the stable, towards the house, chuckling and laughing to himself; but again turned round, before he got half way. "Right, Jock! quite right. Nothing like gathering in plenty of money and orders. But, Jock, hark ye—I do not think there is any necessity for *flying* when one is on such a commission. You should go leisurely and slowly through the towns and villages, keeping all your eyes about you, and using every honest art to obtain good customers. How can you do this, Jock, if you go as you were flying through the country? People, instead of giving you a good order, will come to their shop-door, and say. There goes the Flying Manufacturer!—Jock, they say a

rolling stone never gathers any moss. How do you think a flying one should gather it?"

The dialogue went on in the same half-humorous, half-jeering tone all the forenoon, as well as during dinner, while a great number of queries still continued to be put to the young man; as—How much his lodgings cost him a year! The answer to this astounded old Sandy. His comprehension could hardly take it in; he opened his eyes wide, and held up his hands, exclaiming, with a great burst of breath, "What enormous profits there must be in your business!" and then the laird proceeded with his provoking interrogatories. How much did his nephew's fine boots and spurs cost? what was his tailor's bill yearly? and everything in the same manner; as if the young gentleman had come from a foreign country, of which Sandy Singlebeard wished to note down every particular. The nephew was a little in the fidgets, but knowing the ground on which he stood, he answered all his uncle's queries but too truly, impressing on his frugal mind a far greater idea of his own expenditure than was necessary, and which my old friend could not help viewing as utterly extravagant.

Immediately on the removal of the cloth the young gentleman withdrew into another room, and sending for his uncle to speak with him, he there explained the nature of his errand, and how absolutely necessary it was for him to have the money for the relief of his bond. Old Sandy was off in a twinkling. He had no money for him—not one copper!—not the value of a hair of his thin gray beard should he have from him! He had other uses for his money, and had won it too hardly to give it to any one to throw away for him on grand rooms and carpets, upon flying horses and four-guinea boots!

They returned to the parlour, and we drank some whisky toddy together. There was no more gibing and snappishness. The old man was civil and attentive, but the face of the young one exhibited marks of anger and despair. He took his leave, and went away abruptly enough, and I began to break some jests on the flying manufacturer in order to try the humour of my entertainer. I soon found it out; old Singlebeard's shaft was shot, and he now let me know he had a different opinion of his nephew from what had been intimated by the whole course of his conversation with the young man himself. He said he was a good lad—an ingenious and honest one; that he scarcely knew a better of his years; but he wanted to curb a little that *upsetting spirit* in him to which every young man new to business was too much addicted.

The young gentleman went to his other friends in a sad pickle, and represented himself to them as ruined beyond all redress, reprobating all the while the inconsistency of his uncle and his unaccountable and ill-timed penury.

The most part of the young gentleman's relations were in deep dismay in consequence of the laird's refusal to perform his engagement. But one of them, after listening seriously to the narration, instead of being vexed, only laughed immoderately at the whole affair, and said he had never heard anything so comic and truly ludicrous. "Go your ways home, and mind your business," said he; "you do not know anything of old uncle Sandy: leave the whole matter to me, and I shall answer for his share of the concern."

"You will be answerable at your own cost, then," said the nephew. "If the money is not paid till he advance it, the sum will never be paid on this side of time. You may as well try to extract it from the rock on the side of the mountain."

"Go your ways," said the other. "It is evident that you can do nothing in the business; but were the sum three times the amount of what it is I shall be answerable for it."

It turned out precisely as this gentleman predicted; but no man will conceive old Sandy's motive for refusing that which he was in fact bound to perform. He could not bear to have it known that he had done so liberal and generous an action, and wished to manage matters so that his nephew might believe the money to have been raised in some other way attended with the utmost difficulty. He could not put his nephew to the same school in which he himself had been taught, namely, the school of actual adversity, but he wanted to give him a touch of ideal misfortune, that he might learn the value of independence.

CHAPTER IV.

GEORGE DOBSON'S EXPEDITION TO HELL.

There is no phenomenon in nature less understood, and about which greater nonsense is written, than dreaming. It is a strange thing. For my part I do not understand it, nor have I any desire to do so; and I firmly believe that no philosopher who ever wrote knows a particle more about it than I do, however elaborate and subtle the theories he may advance concerning it. He knows not even what sleep is, nor can he define its nature so as to enable any common mind to comprehend him; and how then can he define that ethereal part of it, wherein the soul holds intercourse with the external world?—how, in that state of abstraction, some ideas force themselves upon us in spite of all our efforts to get rid of them; while others, which we have resolved to bear about with us by night as well as by day, refuse us their fellowship, even at periods when we most require their aid?

No, no; the philosopher knows nothing about either, and if he says he does, I intreat you not to believe him. He does not know what mind is—even his own mind, to which one would think he

has the most direct access; far less can he estimate the operations and powers of that of any other intelligent being. He does not even know, with all his subtlety, whether it be a power distinct from his body or essentially the same, and only incidentally and temporarily endowed with different qualities. He sets himself to discover at what period of his existence the union was established. He is baffled; for consciousness refuses the intelligence, declaring that she cannot carry him far enough back to ascertain it. He tries to discover the precise moment when it is dissolved, but on this, consciousness is altogether silent, and all is darkness and mystery; for the origin, the manner of continuance, and the time and mode of breaking up of the union between soul and body are in reality undiscoverable by our natural faculties—are not patent beyond the possibility of mistake; but whosoever can read his Bible and solve a dream can do either, without being subjected to any material error.

It is on this ground that I like to contemplate, not the theory of dreams, but the dreams themselves; because they prove to the unlettered man in a very forcible manner a distinct existence of the soul, and its lively and rapid intelligence with external nature, as well as with a world of spirits with which it has no acquaintance, when the body is lying dormant, and the same to the soul as if sleeping in death.

I account nothing of any dream that relates to the actions of the day; the person is not sound asleep who dreams about these things; there is no division between matter and mind, but they are mingled together in a sort of chaos—what a farmer would call compost—fermenting and disturbing one another. I find that in all dreams of that kind, men of every profession have dreams peculiar to their own occupations; and, in the country, at least, their import is generally understood. Every man's body is a barometer. A thing made up of the elements must be affected by their various changes and convulsions; and so the body assuredly is. When I was a shepherd, and all the comforts of my life depended so much on good or bad weather, the first thing I did every morning was strictly to overhaul the dreams of the night; and I found that I could calculate better from them than from the appearance and changes of the sky. I know a keen sportsman who pretends that his dreams never deceive him. If he dream of angling, or pursuing salmond in deep waters, he is sure of rain; but if fishing on dry ground, or in waters so low that the fish cannot get from him, it forebodes drought; hunting or shooting hares is snow, and moorfowl wind, &c. But the most extraordinary professional dream on record is, without all doubt, that well-known one of George Dobson, coach-driver in Edinburgh, which I shall here relate; for though it did not happen in the shepherd's cot, it has often been recited there.

George was part proprietor and driver of a hackney-coach in Edinburgh, when such vehicles were scarce; and one day a gentleman, whom he knew, came to him and said:—"George, you must drive me and my son here out to ———," a certain place that he named, somewhere in the vicinity of Edinburgh.

"Sir," said George, "I never heard tell of such a place, and I cannot drive you to it unless you give me very particular directions."

"It is false," returned the gentleman; there is no man in Scotland who knows the road to that place better than you do. You have never driven on any other road all your life; and I insist on you taking us."

"Very well, sir," said George, "I'll drive you to hell, if you have a mind; only you are to direct me on the road."

"Mount and drive on, then," said the other; "and no fear of the road."

George did so, and never in his life did he see his horses go at such a noble rate; they snorted, they pranced, and they flew on; and as the whole road appeared to lie down-hill, he deemed that he should soon come to his journey's end. Still he drove on at the same rate, far, far down-hill—and so fine an open road he never travelled—till by degrees it grew so dark that he could not see to drive any farther. He called to the gentleman, inquiring what he should do; who answered that this was the place they were bound to, so he might draw up, dismiss them, and return. He did so, alighted from the box, wondered at his foaming horses, and forthwith opened the coach-door, held the rim of his hat with the one hand, and with the other demanded his fare.

"You have driven us in fine style, George," said the elder gentleman, "and deserve to be remembered; but it is needless for us to settle just now, as you must meet us here again to-morrow precisely at twelve o'clock."

"Very well, sir," said George; "there is likewise an old account, you know, and some toll-money;" which indeed there was.

"It shall be all settled to-morrow, George, and moreover, I fear there will be some toll-money to-day."

"I perceived no tolls to-day, your honour," said George.

"But I perceived one, and not very far back neither, which I suspect you will have difficulty in repassing without a regular ticket. What a pity I have no change on me!"

"I never saw it otherwise with your honour," said George, jocularly; "what a pity it is you should always suffer yourself to run short of change!"

"I will give you that which is as good, George," said the gentlemen; and he gave him a ticket written with red ink, which the honest coachman could not read. He, however, put it into his sleeve, and inquired of his employer where that same toll was which he had not observed, and how it was that

they did not ask toll from him as he came through. The gentleman replied, by informing George that there was no road out of that domain, and that whoever entered it must either remain in it, or return by the same path; so they never asked any toll till the person's return, when they were at times highly capricious; but that the ticket he had given him would answer his purpose. And he then asked George if he did not perceive a gate, with a number of men in black standing about it.

"Oho! Is yon the spot?" says George; "then, I assure your honour, yon is no toll-gate, but a private entrance into a great man's mansion; for do not I know two or three of the persons yonder to be gentlemen of the law, whom I have driven often and often? and as good fellows they are too as any I know—men who never let themselves run short of change! Good day. Twelve o'clock to-morrow?"

"Yes, twelve o'clock noon, precisely;" and with that George's employer vanished in the gloom, and left him to wind his way out of that dreary labyrinth the best way he could. He found it no easy matter, for his lamps were not lighted, and he could not see an ell before him—he could not even perceive his horses' ears; and what was worse, there was a rushing sound, like that of a town on fire, all around him, that stunned his senses, so that he could not tell whether his horses were moving or standing still. George was in the greatest distress imaginable, and was glad when he perceived the gate before him, with his two identical friends, men of the law, still standing. George drove boldly up, accosted them by their names, and asked what they were doing there: they made him no answer, but pointed to the gate and the keeper. George was terrified to look at this latter personage, who now came up and seized his horses by the reins, refusing to let him pass. In order to introduce himself, in some degree, to this austere toll-man, George asked him, in a jocular manner, how he came to employ his two eminent friends as assistant gate-keepers.

"Because they are among the last comers," replied the ruffian, churlishly. "You will be an assistant here to-morrow."

"The devil I will, sir!"

"Yes, the devil you will, sir."

"I'll be d—d if I do then—that I will!"

"Yes, you'll be d—d if you do—that you will."

"Let my horses go in the meantime, then, sir, that I may proceed on my journey."

"Nay."

"Nay!—Dare you say 'nay' to me, sir?" My name is George Dobson, of the Pleasance, Edinburgh, coach-driver, and coach proprietor too; and no man shall say *nay* to me, as long as I can pay my way. I have his majesty's license, and I'll go and come as I choose—and that I will. Let go my horses there, and tell me what is your demand."

"Well, then, I'll let your horses go," said the keeper, "but I'll keep yourself for a pledge." And with that he let go the horses, and seized honest George by the throat, who struggled in vain to disengage himself, and swore and threatened, according to his own confession, most bloodily. His horses flew off like the wind, so swift, that the coach seemed flying in the air, and scarcely bounding on the earth once in a quarter of a mile. George was in furious wrath, for he saw that his grand coach and harness would all be broken to pieces, and his gallant pair of horses maimed or destroyed; and how was his family's bread now to be won! He struggled, threatened, and prayed in vain; the intolerable toll-man was deaf to all remonstrances. He once more appealed to his two genteel acquaintances of the law, reminding them how he had of late driven them to Roslin on a Sunday, along with two ladies, who, he supposed, were their sisters, from their familiarity, when not another coachman in town would engage with them. But the gentlemen, very ungenerously, only shook their heads, and pointed to the gate. George's circumstances now became desperate, and again he asked the hideous toll-man what right he had to detain him, and what were his charges.

"What right have I to detain you, sir, say you? Who are you that make such a demand here? Do you know where you are, sir?"

"No, faith, I do not," returned George; "I wish I did. But I *shall* know, and make you repent your insolence too. My name, I told you, is George Dobson, licensed coach-hirer in Pleasance, Edinburgh; and to get full redress of you for this unlawful interruption, I only desire to know where I am."

"Then, sir, if it can give you so much satisfaction to know where you are," said the keeper, with a malicious grin, "you *shall* know, and you may take instruments by the hands of your two friends there, instituting a legal prosecution. Your redress, you may be assured, will be most ample, when I inform you that you are in HELL! and out at this gate you pass no more."

This was rather a damper to George, and he began to perceive that nothing would be gained in such a place by the strong hand, so he addressed the inexorable toll-man, whom he now dreaded more than ever, in the following terms: "But I must go home at all events, you know, sir, to unyoke my two horses, and put them up, and to inform Chirsty Halliday, my wife, of my engagement. And, bless me! I never recollected till this moment, that I am engaged to be back here to-morrow at twelve o'clock, and see, here is a free ticket for my passage this way."

The keeper took the ticket with one hand, but still held George with the other. "Oho! were you in with our honourable friend, Mr. R—— of L——y!" said he. "He has been on our books for a long while; however, this will do, only you must put your name to it likewise; and the engagement is this: You, by this instrument, engage your soul, that you will return here by to-morrow at noon."

"Catch me there, billy!" says George. "I'll engage no such thing, depend on it—that I will not."

"Then remain where you are," said the keeper, for there is no other alternative. We like best for people to come here in their own way—in the way of their business;" and with that he flung George backwards, heels-over-head down hill, and closed the gate.

George finding all remonstrance vain, and being desirous once more to see the open day, and breathe the fresh air, and likewise to see Chirsty Halliday, his wife, and set his house and stable in some order, came up again, and in utter desperation, signed the bond, and was suffered to depart. He then bounded away on the track of his horses, with more than ordinary swiftness, in hopes to overtake them; and always now and then uttered a loud Wo! in hopes they might hear and obey, though he could not come in sight of them. But George's grief was but beginning; for at a well-known and dangerous spot, where there was a tan-yard on the one hand, and a quarry on the other, he came to his gallant steeds overturned, the coach smashed to pieces, Dawtie with two of her legs broken, and Duncan dead. This was more than the worthy coachman could bear, and many degrees worse than being in hell. There, his pride and manly spirit bore him up against the worst of treatment; but here his heart entirely failed him, and he laid himself down, with his face on his two hands, and wept bitterly, bewailing, in the most deplorable terms, his two gallant horses, Dawtie and Duncan.

While lying in this inconsolable state, some one took hold of his shoulder, and shook it; and a well-known voice said him, "Geordie! what is the matter wi' ye, Geordie?" George was provoked beyond measure at the insolence of the question, for he knew the voice to be that of Chirsty Halliday, his wife. "I think you needna ask that, seeing what you see," said George. "O, my poor Dawtie, where are a' your jinkings and prancings now, your mooping and your wincings? I'll ne'er be a proud man again—bereaved o' my bonny pair!"

"Get up, George; get up, and bestir yourself," said Chirsty Halliday, his wife. "You are wanted directly, to bring in the lord-president to the Parliament House. It is a great storm, and he must be there by nine o'clock. Get up—rouse yourself, and make ready—his servant is waiting for you."

"Woman, you are demented!" cried George. "How can I go and bring in the lord-president, when my coach is broken in pieces, my poor Dawtie lying with twa of her legs broken, and Duncan dead! And, moreover, I have a previous engagement, for I am obliged to be in hell before twelve o'clock."

Chirsty Halliday now laughed outright, and continued long in a fit of laughter; but George never moved his head from the pillow, but lay and groaned—for, in fact, he was all this while lying snug in his bed; while the tempest without was roaring with great violence, and which circumstance may perhaps account for the rushing and deafening sound which astounded him so much in hell. But so deeply was he impressed with the idea of the reality of his dream, that he would do nothing but lie and moan, persisting and believing in the truth of all he had seen. His wife now went and informed her neighbours of her husband's plight, and of his singular engagement with Mr. R—— of L——y at twelve o'clock. She persuaded one friend to harness the horses, and go for the lord-president; but all the rest laughed immoderately at poor coachy's predicament. It was, however, no laughing to him; he never raised his head, and his wife becoming at last uneasy about the frenzied state of his mind, made him repeat every circumstance of his adventure to her (for he would never believe or admit that it was a dream), which he did in the terms above narrated; and she perceived or dreaded that he was becoming somewhat feverish. She went out, and told Dr. Wood of her husband's malady, and of his solemn engagement to be in hell at twelve o'clock.

"He maunna keep it, dearie. He maunna keep that engagement at no rate," said Dr. Wood. "Set back the clock an hour or twa, to drive him past the time, and I'll ca' in the course of my rounds. Are ye sure he hasna been drinking hard?" She assured him he had not. "Weel, weel, ye maun tell him that he maunna keep that engagement at no rate. Set back the clock, and I'll come and see him. It is a frenzy that maunna be trifled with. Ye maunna laugh at it, dearie—maunna laugh at it. Maybe a nervish fever, wha kens."

The doctor and Chirsty left the house together, and as their road lay the same way for a space, she fell a telling him of the two young lawyers whom George saw standing at the gate of hell, and whom the porter had described as two of the last comers. When the doctor heard this, he stayed his hurried, stooping pace in one moment, turned full round on the woman, and fixing his eyes on her, that gleamed with a deep unstable lustre, he said, "What's that ye were saying, dearie? What's that ye were saying? Repeat it again to me, every word." She did so. On which the doctor held up his hands, as if palsied with astonishment, and uttered some fervent ejaculations. "I'll go with you straight," said he, "before I visit another patient. This is wonderfu'! it is terrible! The young gentlemen are both at rest—both lying corpses at this time! Fine young men—I attended them both—died of the same exterminating disease—Oh, this is wonderful; this is wonderful!"

The doctor kept Chirsty half running all the way down the High Street and St. Mary's Wynd, at such a pace did he walk, never lifting his eyes from the pavement, but always exclaiming now and then, "It is wonderfu'! most wonderfu'!" At length,

prompted by woman's natural curiosity, Chirsty inquired at the doctor if he knew anything of their friend Mr. R—— of L——y. But he shook his head, and replied, "Na, na, dearie—ken naething about him. He and his son are baith in London—ken naething about him; but the tither is awfu'—it is perfectly awfu'!"

When Dr. Wood reached his patient he found him very low, but only a little feverish; so he made all haste to wash his head with vinegar and cold water, and then he covered the crown with a treacle plaster, and made the same application to the soles of his feet, awaiting the issue. George revived a little, when the doctor tried to cheer him up by joking him about his dream; but on mention of that he groaned and shook his head. "So you are convinced, dearie, that it is nae dream?" said the doctor.

"Dear sir, how could it be a dream?" said the patient. "I was there in person with Mr. R—— and his son; and see, here are the marks of the porter's fingers on my throat." Dr. Wood looked, and distinctly saw two or three red spots on one side of his throat, which confounded him not a little. "I assure you, sir," continued George, "it was no dream, which I know to my sad experience. I have lost my coach and horses, and what more have I?—signed the bond with my own hand, and in person entered into the most solemn and terrible engagement."

"But ye're no to keep it, I tell ye," said Dr. Wood; "ye're no to keep it at no rate. It is a sin to enter into a compact wi' the deil, but it is a far greater ane to keep it. Sae let Mr. R—— and his son bide where they are yonder, for ye sanna stir a foot to bring them out the day."

"Oh, oh, Doctor!" groaned the poor fellow, "this is not a thing to be made a jest o'! I feel that it is an engagement that I cannot break. Go I must, and that very shortly. Yes, yes, go I must, and go I will, although I should borrow David Barclay's pair." With that he turned his face towards the wall, groaned deeply, and fell into a lethargy, while Dr. Wood caused them to let him alone, thinking if he would sleep out the appointed time, which was at hand, he would be safe; but all the time he kept feeling his pulse, and by degrees showed symptoms of uneasiness. His wife ran for a clergyman of famed abilities, to pray and converse with her husband, in hopes by that means to bring him to his senses; but after his arrival, George never spoke more, save calling to his horses, as if encouraging them to run with great speed; and thus in imagination driving at full career to keep his appointment, he went off in a paroxysm, after a terrible struggle, precisely within a few minutes of twelve o'clock.

A circumstance not known at the time of George's death made this singular professional dream the more remarkable and unique in all its parts. It was a terrible storm on the night of the dream, as has been already mentioned, and during the time of the hurricane, a London smack went down off Wearmouth about three in the morning. Among the sufferers were the Hon. Mr R—— of L——y and his son! George could not know aught of this at break of day, for it was not known in Scotland till the day of his interment; and as little knew he of the deaths of the two young lawyers, who both died of the small-pox the evening before.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOUTERS OF SELKIRK.

I have heard an amusing story of a young man whose name happened to be the same as that of the hero of the preceding chapter—George Dobson. He was a shoemaker, a very honest man, who lived at the foot of an old street, called the Back Row, in the town of Selkirk. He was upwards of thirty, unmarried, had an industrious old stepmother, who kept house for him, and of course George was what is called "a bein bachelor," or "a chap that was gayan weel to leeve." He was a cheerful happy fellow and quite sober, except when on the town-council, when he sometimes took a glass with the magistrates of his native old borough, of whose loyalty, valour, and antiquity there was no man more proud.

Well, one day as George was sitting in his shop, as he called it (though no man now-a-days would call that a shop in which there was nothing to sell), sewing away at boots and shoes for his customers, whom he could not half hold in whole leather, so great was the demand over all the country for George Dobson's boots and shoes—he was sitting, I say, plying away, and singing with great glee,—

"Up wi' the Souters o' Selkirk,
And down wi' the Earl o' Hume,
And up wi' a' the brave billies
That sew the single-soled shoon!
And up wi' the yellow, the yellow;
The yellow and green hae done weel;
Then up wi' the lads of the Forest,
But down wi' the Merse to the deil!"

The last words were hardly out of George's mouth, when he heard a great noise enter the Back Row, and among the voices one making loud proclamation as follows:—

"Ho yes!—Ho yes!
Souters ane, Souters a',
Souters o' the Back Raw,
There's a gentleman a-coming
Wha will ca' ye *Souters* a'."

"I wish he durst," said George. "That will be the Earl o' Hume wha's coming. He has had us at ill-will for several generations. Bring my aik staff into the shop, callant, and set it down beside

me here—and ye may bring ane to yoursel too. I say, callant, stop. Bring my grandfather's auld sword wi' ye. I wad like to see the Earl o' Hume, or ony o' his cronies, come and cast up our honest calling and occupation till us!"

George laid his oak staff on the cutting-board before him, and leaned the old two-edged sword against the wall, at his right hand. The noise of the proclamation went out at the head of the Back Row, and died in the distance; and then George began again, and sung the Souters of Selkirk with more obstreperous glee than ever. The last words were not out of his mouth when a grand gentleman stepped into the shop, clothed in light armour, with a sword by his side and pistols in his breast. He had a liveryman behind him, and both the master and man were all shining in gold. This is the Earl o' Hume in good earnest, thought George to himself; but, nevertheless, he shall not danton me.

"Good morrow to you, Souter Dobson," said the gentleman. "What song is that you were singing?"

George would have resented the first address with a vengeance, but the latter question took him off it unawares, and he only answered, "It's a very good sang, sir, and ane of the auldest. What objections have you to it?"

"Nay, but what is it about?" returned the stranger; "I want to hear what you say it is about?"

"I'll sing you it over again, sir," said George, "and then you may judge for yoursel. Our sangs up here-awa dinna speak in riddles and parables; they're gayan downright;" and with that George gave it him over again full birr, keeping at the same time a sharp look-out on all his guest's movements; for he had no doubt now that it was to come to an engagement between them, but he was determined not to yield an inch, for the honour of old Selkirk.

When the song was done, however, the gentleman commended it, saying, it was a spirited old thing, and, without doubt, related to some of the early Border feuds. "But how think you the Earl of Hume would like to hear this?" added he.

George, who had no doubt all this while that the Earl of Hume was speaking to him, said good-naturedly, "We dinna care muckle, sir, whether the Earl o' Hume take the sang ill or weel. I'se warrant he has heard it mony a time ere now, and, if he were here, he wad hear it every day when the school looses, and Wattie Henderson wad gie him it every night."

"Well, well, Souter Dobson, that is neither here nor there. That is not what I called about. Let us to business. You must make me a pair of boots in your very best style," said the gentleman, standing up, and stretching forth his leg to be measured.

"I'll make you no boots, sir," said George, nettled at being again called Souter. "I have as many regular customers to supply as hold me busy from one year's end to the other. I cannot make your boots—you may get them made where you please."

"You *shall* make them, Mr. Dobson," said the stranger; "I am determined to try a pair of boots of your making, cost what they will. Make your own price, but let me have the boots by all means; and, moreover, I want them before to-morrow morning."

This was so conciliatory and so friendly of the earl, that George, being a good-natured fellow, made no further objection, but took his measure and promised to have them ready. "I will pay them now," said the gentleman, taking out a purse of gold; but George refused to accept of the price till the boots were produced. "Nay, but I will pay them now," said the gentleman; "for, in the first place, it will insure me of the boots, and, in the next place, I may probably leave town to-night, and make my servant wait for them. What is the cost?'"

"If they are to be as good as I can make them, sir, they will be twelve shillings."

"Twelve shillings, Mr. Dobson! I paid thirty-six for these I wear, in London, and I expect yours will be a great deal better. Here are two guineas, and be sure to make them good."

"I cannot, for my life, make them worth the half of that money," said George. "We have no materials in Selkirk that will amount to one-third of it in value." However, the gentleman flung down the gold, and went away singing the Souters of Selkirk.

"He is a most noble fellow that Earl of Hume," said George to his apprentice. "I thought he and I should have had a battle, but we have parted on the best possible terms."

"I wonder how you could bide to be *souter'd* yon gate!" said the boy.

George scratched his head with the awl, bit his lip, and looked at his grandfather's sword. He had a great desire to follow the insolent gentleman; for he found that he had inadvertently suffered a great insult without resenting it.

After George had shaped the boots with the utmost care, and of the best and finest Kendal leather, he went up the Back Row to seek assistance, so that he might have them ready at the stated time; but never a stitch of assistance could George obtain, for the gentleman had trysted a pair of boots in every shop in the row, paid for them all, and called every one of the shoemakers souter twice over.

Never was there such a day in the Back Row of Selkirk! What could it mean? Had the gentleman a whole regiment coming up, all of the same size, and the same measure of leg? Or was he not rather an army agent, come to take specimens of the best workmen in the country? This last being the prevailing belief, every Selkirk souter threw off his coat and fell a-slashing and cutting of Kendal leather; and such a forenoon of cutting, and sewing, and puffing, and roseting, never was in Selkirk since the battle of Flodden-field.

George's shop was the nethermost of the street, so that the stranger guests came all to him first; so, scarcely had he taken a hurried dinner, and begun to sew again, and, of course, to sing, when in came a fat gentleman, exceedingly well-mounted with sword and pistols; he had fair curled hair, red cheeks that hung over his stock, and a liveryman behind him. "Merry be your heart, Mr. Dobson! but what a plague of a song is that you are singing?" said he. George looked very suspicious-like at him, and thought to himself: Now I could bet any man two gold guineas that this is the Duke of Northumberland, another enemy to our town; but I'll not be cowed by him neither, only I could have wished I had been singing another song when his grace came into the shop. These were the thoughts that ran through George's mind in a moment, and at length he made answer—"We reckon it a good sang, my lord, and ane o' the auldest."

"Would it suit your convenience to sing that last verse over again?" said the fat gentleman; and at the same time he laid hold of his gold-handled pistols.

"O certainly, sir," said George; "but at the same time I must take a lesson in manners from my superiors;" and with that he seized his grandfather's cut-and-thrust sword, and cocking that up by his ear, he sang out with fearless glee—

"The English are dolts, to a man, a man—
Fat puddings to fry in a pan, a pan—
Their Percys and Howards
We reckon but cowards—
But turn the Blue Bonnets wha can, wha can?"

George now set his joints in such a manner that the moment the Duke of Northumberland presented his pistol, he might be ready to cleave him, or cut off his right hand with his grandfather's cut-and-thrust sword; but the fat gentleman durst not venture the issue—he took his hand from his pistol, and laughed till his big sides shook. "You are a great original, Dobson," said he, "but you are nevertheless a brave fellow—a noble fellow—a souter among a thousand, and I am glad I have met with you in this mood too. Well then, let us proceed to business. You must make me a pair of boots in your very best style, George, and that without any loss of time."

"O Lord, sir, I would do that with the greatest pleasure, but it is a thing entirely out of my power," said George, with a serious face.

"Pooh, pooh! I know the whole story," said the fat gentleman. "You are all hoaxed and made fools of this morning; but the thing concerns me very much, and I'll give you five guineas, Mr. Dobson, if you will make me a pair of good boots before to-morrow at this time."

"I wad do it cheerfully for the fifth part o' the price, my lord," said George; "but it is needless to speak about that, it being out of my power. But what way are we hoaxed? I dinna count ony man made a fool of wha has the cash in his pocket as weel as the goods in his hand."

"You are all made fools of together, and I am the most made a fool of of any," said the fat gentleman. "I betted a hundred guineas with a young Scottish nobleman last night, that he durst not go up the Back Row of Selkirk, calling all the way,

'Souters ane, Souters a',
Souters o' the Back Raw;'

and yet, to my astonishment, you have let him do so, and insult you all with impunity; and he has won."

"Confound the rascal!" exclaimed George. "If we had but taken him up! But we took him for our friend, come to warn us, and lay all in wait for the audacious fellow who was to come up behind."

"And a good amends you took of him when he came!" said the fat gentleman. "Well, after I had taken the above bet, up speaks another of our company, and he says—'Why make such account of a few poor cobblers, or Souters, or how do you call them? I'll bet a hundred guineas, that I'll go up the Back Row after that gentleman has set them all agog, and I'll call every one of them *Souter* twice to his face.' I took the bet in a moment; 'You dare not for your blood, sir,' says I. 'You do not know the spirit and bravery of the men of Selkirk. They will knock you down at once, if not tear you to pieces.' But I trusted too much to your spirit, and have lost my two hundred guineas, it would appear. Tell me, in truth, Mr. Dobson, did you suffer him to call you *Souter* twice to your face without resenting it?"

George bit his lip, scratched his head with the awl, and gave the lingles such a yerk, that he made them both crack in two. "We're a' affrontit the gither!" sighed he, in a half whisper, while the apprentice-boy was like to burst with laughter at his master's mortification.

"Well, I have lost my money," continued the gentleman; "but I assure you, George, the gentleman wants no boots. He has accomplished his purpose, and has the money in his pocket; but as it will avail me, I may not say how much, I entreat that you will make me a pair. Here is the money—here are five guineas, which I leave in pledge: only let me have the boots. Or suppose you make these a little wider, and transfer them to me; that is very excellent leather, and will do exceedingly well; I think I never saw better;" and he stood leaning over George, handling the leather. "Now, do you consent to let me have them?"

"I can never do that, my lord," says George. "having the other gentleman's money in my pocket. If you should offer me ten guineas, it would be the same thing."

"Very well, I will find those who will," said he, and off he went, singing,

"'Turn the Blue Bonnets wha can, wha can?"

"This is the queerest day about Selkirk that I ever saw," said George; "but really this Duke of Northumberland, to be the old hereditary enemy of our town, is a real fine, frank fellow."

"Ay, but he *Souter'd* ye too," said the boy.

"It's a lee, ye little blackguard."

"I heard him ca' you a Souter amang a thousand, master; and that taunt will be heard tell o' yet."

"I fancy, callant, we maun let that flee stick to the wa'," said George; and sewed away, and sewed away, and got the boots finished next day at twelve o'clock. Now, thought he to himself, I have thirty shillings by this bargain, and so I'll treat our magistrates to a hearty glass this afternoon; I hae muckle need o' a slockening, and the Selkirk bailies never fail a friend. George put his hand into his pocket to clink his two gold guineas; but never a guinea was in George's pocket, nor plack either! His countenance changed, and fell so much, that the apprentice noticed it, and suspected the cause; but George would confess nothing, though, in his own mind, he strongly suspected the Duke of Northumberland of the theft, *alias*, the fat gentleman with the fair curled hair, and the red cheeks hanging over his stock.

George went away up among his brethren of the awl in the Back Row, and called on them every one; but he soon perceived, from their blank looks, and their disinclination to drink that night, that they were all in the same predicament with himself. The fat gentleman with the curled hair had visited every one of them, and got measure for a pair of ten guinea boots, but had not paid any of them; and, somehow or other, every man had lost the price of the boots which he had received in the morning. Whom to blame for this, nobody knew; for the whole day over, and a good part of the night, from the time the proclamation was made, the Back Row of Selkirk was like a cried fair; all the idle people in the town and the country about were there, wondering after the man who had raised such a demand for boots. After all, the Souters of Selkirk were left neither richer nor poorer than they were at the beginning, and every one of them had been four times called a *Souter* to his face—a title of great obloquy in that town, although the one of all others that the townsmen ought to be proud of. And it is curious that they are proud of it when used collectively; but apply it to any of them as a term of reproach, and you had better call him the worst name under heaven.

This was the truth of the story; and the feat was performed by the late Duke of Queensberry, when Earl of March, and two English noblemen then on a tour through this country. Every one of them gained his bet, through the simplicity of the honest Souters; but certainly the last had a difficult part to play, having staked two hundred guineas that he would take all the money from the Souters that they had received from the gentleman in the morning, and call every one of them *Souter* to his face. He got the price entire from every one, save Thomas Inglis, who had drunk the half of his before he got to him; but this being proved, the English gentleman won.

George Dobson took the thing most amiss. He had been the first taken in all along, and he thought a good deal about it. He was, moreover, a very honest man, and in order to make up the boots to the full value of the money he had received, he had shod them with silver, which took two Spanish dollars, and he had likewise put four silver tassels to the tops, so that they were splendid boots, and likely to remain on his hand. In short, though he did not care about the loss, he took the hoax very sore to heart.

Shortly after this, he was sitting in his shop, working away, and not singing a word, when in comes a fat gentleman, with fair curled hair, and red cheeks, but they were *not* hanging over his cravat; and he says, "Good morning, Dobson. You are very quiet and contemplative this morning."

"Ay, sir; folk canna be aye alike merry."

"Have you any stomach for taking measure of a pair of boots this morning?"

"Nah! I'll take measure o' nae mae boots to strangers; I'll stick by my auld customers." He is very like my late customer, thought George, but his tongue is not the same. If I thought it were he, I would nick him!

"I have heard the story of the boots, George," said the visitor, "and never heard a better one. I have laughed very heartily at it; and I called principally to inform you, that if you will call at Widow Wilson's, in Hawick, you will get the price of your boots."

"Thank you, sir," said George; and the gentleman went away; Dobson being now persuaded he was *not* the Duke of Northumberland, though astonishingly like him. George had not sewed a single yerking, ere the gentleman came again into the shop, and said, "You had better measure me for these boots, Dobson. I intend to be your customer in future."

"Thank you, sir, but I would rather not, just now."

"Very well; call then at Widow Wilson's, in Hawick, and you shall get *double* payment for the boots you have made." George thanked him again and away he went; but in a very short space he entered the shop again, and again requested George to measure him for a pair of boots. George became suspicious of the gentleman, and rather uneasy, as he continued to haunt him like a ghost; and so, merely to be quit of him, he took the measure of his leg and foot. "It is very near the measure of these fine silver-mounted ones, sir," said George; "you had better just take them."

"Well, so be it," said the stranger. "Call at

Widow Wilson's, in Hawick, and you shall have *triple* payment for your boots. Good day."

"O, this gentleman is undoubtedly wrong in his mind," said George to himself. "This beats all the customers I ever met with! Ha—ha—ha! Come to Widow Wilson's, and you shall have payment for your boots—double payment for your boots—*triple* payment for your boots! Oh! the man's as mad as a March hare! He—he—he—he!"

"Hilloa, George," cried a voice close at his ear, "what's the matter wi' ye! Are ye gane daft? Are ye no gaun to rise to your wark the day?"

"Aich! Gudeness guide us, mother, am I no up yet!" cried George, springing out of his bed; for he had been all the while in a sound sleep, and dreaming. "What gart ye let me lie sae lang? I thought I had been i' the shop!"

"Shop!" exclaimed she; "I daresay, then, you thought you had found a fiddle in't. What were ye guffawing and laughing at!"

"Oh! I was laughing at a fat man, and the payment of a pair o' boots at Widow Wilson's, in Hawick."

"Widow Wilson's, i' Hawick!" exclaimed his mother, holding up both her hands; "Gude forgie me for a great leear, if I hae dreamed about ony body else, frae the tae end o' the night to the tither!"

"Houts, mother, haud your tongue; it is needless to heed your dreams, for ye never gie ower dreaming about somebody."

"And what for no, lad? Hasna an auld body as good a right to dream as a young ane? Mrs. Wilson's a throughgaun quean, and clears mair than a hunder a year by the Tannage. I'se warrant there sall something follow thir dreams; I get the maist o' my dreams redd."

George was greatly tickled with his dream about the fat gentleman and the boots, and so well convinced was he that there was some sort of meaning in it, that he resolved to go to Hawick the next market day, and call on Mrs. Wilson, and settle with her; although it was a week or two before his usual term of payment, he thought the money would scarcely come wrong. So that day he plied and wrought as usual; but instead of his favourite ditties relating to the Forest, he chanted the whole day over one as old as any of them; but I am sorry I recollect only the chorus and a few odd stanzas of it.

ROUND ABOUT HAWICK.

We'll round about Hawick, Hawick,
Round about Hawick thegither;
We'll round about Hawick, Hawick,
And in by the bride's gudemither.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

There's been little luck i' the deed;
We're a' in the dumps thegither;
Let's gie the bridegroom a sheep's head,
But gie the bride brose and butter.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

Then a' the gudewives i' the land
Came flocking in droves thegither,
A' bringing their bountith in hand
To please the young bride's gudemither.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

The black gudewife o' the Braes
Gae baby-clouts no worth a button;
But the auld gudewife o' Penchrice
Cam in wi' a shouder o' mutton.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

Wee Jean o' the Coate gae a pun,
A penny, a plack, and a boddle;
But the wife at the head o' the town
Gae nought but a lang pin-todle.[1]
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

The mistress o' Bortugh cam ben,
Aye blinking sae couthy and canny;
But some said she had in her han'
A kipple o' bottles o' branny.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

And some brought dumples o' woo,
And some brought flitches o' bacon,
And kebbucks and cruppocks enow;
But Jenny Muirhead brought a capon.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

Then up cam the wife o' the Mill,
Wi' the cog, and the meal, and the water;
For she likit the joke sae weel
To gie the bride brose and butter.
Sing, Round about Hawick, &c.

And first she pat in a bit bread,
And then she pat in a bit butter,
And then she pat in a sheep's head,
Horns and a' thegither.
Sing, Round about Hawick, Hawick,
Round about Hawick thegither;
Round about Hawick, Hawick.
Round about Hawick for ever.

On the Thursday following, George, instead of going to *the shop*, dressed himself in his best Sunday clothes, and, with rather a curious face, went ben to his step-mother, and inquired what feck o' siller she had about her?"

"Siller! Gudeness forgie you, Geordie, for an evendown waster and a profligate! What are ye gaun to do wi' siller the day?"

"I have something ado ower at Hawick, and I was thinking it wad be as weel to pay her account when I was there."

"Oho, lad! are ye there wi' your dreams, and your visions o' the night, Geordie? Ye're aye keen o' sangs, man; I can pit a vera gude ane i' your head. There's an unco gude auld thing they ca' 'Wap at the Widow, my Laddie.' D'ye ken it, Geordie? Siller, quo' he! Hae ye ony feck o' siller, mother? Whew! I hae as muckle as will pay the widow's account sax times ower! Ye may tell her that frae me. Siller! lack-a-day!—But, Geordie, my man—Auld wives' dreams are no to be regardit, ye ken. Eh?"

After putting half a dozen pairs of trysted shoes, and the identical silver-mounted boots, into the

[1] A pin-cushion.

cadger's creels—then the only regular carriers—off set George Dobson, to Hawick market, a distance of nearly eleven new-fashioned miles, but then accounted only eight and three quarters; and after parading the Sandbed, Slitterick Bridge, and the Tower Knowe, for the space of an hour, and shaking hands with some four or five acquaintances, he ventured east-the-gate to pay Mrs. Wilson her account. He was kindly welcomed, as every good and regular customer was, by Mrs. Wilson. They settled amicably, and in the course of business George ventured several sly, jocular hints, to see how they would be taken, vexed that his grand and singular dream should go for nothing. No, nothing would pass there but sterling cent per cent. The lady was deaf and blind to every effort of gallantry, valuing her own abilities too highly ever to set a man a second time at the head of her flourishing business. Nevertheless, she could not be blind to George's qualifications—he knew that was impossible—for in the first place he was a goodly person, with handsome limbs and broad square shoulders; of a very dark complexion it is true, but with fine, shrewd, manly features; was a burgess and councillor of the town of Selkirk, and as independent in circumstances as she was.

Very well, Mrs. Wilson knew all this, valued George Dobson accordingly, and would not have denied him any of those good points more than Gideon Scott would to a favourite Cheviot tup, in any society whatever; but she had such a sharp, cold, business manner, that George could discover no symptoms where the price of the boots was to come from. In order to conciliate matters as far as convenient, if not even to stretch a point, he gave her a further order, larger than the one just settled; but all that he elicited was thanks for his custom, and one very small glass of brandy; so he drank her health, and a good husband to her. Mrs. Wilson only curtseyed, and thanked him coldly, and away George set west-the-street with a quick and stately step, saying to himself that the expedition of the silver-mounted boots was all up.

As he was posting up the street, an acquaintance of his, a flesher, likewise of the name of Wilson, eyed him, and called him aside. "Hey, George, come this way a bit. How are ye? How d'ye do, sir? What news about Selkirk? Grand demand for boots there just now, I hear—eh? Needing any thing in my way the day! Nae beef like that about your town. Come away in and taste the gudewife's bottle. I want to hae a crack wi' ye, and get measure of a pair o' boots. The grandest story yon, sir, I ever heard—eh? Needing a leg o' beef? Better? Never mind, come away in."

George was following Mr. Wilson into the house, having as yet scarcely got a word said; and he liked the man exceedingly; when one pulled his coat, and a pretty servant girl smirked in his face and said, "Maister Dabsen, thou maun cum awa yest-the-gate and speak till Mrs. Wulsin; there's sumtheyng forgot atween ye. Thou maun cum directly."

"Haste ye, gae away, rin!" says Wilson, pushing him out at the door, "that's a better bait than a poor flesher's dram. There's some comings and gangings yonder. A bien berth and a thrifty dame. Grip to, grip to, lad! I'se take her at a hunder pound the quarter. Let us see you as ye return again."

George went back, and there was Mrs. Wilson standing in the door to receive him.

"I quite forgot, Mr. Dobson—I beg pardon. But I hope, as usual, you will take a family-dinner with me to-day?"

"Indeed, Mrs. Wilson, I was just thinking to mysel that you were fey, and that we two would never bargain again, for I never paid you an account before that I did not get the offer of my dinner."

"A very stupid neglect! But, indeed, I have so many things to mind, and am so hard set with the world, Mr. Dobson; you cannot conceive, when there's only a woman at the head of affairs——"

"Ay, but sic a woman," said George, and shook his head.

"Well, well, come at two. I dine early. No ceremony, you know. Just a homely dinner, and no drinking." So saying, she turned and sailed into the house very gracefully; and then turning aside, she looked out at the window after him, apostrophizing him thus:—"Ay, ye may strut away west-the-street, as if I were looking after you. Shame fa' the souter-like face o' ye; I wish you had been fifty miles off the day! If it hadna been fear of affronting a good steady customer, you shoudna hae been here. For there's my brother coming to dinner, and maybe some o' his cronies; and he'll be sae ta'en wi' this merry souter chield, that I ken weel they'll drink mair than twice the profits o' this bit order. My brother maun hae a' his ain will too! Folk maun aye bow to the bush they get bield frae, else I should take a staup out o' their punch cogs the night."

George attended at ten minutes past two, to be as fashionable as the risk of losing his kail would permit—gave a sharp wooer-like rap at the door, and was shown by the dimpling Border maid into *the* Room, which, in those days, meant the only sitting apartment of a house. Mrs. Wilson being absent to superintend the preparations for dinner, and no one to introduce the parties to each other, think of George's utter amazement, when he saw the identical fat gentleman, who came to him thrice in his dream, and ordered him to come to Widow Wilson's and get payment of his boots! He was the very gentleman in every respect, every inch of him, and George could have known him among a thousand. It was not the Duke of Northumberland, but he that was so very like him, with fair curled hair, and red cheeks, which did not hang over his cravat. George felt as if he had been dropped into another state of

existence, and hardly knew what to think or say. He had at first very nigh run up and taken the gentleman's hand, and addressed him as an old acquaintance, but luckily he recollected the equivocal circumstances in which they met, which was not actually in *the shop*, but in George's little bed-closet in the night, or early in the morning.

In short, the two sat awkward enough, till, at last, Mrs. Wilson entered, in most brilliant attire, and really a handsome fine woman; and with her a country lady, with something in her face extremely engaging. Mrs. Wilson immediately introduced the parties to each other thus:—"Brother, this is Mr. Dobson, boot and shoe maker in Selkirk; as honest a young man, and as good a payer as I know. Mr. Dobson, this is Mr. Turnbull, my brother, the best friend I ever had; and this is his daughter Margaret."

The parties were acquainted in one minute, for Mr. Turnbull was a frank kind-hearted gentleman; ay, they were more than acquainted, for the very second or third look that George got of Margaret Turnbull, he loved her. And during the whole afternoon, every word that she spoke, every smile that she smiled, and every happy look that she turned on another, added to his flame; so that long ere the sun leaned his elbow on Skelfhill Pen, he was deeper in love than, perhaps, any other souter in this world ever was. It is needless to describe Miss Turnbull; she was just what a woman should be, and not exceeding twenty-five years of age. What a mense she would be to the town of Selkirk, and to a boot and shoe maker's parlour, as well as to the top of the councillor's seat every Sunday.

When the dinner was over, the brandy bottle went round, accompanied with the wee, wee glass, in the shape of the burr of a Scots thistle. When it came to Mr. Turnbull, he held it up between him and the light, "Keatie, whaten a niff-naff of a glass is this? let us see a feasible ane."

"If it be over little, you can fill it the oftener, brother, I think a big dram is so vulgar!"

"That's no the thing, Keatie. The truth is, that ye're a perfect she Nabal, and ilka thing that takes the value of a plack out o' your pocket is vulgar, or improper, or something that way. But I'll tell you, Keatie, my woman, what you shall do: set down a black bottle on this hand o' me, and twa clear anes on this, and the cheeny bowl atween them, and I'll let you see what I'll do. I ken o' nane within the ports o' Hawick can afford a bowl better than you. Nane o' your half bottles and quarter bottles at a time; now, Keatie, ye ken, ye hae a confoundit trick o' that; but I hae some hopes that I'll learn you good manners by and by."

"Dear brother, I'm sure you are not going to drink your bottles here? Think what the town would say, if I were to keep cabals o' drinkers in my sober house."

"Do as I bid you now, Keatie, and lippen the rest to me; ah she is a niggard, Mr. Dobson, and has muckle need of a little schooling to open her heart."

The materials were produced, and Mr. Turnbull, as had been predicted, did not spare them. Other two Wilsons joined them immediately after dinner, the one a shoemaker, and the other our friend the flesher, and a merrier afternoon has seldom been in Hawick. Mr. Turnbull was perfectly delighted with George; he made him sing the "The Souters o' Selkirk," "Turn the Blue Bonnets," and all his best things; but when he came to "Round about Hawick," he made him sing it six times over, and was never weary of laughing at it, and identifying the characters with those then living. The story of the boots was an inexhaustible joke, and the likeness between Mr. Turnbull and the Duke of Northumberland an acceptable item. At length Mr. Turnbull got so elevated, that he said, "Ay, man! and they are shod wi' silver, and silver tassels round the top? I wad gie a bottle o' wine for a sight o' them."

"It shall cost you nae mair," said George, and in three minutes he set them on the table. Mr. Turnbull tried them on, and walked through and through the room with them, singing:—

"'With silver he was shod before—
With burning gold behind.'"

They fitted exactly; and before sitting down, he offered George the original price, and got them.

It became late rather too soon for our group, but the young lady grew impatient to get home, and Mr. Turnbull was obliged to prepare for going: nothing, however, would please him, save that George should go with him all night; and George being, long before this time, over head and ears in love, accepted of the invitation, and the loan of the flesher's bay mare, and went with them. Miss Margaret had soon, by some kind of natural inspiration, discovered our jovial Souter's partiality for her; and in order to open the way for a banter (the best mode of beginning a courtship), she fell on and rallied him most severely about the boots and the *Soutering*, and particularly about letting himself be robbed of the two guineas. This gave George an opportunity of retaliating so happily, that he wondered at himself, for he acknowledged that he said things that he never believed he could have had the face to say to a lady before.

The year after that, the two were married in the house of Mrs. Wilson, and Mr. Turnbull paid down a hundred pounds to George on the day he brought her from that house a bride. Now, thought George to himself, I have been twice most liberally paid for my boots in that house. My wife, perhaps, will stand for the third payment, which I hope will be the best of all; but I still think there is to be another one beside. He was not wrong, for after the death of his worthy father-in-law, he found himself entitled to the third of his whole effects; the

transfer of which, nine years after his marriage, was made over to him in the house of his friend Mrs. Wilson.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAIRD OF CASSWAY.

There is an old story which I have often heard related about a great Laird of Cassway, in an outer corner of Dumfriesshire, of the name of Beattie, and his two sons. The incidents of the story are of a very extraordinary nature. This Beattie had occasion to be almost constantly in England, because, as my informant said, he took a great hand in government affairs, from which I conclude that the tradition had its rise about the time of the civil wars; for about the close of that period, the Scotts took the advantage of the times to put the Beatties down, who, for some previous ages, had maintained the superiority of that district.

Be that as it may, the Laird of Cassway's second son, Francis, fell desperately in love with a remarkably beautiful girl, the eldest daughter of Henry Scott of Drumfielding, a gentleman, but still only a retainer, and far beneath Beattie of Cassway, both in point of wealth and influence. Francis was a scholar newly returned from the university; was tall, handsome, of a pale complexion and gentlemanly appearance, while Thomas, the eldest son, was fair, ruddy, and stout made, a perfect picture of health and good humour; a sportsman, a warrior, and a jovial blade; one who would not suffer a fox to get rest in the whole moor district. He rode the best horse, kept the best hounds, played the best fiddle, danced the best country bumpkin, and took the stoutest draught of mountain dew, of any man between Erick Brae and Teviot Stone, and was altogether that sort of a young man, that whenever he cast his eyes on a pretty girl, either at chapel or weapon-shaw, she would hide her face, and giggle as if tickled by some unseen hand.

Now, though Thomas, or the Young Laird, as he was called, had only spoken once to Ellen Scott in his life, at which time he chucked her below the chin, and bade the devil take him if ever he saw as bonny a face in his whole born days; yet, for all that, Ellen loved him. It could not be said that she was *in love* with him, for a maiden's love must be won before it is given absolutely away; but hers gave him the preference to any other young man. She loved to see him, to hear of him, and to laugh at him; and it was even observed by the domestics, that Tam Beattie o' the Cassway's name came oftener into her conversation than there was any good reason for.

Such was the state of affairs when Francis came home and fell desperately in love with Ellen Scott; and his father being in England, and he under no restraint, he went frequently to visit her. She received him with a kindness and affability that pleased him to the heart; but he little wist that this was only a spontaneous and natural glow of kindness towards him because of his connections, and rather because he was the Young Laird of Cassway's only brother, than the poor but accomplished Francis Beattie, the scholar from Oxford.

He was, however, so much delighted with her, that he asked her father's permission to pay his addresses to her. Her father, who was a prudent and sensible man, answered him in this wise:—"That nothing would give him greater delight than to see his beloved Ellen joined with so accomplished and amiable a young gentleman in the bonds of holy wedlock, provided his father's assent was previously obtained. But as he himself was subordinate to another house, not on the best terms with the house of Cassway, he would not take it on him to sanction any such connection without the Old Laird's full consent. That, moreover, as he, Francis Beattie, was just setting out in life as a lawyer, there was but too much reason to doubt that a matrimonial connection with Ellen at that time would be highly imprudent; therefore it was not to be thought further of till the Old Laird was consulted. In the meantime, he should always be welcome to his house and to his daughter's company, as he had the same dependence on his honour and integrity as if he had been a son of his own."

The young man thanked him affectionately, and could not help acquiescing in the truth of his remarks, promised not to mention matrimony further till he had consulted his father, and added:—"But indeed you must excuse me, if I avail myself of your permission to visit here often, as I am sensible that it will be impossible for me to live for any space of time out of my dear Ellen's sight." He was again assured of welcome, and the two parted mutually pleased.

Henry Scott of Drumfielding was a widower, with six daughters, over whom presided Mrs. Jane Jerdan, their maternal aunt, an old maid, with fashions and ideas even more antiquated than herself. No sooner had the young wooer taken his leave than she bounced into the room, the only sitting apartment in the house, and said, in a loud, important whisper, "What's that young swankie of a lawyer wanting, that he's aye hankering sae muckle about our town? I'll tell you what, brother Harry, it strikes me that he wants to make a wheelwright o' your daughter Nell. Now gin he axes your consent to ony siccan thing, dinna ye grant it. That's a'. Take an auld fool's advice gin ye wad prosper. Folk are a' wise ahint the hand, and sae will ye be."

"Dear Mrs. Jane, what objections can you have to Mr. Francis Beattie, the most accomplished young gentleman of the whole country?"

"'Complished gentleman! 'Complished kirn-milk!

I'll tell you what, brother Harry, afore I were a landless lady, I wad rather be a tailor's layboard. What has he to maintain a lady spouse with? The wind o' his lungs, forsooth! thinks to sell that for goud in goupings. Hech me! Crazy wad they be wha wad buy it; and they wha trust to crazy people for their living will live but crazily. Take an auld fool's advice gin ye wad prosper, else ye'll be wise ahint the hand. Have nae mair to do with him; Nell's bread for his betters; tell him that. Or, by my certy, gin I meet wi' him face to face *I'll* tell him."

"It would be unfriendly in me to keep aught a secret from you, sister, considering the interest you have taken in my family. I *have* given him my consent to visit my daughter, but at the same time have restricted him from mentioning matrimony until he have consulted his father."

"And what is the visiting to gang for, then? Away wi' him! Our Nell's food for his betters. What wad ye think an she could get the Young Laird, his brother, wi' a blink o' her ee?"

"Never speak to me of that, Mrs. Jane. I wad rather see the poorest of his shepherd lads coming to court my child than see him;" and with these words Henry left the room.

Mrs. Jane stood long, making faces, shaking her apron with both hands, nodding her head, and sometimes giving a stamp with her foot. "I have set my face against that connection," said she; "our Nell's no made for a lady to a London lawyer. It wad set her rather better to be Lady of Cassway. The Young Laird for me! I'll hae the branks of love thrown over the heads o' the twasome, tie the tangs thegither, and then let them gallop like twa kippled grews. My brother Harry's a simple man; he disna ken the credit that he has by his daughters —thanks to some other body than him! Niece Nell has a shape, an ee, and a lady-manner that wad kilhab the best lord o' the kingdom, were he to come under their influence and my manoovres. She's a Jerdan a' through; and that I'll let them ken! Folk are a' wise ahint the hand; credit only comes by catch and keep. Goodnight to a' younger brothers, puffings o' love vows, and sabs o' wind! Gie me the good green hills, the gruff wedders, and bob-tail'd yowes; and let the Law and the Gospelmen sell the wind o' their lugs as dear as they can."

In a few days, Henry of Drumfielding was called out to attend his chief on some expedition; on which Mrs. Jane, not caring to trust her message to any other person, went over to Cassway, and invited the Young Laird to Drumfielding to see her niece, quite convinced that her charms and endowments would at once enslave the elder brother as they had done the younger. Tam Beattie was delighted at finding such a good back friend as Mrs. Jane, for he had not failed to observe, for a twelvemonth back, that Ellen Scott was very pretty, and, either through chance or design, he asked Mrs. Jane if the young lady was privy to this invitation.

"*She* privy to it?" exclaimed Mrs. Jane, shaking her apron. "Ha, weel I wat, no! She wad soon hae flown in my face wi' her gibery and her jaukery had I tauld her my errand; but the gowk kens what the tittling wants, although it is not aye crying, *Give, give*, like the horse loch-leech."

"Does the horse leech really cry that, Mrs. Jane! I should think, from a view of its mouth, that it could scarcely cry anything," said Tom.

"Are ye sic a reprobate as to deny the words o' the Scripture, sir? Hech, wae's me! what some folk hae to answer for! We're a' wise ahint the hand. But, hark ye—come ye ower in time, else I am feared she may be settled for ever out o' your reach. Now, I canna bide to think on that, for I have always thought you twa made for ane anither. Let me take a look o' you frae tap to tae—O yes—made for ane anither. Come ower in time before billy Harry come hame again; and let your visit be in timeous hours, else I'll gie you the back of the door to keep. Wild reprobate!" she exclaimed to herself, on taking her leave; "to deny that the horse loch-leech can speak? Ha—he—The Young Laird is the man for me!"

Thomas Beattie was true to his appointment, as may be supposed, and Mrs. Jane having her niece dressed in style, he was perfectly charmed with her; and really it cannot be denied that Ellen was as much delighted with him. She was young, gay, and frolicsome, and Ellen never spent a more joyous and happy afternoon, or knew before what it was to be in a presence that delighted her so much. While they sat conversing, and apparently better satisfied with the company of each other than was likely to be regarded with indifference by any other individual aspiring to the favour of the young lady, the door was opened, and there entered no other than Francis Beattie! When Ellen saw her devoted lover appear thus suddenly, she blushed deeply, and her glee was damped in a moment. She looked rather like a condemned criminal, or at least a guilty creature, than what she really was—a being over whose mind the cloud of guilt had never cast its shadow.

Francis loved her above all things on earth or in heaven, and the moment he saw her so much abashed at being surprised in the company of his brother, his spirit was moved to jealousy—to maddening and uncontrollable jealousy. His ears rang, his hair stood on end, and the contour of his face became like a bent bow. He walked up to his brother with his hand on his hilt, and, in a state of excitement which rendered his words inarticulate, addressed him thus, while his teeth ground together like a horse-rattle:

"Pray, sir, may I ask you of your intentions, and of what you are seeking here?"

"I know not, Frank, what right you have to ask any such questions; but you will allow that I have a right to ask at you what you are seeking

here at present, seeing you come so very inopportunely?"

"Sir," said Francis, whose passion could stay no farther parley, "dare you put it to the issue of the sword this moment?"

"Come now, dear Francis, do not act the fool and the madman both at a time. Rather than bring such a dispute to the issue of the sword between two brothers who never had a quarrel in their lives, I propose that we bring it to a much more temperate and decisive issue here where we stand, by giving the maiden her choice. Stand you there at that corner of the room, I at this, and Ellen Scott in the middle; let us both ask her, and to whomsoever she comes, the prize be his. Why should we try to decide, by the loss of one of our lives, what we cannot decide, and what may be decided in a friendly and rational way in one minute?"

"It is easy for you, sir, to talk temperately and with indifference of such a trial, but not so with me. This young lady is dear to my heart."

"Well, but so is she to mine. Let us, therefore, appeal to the lady at once, whose claim is the best; and as your pretensions are the highest, do you ask her first."

"My dearest Ellen," said Francis, humbly and affectionately, "you know that my whole soul is devoted to your love, and that I aspire to it only in the most honourable way: put an end to this dispute therefore by honouring me with the preference which the unequivocal offer of my hand merits."

Ellen stood dumb and motionless, looking steadfastly down at the hem of her jerkin, which she was nibbling with her hands. She dared not lift an eye to either of the brothers, though apparently conscious that she ought to have recognized the claims of Francis.

"Ellen, I need not tell you that I love you," said Thomas, in a light and careless manner, as if certain that his appeal would be successful; "nor need I attempt to tell how dearly and how long I will love you, for in faith I cannot. Will you make the discovery for yourself by deciding in my favour?"

Ellen looked up. There was a smile on her lovely face; an arch, mischievous, and happy smile, but it turned not on Thomas. Her face turned to the contrary side, but yet the beam of that smile fell not on Francis, who stood in a state of as terrible suspense between hope and fear, as a Roman Catholic sinner at the gate of heaven, who has implored of St. Peter to open the gate, and awaits a final answer. The die of his fate was soon cast, for Ellen, looking one way, yet moving another, straightway threw herself into Thomas Beattie's arms, exclaiming, "Ah, Tom! I fear I am doing that which I shall rue, but I must trust to your generosity; for, bad as you are, I like you the best!"

Thomas took her in his arms, and kissed her; but before he could say a word in return, the despair and rage of his brother, breaking forth over every barrier of reason, interrupted him. "This is the trick of a coward to screen himself from the chastisement he deserves. But you escape me not thus! Follow me if you dare!" And as he said this, Francis rushed from the house, shaking his naked sword at his brother.

Ellen trembled with agitation at the young man's rage; and while Thomas still continued to assure her of his unalterable affection, Mrs. Jane Jerdan entered, plucking her apron so as to make it twang like a bowstring.

"What's a' this, Squire Tummas? Are we to be habbled out o' house and hadding by this rapturous[1] young lawyer o' yours? By the souls o' the Jerdans, I'll kick up sic a stoure about his lugs as shall blind the juridical een o' him! It's queer that men should study the law only to learn to break it. Sure am I, nae gentleman, that hasna been bred a lawyer, wad come into a neighbour's house bullyragging that gate wi' sword in han', malice prepense in his eye, and venom on his tongue. Just as a lassie hadna her ain freedom o' choice, because a fool has been pleased to ask her! Haud the grip you hae, Niece Nell; ye hae made a wise choice for ainee. Tam's the man for my money! Folk are a' wise ahint the hand, but real wisdom lies in taking time by the forelock. But, Squire Tam, the thing that I want to ken is this: are you going to put up wi' a' that bullying and threatening, or do you propose to chastise the fool according to his folly?"

"In truth, Mrs. Jane, I am very sorry for my brother's behaviour, and could not with honour yield any more than I did to pacify him. But he must be humbled. It would not do to suffer him to carry matters with so high a hand."

"Now, wad ye be but advised and leave him to me, I would play him sic a plisky as he shouldna forget till his dying day. By the souls o' the Jerdans, I would! Now promise to me that ye winna fight him."

"O promise, promise!" cried Ellen vehemently, "for the sake of heaven's love, promise my aunt that."

Thomas smiled and shook his head, as much as if he had said, "You do not know what you are asking." Mrs. Jane went on.

"Do it then—do it with a vengeance, and remember this, that wherever ye set the place o' combat, be it in hill or dale, deep linn or moss hag, I shall have a thirdsman there to encourage you on. I shall give you a meeting you little wot of."

Thomas Beattie took all this for words of course, as Mrs. Jane was well known for a raving, ranting old maid, whose vehemence few regarded, though a great many respected her for the care she had taken of her sister's family, and a greater number still regarded her with terror, as a being possessed of superhuman powers; so after many expressions

[1] Rapturous, *i.e.* outrageous.

of the fondest love for Ellen, he took his leave, his mind being made up how it behoved him to deal with his brother.

I forgot to mention before, that old Beattie lived at Nether Cassway with his family; and his eldest son Thomas at Over Cassway, having, on his father's entering into a second marriage, been put in possession of that castle and these lands. Francis, of course, lived in his father's house when in Scotland; and it was thus that his brother knew nothing of his frequent visits to Ellen Scott.

That night, as soon as Thomas went home, he despatched a note to his brother to the following purport:—That he was sorry for the rudeness and unreasonableness of his behaviour. But if, on coming to himself, he was willing to make an apology before his mistress, then he (Thomas) would gladly extend to him the right hand of love and brotherhood; but if he refused this, he would please to meet him on the Crook of Glendearg next morning by the sunrising. Francis returned for answer, that he would meet him at the time and place appointed. There was then no further door of reconciliation left open, but Thomas still had hopes of managing him even on the combat field.

Francis slept little that night, being wholly set on revenge for the loss of his beloved mistress; and a little after daybreak he arose, and putting himself in light armour, proceeded to the place of rendezvous. He had farther to go than his elder brother, and on coming in sight of the Crook of Glendearg, he perceived the latter there before him. He was wrapped in his cavalier's cloak, and walking up and down the crook with impassioned strides, on which Francis soliloquized as follows, as he hasted on:—"Ah ha! so Tom is here before me! This is what I did not expect, for I did not think the flagitious dog had so much spirit or courage in him as to meet me. I am glad he has! for how I long to chastise him, and draw some of the pampered blood from that vain and insolent heart, which has bereaved me of all I held dear on earth!"

In this way did he cherish his wrath till close at his brother's side, and then, addressing him in the same insolent terms, he desired him to cease his cowardly cogitations and draw. His opponent instantly wheeled about, threw off his horseman's cloak, and presented his sword;—and behold the young man's father stood before him, armed and ready for action! The sword fell from Francis's hand, and he stood appalled as if he had been a statue, unable either to utter a word or move a muscle.

"Take up thy sword, caitiff, and let it work thy ruthless work of vengeance here. Is it not better that thou shouldst pierce this old heart, worn out with care and sorrow, and chilled by the ingratitude of my race,' than that of thy gallant and generous brother, the representative of our house, and the chief of our name? Take up thy sword, I say, and if I do not chastise thee as thou deservest, may Heaven reave the sword of justice from the hand of the avenger!"

"The God of heaven forbid that I should ever lift my sword against my honoured father!" said Francis.

"Thou darest not, thou traitor and coward!" returned the father. "I throw back the disgraceful terms in thy teeth which thou usedst to thy brother. Thou camest here boiling with rancour, to shed his blood; and when I appear in person for him, thou darest not accept the challenge."

"You never did me wrong, my dear father; but my brother has wronged me in the tenderest part."

"Thy brother never wronged thee intentionally, thou deceitful and sanguinary fratricide. It was thou alone who forced this quarrel upon him; and I have great reason to suspect thee of a design to cut him off, that the inheritance and the maid might both be thine own. But here I swear by the hand that made me, and the Redeemer that saved me, if thou wilt not go straight and kneel to thy brother for forgiveness, confessing thy injurious treatment, and swearing submission to thy natural chief, I will banish thee from my house and presence for ever, and load thee with a parent's curse, which shall never be removed from thy soul till thou art crushed to the lowest hell."

The young scholar, being utterly astounded at his father's words, and at the awful and stern manner in which he addressed him, whom he had never before reprimanded, was wholly overcome. He kneeled to his parent and implored his forgiveness, promising, with tears, to fulfil every injunction which it would please him to enjoin; and on this understanding the two parted on amicable and gracious terms.

Francis went straight to the tower of Over Cassway, and inquired for his brother, resolved to fulfil his father's stern injunctions to the very letter. He was informed his brother was in his chamber in bed, and indisposed. He asked the porter further, if he had not been forth that day, and was answered that he had gone forth early in the morning in armour, but had quickly returned, apparently in great agitation, and betaken himself to his bed. Francis then requested to be conducted to his brother, to which the servant instantly assented, and led him up to the chamber, never suspecting that there could be any animosity between the two only brothers; but on John Burgess opening the door, and announcing the Tutor, Thomas, being in a nervous state, was a little alarmed. "Remain in the room there, Burgess," said he. "What, brother Frank, are you seeking here at this hour, armed cap-a-pee? I hope you are not come to assassinate me in my bed!"

"God forbid, brother," said the other; "here, John, take my sword down with you, I want some private conversation with Thomas." John did so, and the following conversation ensued; for as soon as the door closed, Francis dropped on his knees, and

said, "O, my dear brother, I have erred grievously, and am come to confess my crime, and implore your pardon."

"We have both erred, Francis, in suffering any earthly concern to incite us against each other's lives. We have both erred, but you have my forgiveness cheerfully; here is my hand on it, and grant me thine in return. O Francis, I have got an admonition this morning, that never will be erased from my memory, and which has caused me to see my life in a new light. What or whom think you I met an hour ago on my way to the Crook of Glendearg to encounter you?"

"Our father, perhaps."

"You have seen him, then?"

"Indeed I have, and he has given me such a reprimand for severity, as son never before received from a parent."

"Brother Frank, I must tell you, and when I do, you will not believe me—It *was not* our father whom we both saw this morning."

"It was no other whom I saw. What do you mean? Do you suppose that I do not know my own father?"

"I tell you it was not, and could not be. I had an express from him yesterday. He is two hundred miles from this, and cannot be in Scotland sooner than three weeks hence."

"You astonish me, Thomas. This is beyond human comprehension!"

"It is true; that I avouch, and the certainty of it has sickened me at heart. You must be aware that he came not home last night, and that his horse and retinue have not arrived."

"He was not at home, it is true, nor have his horse and retinue arrived in Scotland. Still there is no denying that our father is here, and that it was he who spoke to and admonished me."

"I tell you it is impossible. A spirit hath spoke to us in our father's likeness, for he is not, and cannot be in Scotland at this time. My faculties are altogether confounded by the event, not being able to calculate on the qualities or condition of our monitor. An evil spirit it certainly could not be, for all its admonitions pointed to good. I sorely dread, Francis, that our father is no more; that there has been another engagement, that he has lost his life, and that his soul has been lingering around his family before taking its final leave of this sphere. I believe that our father is dead; and for my part I am so sick at heart, that my nerves are all unstrung. Pray, do you take horse and post off for Salop, from whence his commission to me yesterday was dated, and see what hath happened to our revered father."

"I cannot, for my life, give credit to this, brother, or that it was any other being but my father himself who rebuked me. Pray allow me to tarry another day at least, before I set out. Perhaps our father may appear in the neighbourhood, and may be concealing himself for some secret purpose. Did you tell him of our quarrel?"

"No. He never asked me concerning it, but charged me sharply with my intent on the first word, and adjured me, by my regard for his blessing, and my hope in heaven, to desist from my purpose."

"Then he knew it all intuitively; for when I first went in view of the spot appointed for our meeting, I perceived him walking sharply to and fro, wrapped in his military cloak. He never so much as deigned to look at me, till I came close to his side, and thinking it was yourself, I fell to upbraiding him, and desired him to draw. He then threw off his cloak, drew his sword, and, telling me he came in your place, dared me to the encounter. But he knew all the grounds of our quarrel minutely, and laid the blame on me. I own I am a little puzzled to reconcile circumstances, but am convinced my father is near at hand. I heard his words, and saw his eyes flashing anger and indignation. Unfortunately I did not touch him, which would have put an end to all doubts; for he did not present the hand of reconciliation to me, as I expected he would have done, on my yielding implicitly to all his injunctions."

The two brothers then parted, with protestations of mutual forbearance in all time coming, and with an understanding, as that was the morning of Saturday, that if their father, or some word of him, did not reach home before the next evening, the tutor of Cassway was to take horse for the county of Salop early on Monday morning.

Thomas, being thus once more left to himself, could do nothing but toss and tumble in his bed, and reflect on the extraordinary occurrence of that morning; and, after many troubled cogitations, it at length occurred to his recollection what Mrs. Jane Jerdan had said to him:—"Do it then. Do it with a vengeance! But remember this, that wherever ye set the place of combat, be it in hill or dale, deep linn, or moss hagg, I shall have a thirdsman there to encourage you on. I shall give you a meeting you little wot of."

If he was confounded before, he was ten times more so at the remembrance of these words, of most ominous import.

At the time he totally disregarded them, taking them for mere rhodomontade; but now the idea was to him terrible, that his father's spirit, like the prophets of old, should have been conjured up by witchcraft; and then again he bethought himself that no witch would have employed her power to prevent evil. In the end, he knew not what to think, and so, taking the hammer from its rest, he gave three raps on the pipe drum, for there were no bells in the towers of those days, and up came old John Burgess, Thomas Beattie's henchman, huntsman, and groom of the chambers, one who had been attached to the family for fifty years, and he says in his slow West-Border tongue:—"How's tou now, callan? Is tou

ony betterlins? There has been tway stags seen in the Bloodhope-Linns tis mworning already."

"Ay, and there has been something else seen, John, that lies nearer to my heart, to-day." John looked at his master with an inquisitive eye and quivering lip, but said nothing. The latter went on, "I am very unwell to-day, John, and cannot tell what is the matter with me; I think I am bewitched."

"It's very like tou is, callan. I pits nae doubt on't at a'."

"Is there anybody in this moor district whom you ever heard blamed for the horrible crime of witchcraft?"

"Ay, that there is; mair than ane or tway. There's our neighbour, Lucky Jerdan, for instance, and her niece Nell; the warst o' the pair, I doubt." John said this with a sly stupid leer, for he had admitted the old lady to an audience with his master the day before, and had eyed him afterwards bending his course towards Drumfielding.

"John, I am not disposed to jest at this time; for I am disturbed in mind, and very ill. Tell me, in reality, did you ever hear Mrs. Jane Jerdan accused of being a witch?"

"Why, look thee, master, I dares nae say she's a wotch; for Lucky has mony good points in her character. But it's weel kenned she has mair power nor her ain, for she can stwop a' the plews in Eakdale wi' a wave o' her hand, and can raise the dead out o' their graves, just as a matter of cwoorse."

"That, John, is an extraordinary power indeed. But did you never hear of her sending any living men *to* their graves? For as that is rather the danger that hangs over me, I wish you would take a ride over and desire Mrs. Jane to come and see me. Tell her I am ill, and request of her to come and see me."

"I shall do that, callan'. But are tou sure it is the auld wotch I'm to bring? For it strikes me the young ane maybe has done the deed; and if sae, she is the fittest to effect the cure. But I sall bring the auld ane—dinna flee intil a rage, for I sall bring the auld ane; though, gude forgie me, it is unco like bringing the houdy."

Away went John Burgess to Drumfielding; but Mrs. Jane would not move for all his entreaties. She sent back word to his master, to "rise out o' his bed, for he wad be waur if onything ailed him; and if he had aught to say to auld Jane Jerdan, she would be ready to hear it at hame, though he behoved to remember that it wasna ilka subject under the sun that she could thole to be questioned anent."

With this answer John was forced to return, and there being no accounts of old Beattie having been seen in Scotland, the young men remained all the Sabbath-day in the utmost consternation at the apparition of their father they had seen, and the appalling rebuke they had received from it. The most incredulous mind could scarce doubt that they had had communion with a supernatural being; and not being able to draw any other conclusion themselves, they became persuaded that their father was dead; and accordingly, both prepared for setting out early on Monday morning towards the county of Salop, from whence they had last heard of him.

But just as they were ready to set out, when their spurs were buckled on and their horses bridled, Andrew Johnston, their father's confidential servant, arrived from the place to which they were bound. He had rode night and day, never once stinting the light gallop, as he said, and had changed his horse seven times. He appeared as if his ideas were in a state of derangement and confusion; and when he saw his young masters standing together, and ready-mounted for a journey, he stared at them as if he scarcely believed his own senses. They of course asked immediately about the cause of his express; but his answers were equivocal, and he appeared not to be able to assign any motive. They asked him concerning their father, and if anything extraordinary had happened to him. He would not say either that there had, or that there had not; but inquired, in his turn, if nothing extraordinary had happened with them at home. They looked to one another, and returned him no answer; but at length the youngest said, "Why, Andrew, you profess to have ridden express the distance of two hundred miles; now, you surely must have some guess for what purpose you have done this? Say, then, at once, what your message is. Is our father alive!"

"Ye—es; I think he is."

"You *think* he is? Are you uncertain, then!"

"I am certain he is not *dead*—at least was not when I left him. But—hum—certainly there has a change taken place. Hark ye, masters—can a man be said to be in life when he is out of himself!"

"Why, man, keep us not in this thrilling suspense. Is our father well?"

"No—not *quite* well. I am sorry to say, honest gentleman, that he is not. But the truth is, my masters, now that I see you well and hearty, and about to take a journey in company, I begin to suspect that I have been posted all this way on a fool's errand; and not another syllable will I speak on the subject till I have had some refreshment, and if you still insist on hearing a ridiculous story, you shall hear it then."

When the matter of the refreshment had been got over to Andrew's full satisfaction, he began as follows:—

"Why, faith, you see, my masters, it is not easy to say my errand to you, for in fact I have none. Therefore, all that I can do is to tell you a story—a most ridiculous one it is, as ever sent a poor fellow out on the gallop for the matter of two hundred miles or so. On the morning before last, right early, little Isaac, the page, comes to me, and he says, 'Johnston, thou must go and visit measter. He's bad.

"'Bad!' says I. 'Whaten way is he bad?'

"'Why,' says he, 'he's so far ill as he's not well, and desires to see you without one moment's delay. He's in fine taking, and that you'll find; but what-for do I stand here? Lword, I never got such a fright. Why, Johnston, does thou know that measter hath lwost himself?'

"'How lost himself, rabbit?' says I, 'speak plain out, else I'll have thee lug-hauled, thou dwarf!' for my blood rose at the imp, for fooling at any mishap of my master's. But my choler only made him worse, for there is not a greater deil's-buckie in all the Five Dales.

"'Why, man, it is true that I said,' quoth he, laughing; 'the old gurly squoir hath lwost himself; and it will be grand sport to see thee going calling him at all the steane-crosses in the kingdom, in this here way—Ho yes! and a two times ho yes! and a *three* times ho yes! Did anybody no see the better half of my measter, Laird of the twa Cassways, Bloodhope, and Pantland, which was amissing overnight, and is supposed to have gone a-wool-gathering? If anybody hath seen that better part of my measter, whilk contains as mooch wit as a man could drive on a hurlbarrow, let them restore it to me, Andrew Johnston, piper, trumpeter, whacker, and wheedler, to the same great and noble squoir; and high shall be his reward—Ho yes!'

"'The devil restore thee to thy right mind!' said I, knocking him down, and leaving him sprawling in the kennel, and then hasted to my master, whom I found feverish, restless, and raving, and yet with an earnestness in his demeanour that stunned and terrified me. He seized my hand in both of his, which were burning like fire, and gave me such a look of despair as I shall never forget. 'Johnston, I am ill,' said he, 'grievously ill, and know not what is to become of me. Every nerve in my body is in a burning heat, and my soul is as it were torn to fritters with amazement. Johnston, as sure as you are in the body, something most deplorable hath happened to them.'

"'Yes, as sure as I am in the body, there has, master,' says I. 'But I'll have you bled and doctored in style; and you shall soon be as sound as a roach,' says I; 'for a gentleman must not lose heart altogether for a little fire-raising in his outworks, if it does not reach the citadel,' says I to him. But he cut me short by shaking his head and flinging my hand from him.

"'A truce with your talking,' says he. 'That which hath befallen me is as much above your comprehension as the sun is above the earth, and never will be comprehended by mortal man; but I must inform you of it, as I have no other means of gaining the intelligence I yearn for, and which I am incapable of gaining personally. Johnston, there never was a mortal man suffered what I have suffered since midnight. I believe I have had doings with hell; for I have been disembodied and embodied again, and the intensity of my tortures has been unparalleled. I was at home this morning at daybreak.'

"'At home at Cassway!' says I. 'I am sorry to hear you say so, master, because you know, or should know, that the thing is impossible, you being in the ancient town of Shrewsbury on the king's business.'

"'I was at home in very deed, Andrew,' returned he; 'but whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell—the Lord only knoweth. But there I was in this guise, and with this heart and all its feelings within me, where I saw scenes, heard words, and spoke others, which I will here relate to you. I had finished my despatches last night by midnight, and was sitting musing on the hard fate and improvidence of my sovereign master, when, ere ever I was aware, a neighbour of ours, Mrs. Jane Jerdan of Drumfielding, a mysterious character, with whom I have had some strange doings in my time, came suddenly into the chamber, and stood before me. I accosted her with doubt and terror, asking what had brought her so far from home.'

"'You are not so far from home as you imagine,' said she; 'and it is fortunate for some that it is so. Your two sons have quarrelled about the possession of niece Ellen, and though the eldest is blameless of the quarrel, yet has he been forced into it, and they are engaged to fight at daybreak at the Crook of Glendearg. There they will assuredly fall by each other's hands if you interpose not; for there is no other authority now on earth that can prevent this woeful calamity.'

"'Alas! how can I interfere,' said I, 'at this distance? It is already within a few hours of the meeting, and before I get from among the windings of the Severn, their swords will be bathed in each other's blood! I must trust to the interference of Heaven.'

"'Is your name and influence, then, to perish for ever?' said she. Is it so soon to follow your master's, the great Maxwell of the Dales, into utter oblivion? Why not rather rouse into requisition the energies of the spirits that watch over human destinies? At least step aside with me, that I may disclose the scene to your eyes. You know I can do it; and you may then act according to your natural impulse.'

"'Such was the import of the words she spoke to me, if not the very words themselves. I understood them not at the time; nor do I yet. But when she had done speaking, she took me by the hand, and hurried me towards the door of the apartment, which she opened, and the first step we took over the threshold, we stepped into a void space and fell downward. I was going to call out, but felt my descent so rapid, that my voice was stifled, and I could not so much as draw my breath. I expected every moment to fall against something and be dashed to pieces; and I shut my eyes, clenched my teeth, and held by the dame's hand with a frenzied

grasp, in expectation of the catastrophe. But down we went—down and down, with a celerity which tongue cannot describe, without light, breath, or any sort of impediment. I now felt assured that we had both at once stepped from off the earth, and were hurled into the immeasurable void. The airs of darkness sung in my ears with a booming din as I rolled down the steeps of everlasting night, an outcast from nature and all its harmonies, and a journeyer into the depths of hell.

"'I still held my companion's hand, and felt the pressure of hers; and so long did this our alarming descent continue, that I at length caught myself breathing once more, but as quick as if I had been in the height of a fever. I then tried every effort to speak, but they were all unavailing; for I could not emit one sound, although my lips and tongue fashioned the words. Think, then, of my astonishment, when my companion sung out the following stanza with the greatest glee:—

"'Here we roll,
Body and soul,
Down to the deeps of the Paynim's goal—
With speed and with spell,
With yo and with yell,
This is the way to the palace of hell—
Sing Yo! Ho!
Level and low,
Down to the Valley of Vision we go!'"

"'Ha, ha, ha! Tam Beattie,' added she, 'where is a' your courage now? Cannot ye lift up your voice and sing a stave wi' your auld crony? And cannot ye lift up your een, and see what region you are in now?'

"'I did force open my eyelids, and beheld light, and apparently worlds, or huge lurid substances, gliding by me with speed beyond that of the lightning of heaven. I certainly perceived light, though of a dim uncertain nature; but so precipitate was my descent, I could not distinguish from whence it proceeded, or of what it consisted, whether of the vapours of chaotic wastes, or the streamers of hell. So I again shut my eyes closer than ever, and waited the event in terror unutterable.

"'We at length came upon something which interrupted our farther progress. I had no feeling as we fell against it, but merely as if we came in contact with some soft substance that impeded our descent; and immediately afterwards I perceived that our motion had ceased.

"'What a terrible tumble we hae gotten, Laird!' said my companion. 'But ye are now in the place where you should be; and deil speed the coward!'

"'So saying, she quitted my hand, and I felt as if she were wrested from me by a third object; but still I durst not open my eyes, being convinced that I was lying in the depths of hell, or some hideous place not to be dreamed of; so I lay still in despair, not even daring to address a prayer to my Maker. At length I lifted my eyes slowly and fearfully; but they had no power of distinguishing objects. All that I perceived was a vision of something in nature, with which I had in life been too well acquainted. It was a glimpse of green glens, long withdrawing ridges, and one high hill, with a cairn on its summit. I rubbed my eyes to divest them of the enchantment, but when I opened them again, the illusion was still brighter and more magnificent. Then springing to my feet, I perceived that I was lying in a little fairy ring, not one hundred yards from the door of my own hall!

"'I was, as you may well conceive, dazzled with admiration; still I felt that something was not right with me, and that I was struggling with an enchantment; but recollecting the hideous story told me by the beldame, of the deadly discord between my two sons, I hasted to watch their motions, for the morning was yet but dawning. In a few seconds after recovering my senses, I perceived my eldest son Thomas leave his tower armed, and pass on towards the place of appointment. I waylaid him, and remarked to him that he was very early astir, and I feared on no good intent. He made no answer, but stood like one in a stupor, and gazed at me. 'I know your purpose, son Thomas,' said I; 'so it is in vain for you to equivocate. You have challenged your brother, and are going to meet him in deadly combat; but as you value your father's blessing, and would deprecate his curse—as you value your hope in heaven, and would escape the punishment of hell—abandon the hideous and cursed intent, and be reconciled to your only brother.'

"'On this, my dutiful son Thomas kneeled to me, and presented his sword, disclaiming, at the same time, all intentions of taking away his brother's life, and all animosity for the vengeance sought against himself, and thanked me in a flood of tears for my interference. I then commanded him back to his couch, and taking his cloak and sword, hasted away to the Crook of Glendearg, to wait the arrival of his brother.'"

Here Andrew Johnston's narrative detailed the self-same circumstances recorded in a former part of this tale, as having passed between the father and his younger son, so that it is needless to recapitulate them; but beginning where that broke off, he added, in the words of the Old Laird, "'As soon as my son Francis had left me, in order to be reconciled to his brother, I returned to the fairy knowe and ring where I first found myself seated at daybreak. I know not why I went there, for though I considered with myself, I could discover no motive that I had for doing so, but was led thither by a sort of impulse which I could not resist, and from the same feeling spread my son's mantle on the spot, laid his sword down beside it, and stretched me down to sleep. I remember nothing further with any degree of accuracy, for I instantly fell into a chaos of suffering, confusion, and racking dismay, from which I was only of late released by awaking

from a trance, on the very seat and in the same guise in which I was the evening before. I am certain I was at home in body or in spirit—saw my sons—spake these words to them, and heard theirs in return. How I returned I know even less, if that is possible, than how I went; for it seemed to me that the mysterious force that presses us to this sphere, and supports us on it, was in my case withdrawn or subverted, and that I merely fell from one part of the earth's surface and alighted on another. Now I am so ill that I cannot move from this couch; therefore, Andrew, do you mount and ride straight home. Spare no horse-flesh, by night or by day, to bring me word of my family, for I dread that some evil hath befallen them. If you find them in life, give them many charges from me of brotherly love and affection; if not—what can I say but, in the words of the patriarch, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.'"

The two brothers, in utter amazement, went together to the green ring on the top of the knoll above the castle of Cassway, and there found the mantle lying spread, and the sword beside it. They then, without letting Johnston into the awful secret, mounted straight, and rode off with him to their father. They found him still in bed, and very ill; and though rejoiced at seeing them, they soon lost hope of his recovery, his spirits being broken and deranged in a wonderful manner. Their conversations together were of the most solemn nature, the visitation deigned to them having been above their capacity. On the third or fourth day their father was removed by death from this terrestrial scene, and the minds of the young men were so much impressed by the whole of the circumstances, that it made a great alteration in their after life. Thomas, as solemnly charged by his father, married Ellen Scott, and Francis was well known afterward as the celebrated Dr. Beattie of Amherst. Ellen was mother to twelve sons, and on the night that her seventh son was born, her aunt Jerdan was lost, and never more heard of, either living or dead.

This will be viewed as a most romantic and unnatural story, as without doubt it is; but I have the strongest reasons for believing that it is founded on a literal fact, of which all the three were sensibly and positively convinced. It was published in England in Dr. Beattie's lifetime, and by his acquiescence, and owing to the respectable source from whence it came, it was never disputed in that day that it had its origin in truth. It was again republished, with some miserable alterations, in a London collection of 1770, by J. Smith, at No. 15 Paternoster Row; and though I have seen none of these accounts, but relate the story wholly from tradition, yet the assurance obtained from a friend of their existence, is a curious corroborative circumstance, and proves that, if the story was not true, the parties at least believed it to be so.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BROWNIE OF THE BLACK HAGGS.

When the Sprots were Lairds of Wheelhope, which is now a long time ago, there was one of the ladies who was very badly spoken of in the country. People did not just openly assert that Lady Wheelhope (for every landward laird's wife was then styled Lady) was a witch, but every one had an aversion even at hearing her named; and when by chance she happened to be mentioned, old men would shake their heads and say, "Ah! let us alane o' her! The less ye meddle wi' her the better." Old wives would give over spinning, and, as a pretence for hearing what might be said about her, poke in the fire with the tongs, cocking up their ears all the while; and then, after some meaning coughs, hems, and haws, would haply say, "Hech-wow, sirs! An a' be true that's said!" or something equally wise and decisive.

In short, Lady Wheelhope was accounted a very bad woman. She was an inexorable tyrant in her family, quarrelled with her servants, often cursing them, striking them, and turning them away, especially if they were religious, for she could not endure people of that character, but charged them with everything bad. Whenever she found out that any of the servant men of the laird's establishment were religious, she gave them up to the military and got them shot, and several girls that were regular in their devotions, she was supposed to have got rid of by poison. She was certainly a wicked woman, else many good people were mistaken in her character; and the poor persecuted Covenanters were obliged to unite in their prayers against her.

As for the laird, he was a big, dun-faced, pluffy body, that cared neither for good nor evil, and did not well know the one from the other. He laughed at his lady's tantrums and barley-hoods; and the greater the rage that she got into, the laird thought it the better sport. One day, when two maid-servants came running to him, in great agitation, and told him that his lady had felled one of their companions, the laird laughed heartily, and said he did not doubt it.

"Why, sir, how can you laugh?" said they; "the poor girl is killed."

"Very likely, very likely," said the laird. "Well, it will teach her to take care who she angers again."

"And, sir, your lady will be hanged."

"Very likely; well, it will teach her how to strike so rashly again—Ha, ha, ha! Will it not, Jessy?"

But when this same Jessy died suddenly one morning, the laird was greatly confounded, and seemed dimly to comprehend that there had been

unfair play going on. There was little doubt that she was taken off by poison, but whether the lady did it through jealousy or not was never divulged; but it greatly bamboozled and astonished the poor laird, for his nerves failed him, and his whole frame became paralytic. He seems to have been exactly in the same state of mind with a collie that I once had. He was extremely fond of the gun as long as I did not kill anything with it (there being no game laws in Ettrick Forest in those days), and he got a grand chase after the hares when I missed them. But there was one day that I chanced for a marvel to shoot one dead a few paces before his nose. I'll never forget the astonishment that the poor beast manifested. He stared one while at the gun, and another while at the dead hare, and seemed to be drawing the conclusion, that if the case stood thus, there was no creature sure of its life. Finally, he took his tail between his legs and ran away home, and never would face a gun all his life again.

So was it precisely with Laird Sprot of Wheelhope. As long as his lady's wrath produced only noise and uproar among the servants, he thought it fine sport; but when he saw what he believed the dreadful effects of it, he became like a barrel organ out of tune, and could only discourse one note, which he did to every one he met. "I wish she mayna hae gotten something she had been the waur of." This note he repeated early and late, night and day, sleeping and waking, alone and in company, from the moment that Jessy died till she was buried; and on going to the churchyard as chief mourner, he whispered it to her relatives by the way. When they came to the grave, he took his stand at the head, nor would he give place to the girl's father; but there he stood, like a huge post, as though he neither saw nor heard; and when he had lowered her head into the grave and dropped the cord, he slowly lifted his hat with one hand, wiped his dim eyes with the back of the other, and said, in a deep tremulous tone, "Poor lassie! I wish she didna get something she had been the waur of."

This death made a great noise among the common people; but there was little protection for the life of the subject in those days; and provided a man or woman was a real anti-Covenanter, they might kill a good many without being quarrelled for it. So there was no one to take cognizance of the circumstances relating to the death of poor Jessy.

After this the lady walked softly for the space of two or three years. She saw that she had rendered herself odious, and had entirely lost her husband's countenance, which she liked worst of all. But the evil propensity could not be overcome; and a poor boy, whom the laird out of sheer compassion had taken into his service, being found dead one morning, the country people could no longer be restrained; so they went in a body to the sheriff, and insisted on an investigation. It was proved that she detested the boy, had often threatened him, and had given him brose and butter the afternoon before he died; but notwithstanding of all this, the cause was ultimately dismissed, and the pursuers fined.

No one can tell to what height of wickedness she might now have proceeded, had not a check of a very singular kind been laid upon her. Among the servants that came home at the next term, was one who called himself Merodach, and a strange person he was. He had the form of a boy, but the features of one a hundred years old, save that his eyes had a brilliancy and restlessness which were very extraordinary, bearing a strong resemblance to the eyes of a well-known species of monkey. He was froward and perverse, and disregarded the pleasure or displeasure of any person; but he performed his work well, and with apparent ease. From the moment he entered the house, the lady conceived a mortal antipathy against him, and besought the laird to turn him away. But the laird would not consent; he never turned away any servant, and moreover he had hired this fellow for a trivial wage, and he neither wanted activity nor perseverance. The natural consequence of this refusal was, that the lady instantly set herself to embitter Merodach's life as much as possible, in order to get early quit of a domestic every way so disagreeable. Her hatred of him was not like a common antipathy entertained by one human being against another—she hated him as one might hate a toad or an adder, and his occupation of jotteryman (as the laird termed his servant of all work) keeping him always about her hand, it must have proved highly annoying.

She scolded him, she raged at him, but he only mocked her wrath, and giggled and laughed at her, with the most provoking derision. She tried to fell him again and again, but never, with all her address, could she hit him, and never did she make a blow at him that she did not repent it. She was heavy and unwieldy, and he as quick in his motions as a monkey; besides, he generally contrived that she should be in such an ungovernable rage, that when she flew at him, she hardly knew what she was doing. At one time she guided her blow towards him, and he at the same instant avoided it with such dexterity, that she knocked down the chief hind, or fore-man, and then Merodach giggled so heartily, that, lifting the kitchen poker, she threw it at him with a full design of knocking out his brains, but the missile only broke every article of crockery on the kitchen dresser.

She then hasted to the laird, crying bitterly, and telling him she would not suffer that wretch Merodach, as she called him, to stay another night in the family.

"Why, then, put him away, and trouble me no more about him," said the laird.

"Put him away!" exclaimed she; "I have already ordered him away a hundred times, and charged him never to let me see his horrible face

again, but he only grins, and answers with some intolerable piece of impertinence."

The pertinacity of the fellow amused the laird: his dim eyes turned upwards into his head with delight; he then looked two ways at once, turned round his back, and laughed till the tears ran down his dun cheeks, but he could only articulate, "You're fitted now."

The lady's agony of rage still increasing from this derision, she upbraided the laird bitterly, and said he was not worthy the name of man, if he did not turn away that pestilence, after the way he had abused her.

"Why, Shusy, my dear, what has he done to you?"

"What done to me! has he not caused me to knock down John Thomson? and I do not know if ever he will come to life again!"

"Have you felled your favourite, John Thomson?" said the laird, laughing more heartily than before; "you might have done a worse deed than that."

"And has he not broke every plate and dish on the whole dresser?" continued the lady, "and for all this devastation, he only mocks at my displeasure—absolutely mocks me; and if you do not have him turned away, and hanged or shot for his deeds, you are not worthy the name of man."

"Oh alack! What a devastation among the cheena metal!" said the laird, and calling on Merodach, he said, "Tell me, thou evil Merodach of Babylon, how thou darest knock down thy lady's favourite servant, John Thomson?"

"Not I, your honour. It was my lady herself, who got into such a furious rage at me, that she mistook her man, and felled Mr. Thomson, and the good man's skull is fractured."

"That was very odd," said the laird, chuckling; "I do not comprehend it. But then, what set you on smashing all my lady's delft and cheena ware? That was a most infamous and provoking action."

"It was she herself, your honour. Sorry would I be to break one dish belonging to the house. I take all the house servants to witness, that my lady smashed all the dishes with a poker, and now lays the blame on me!"

The laird turned his dim eyes on his lady, who was crying with vexation and rage, and seemed meditating another personal attack on the culprit, which he did not at all appear to shun, but rather to court. She, however, vented her wrath in threatenings of the most deep and desperate revenge, the creature all the while assuring her that she would be foiled, and that in all her encounters and contests with him, she would uniformly come to the worst: he was resolved to do his duty, and there before his master he defied her.

The laird thought more than he considered it prudent to reveal; he had little doubt that his wife would find some means of wreaking her vengeance on the object of her displeasure, and he shuddered when he recollected one who had taken "something that she had been the waur of."

In a word, the Lady of Wheelhope's inveterate malignity against this one object was like the rod of Moses, that swallowed up the rest of the serpents. All her wicked and evil propensities seemed to be superseded if not utterly absorbed by it. The rest of the family now lived in comparative peace and quietness, for early and late her malevolence was venting itself against the jotteryman, and against him alone. It was a delirium of hatred and vengeance, on which the whole bent and bias of her inclination was set. She could not stay from the creature's presence, or, in the intervals when absent from him, she spent her breath in curses and execrations, and then, not able to rest, she ran again to seek him, her eyes gleaming with the anticipated delights of vengeance, while, ever and anon, all the ridicule and the harm redounded on herself.

Was it not strange that she could not get quit of this sole annoyance of her life? One would have thought she easily might. But by this time there was nothing further from her wishes; she wanted vengeance, full, adequate, and delicious vengeance, on her audacious opponent. But he was a strange and terrible creature, and the means of retaliation constantly came, as it were, to his hand.

Bread and sweet milk was the only fare that Merodach cared for, and having bargained for that, he would not want it, though he often got it with a curse and with ill will. The lady having, upon one occasion, intentionally kept back his wonted allowance for some days, on the Sabbath morning following, she set him down a bowl of rich sweet milk, well drugged with a deadly poison, and then she lingered in a little ante-room to watch the success of her grand plot, and prevent any other creature from tasting of the potion. Merodach came in, and the housemaid said to him, "There is your breakfast, creature."

"Oho! my lady has been liberal this morning," said he, "but I am beforehand with her. Here, little Missie, you seem very hungry to-day; take you my breakfast." And with that he set the beverage down to the lady's little favourite spaniel. It so happened that the lady's only son came at that instant into the ante-room seeking her, and teasing his mamma about something, which withdrew her attention from the hall-table for a space. When she looked again, and saw Missie lapping up the sweet milk, she burst from her hiding-place like a fury, screaming as if her head had been on fire, kicked the remainder of its contents against the wall, and lifting Missie in her bosom, retreated hastily, crying all the way.

"Ha, ha, ha; I have you now!" cried Merodach, as she vanished from the hall.

Poor Missie died immediately, and very privately; indeed, she would have died and been buried, and never one have seen her, save her mistress, had not

Merodach, by a luck that never failed him, looked over the wall of the flower garden, just as his lady was laying her favourite in a grave of her own digging. She, not perceiving her tormentor, plied on at her task, apostrophizing the insensate little carcass. "Ah! poor dear little creature, thou hast had a hard fortune, and hast drank of the bitter potion that was not intended for thee; but he shall drink it three times double for thy sake."

"Is that little Missie?" said the eldritch voice of the jotteryman, close at the lady's ear. She uttered a loud scream, and sank down on the bank. "Alack for poor Missie," continued the creature, in a tone of mockery. "My dear heart is sorry for Missie. What has befallen her? whose breakfast cup did she drink?"

"Hence with thee, fiend!" cried the lady; "what right hast thou to intrude on thy mistress's privacy? Thy turn is coming yet, or may the nature of woman change within me!"

"It is changed already," said the creature, grinning with delight; "I have thee now, I have thee now! And were it not to show my superiority over thee, which I do every hour, I should soon see thee strapped like a mad cat or a worrying bratch. What wilt thou try next?"

"I will cut thy throat, and if I die for it, will rejoice in the deed—a deed of charity to all that dwell on the face of the earth."

"I have warned thee before, dame, and I now warn thee again, that all thy mischief meditated against me will fall double on thine own head."

"I want none of your warning, fiendish cur. Hence with your elvish face, and take care of yourself."

It would be too disgusting and horrible to relate or read all the incidents that fell out between this unaccountable couple. Their enmity against each other had no end and no mitigation, and scarcely a single day passed over on which the lady's acts of malevolent ingenuity did not terminate fatally for some favourite article of her own. Scarcely was there a thing, animate or inanimate, on which she set a value, left to her, that was not destroyed; and yet scarcely one hour or minute could she remain absent from her tormentor, and all the while, it seems, solely for the purpose of tormenting him. While all the rest of the establishment enjoyed peace and quietness from the fury of their termagant dame, matters still grew worse and worse between the fascinated pair. The lady haunted the menial, in the same manner as the raven haunts the eagle—for a perpetual quarrel, though the former knows that in every encounter she is to come off the loser. Noises were heard on the stairs by night, and it was whispered among the servants, that the lady had been seeking Merodach's chamber, on some horrible intent. Several of them would have sworn that they had seen her passing and repassing on the stair after midnight, when all was quiet; but then, it was likewise well known that Merodach slept with well-fastened doors, and a companion in another bed in the same room, whose bed, too, was nearest the door. Nobody cared much what became of the jotteryman, for he was an unsocial and disagreeable person; but some one told him what they had seen, and hinted a suspicion of the lady's intent. But the creature only bit his upper lip, winked with his eyes, and said, "She had better let that alone; she will be the first to rue that."

Not long after this, to the horror of the family and the whole country side, the laird's only son was found murdered in his bed one morning, under circumstances that manifested the most fiendish cruelty and inveteracy on the part of his destroyer. As soon as the atrocious act was divulged, the lady fell into convulsions, and lost her reason; and happy had it been for her had she never recovered the use of it, for there was blood upon her hand, which she took no care to conceal, and there was little doubt that it was the blood of her own innocent and beloved boy, the sole heir and hope of the family.

This blow deprived the laird of all power of action; but the lady had a brother, a man of the law, who came and instantly proceeded to an investigation of this unaccountable murder. Before the sheriff arrived, the housekeeper took the lady's brother aside, and told him he had better not go on with the scrutiny, for she was sure the crime would be brought home to her unfortunate mistress; and after examining into several corroborative circumstances, and viewing the state of the raving maniac, with the blood on her hand and arm, he made the investigation a very short one, declaring the domestics all exculpated.

The laird attended his boy's funeral, and laid his head in the grave, but appeared exactly like a man walking in a trance, an automaton, without feelings or sensations, oftentimes gazing at the funeral procession, as on something he could not comprehend. And when the death-bell of the parish church fell a-tolling, as the corpse approached the kirk-stile, he cast a dim eye up towards the belfry, and said hastily, "What, what's that? Och ay, we're just in time, just in time." And often was he hammering over the name of "Evil Merodach, king of Babylon," to himself. He seemed to have some far-fetched conception that his unaccountable jotteryman was in some way connected with the death of his only son and other lesser calamities, although the evidence in favour of Merodach's innocence was as usual quite decisive.

This grievous mistake of Lady Wheelhope can only be accounted for, by supposing her in a state of derangement, or rather under some evil influence over which she had no control, and to a person in such a state the mistake was not so very unnatural. The mansion-house of Wheelhope was old and irregular. The stair had four acute turns, and four landing-places, all the same. In the uppermost chamber slept the two domestics, Merodach in the bed farthest in, and in the chamber immediately be-

low that, which was exactly similar, slept the young laird and his tutor, the former in the bed farthest in, and thus, in the turmoil of her wild and raging passions, her own hand made herself childless.

Merodach was expelled the family forthwith, but refused to accept of his wages, which the man of law pressed upon him, for fear of further mischief; but he went away in apparent sullenness and discontent, no one knowing whither.

When his dismissal was announced to the lady, who was watched day and night in her chamber, the news had such an effect on her, that her whole frame seemed electrified; the horrors of remorse vanished, and another passion, which I neither can comprehend nor define, took the sole possession of her distempered spirit. "He *must* not go! He *shall* not go!" she exclaimed. "No, no, no; he shall not, he shall not, he shall not!" and then she instantly set herself about making ready to follow him, uttering all the while the most diabolical expressions, indicative of anticipated vengeance. "Oh, could I but snap his nerves one by one, and birl among his vitals! Could I but slice his heart off piecemeal in small messes, and see his blood lopper, and bubble, and spin away in purple slays; and then to see him grin, and grin, and grin, and grin! Oh—oh—oh! How beautiful and grand a sight it would be to see him grin, and grin, and grin!" And in such a style would she run on for hours together.

She thought of nothing, she spake of nothing, but the discarded jotteryman, whom most people now began to regard as a creature that was "not canny." They had seen him eat, and drink, and work, like other people; still he had that about him that was not like other men. He was a boy in form, and an antediluvian in feature. Some thought he was a mongrel, between a Jew and an ape, some a wizard, some a kelpie, or a fairy, but most of all, that he was really and truly a brownie. What he was I do not know, and therefore will not pretend to say; but be that as it may, in spite of locks and keys, watching and waking, the Lady of Wheelhope soon made her escape, and eloped after him. The attendants, indeed, would have made oath that she was carried away by some invisible hand, for it was impossible, they said, that she could have escaped on foot like other people; and this edition of the story took in the country, but sensible people viewed the matter in another light.

As for instance, when Wattie Blythe, the laird's old shepherd, came in from the hill one morning, his wife Bessie thus accosted him: "His presence be about us, Wattie Blythe! have you heard what has happened at the ha'? Things are aye turning waur and waur there, and it looks like as if Providence had gi'en up our laird's house to destruction. This grand estate maun now gang frae the Sprots, for it has finished them."

"Na, na, Bessie, it isna the estate that has finished the Sprots, but the Sprots that hae finished the estate, and themsels into the boot. They hae been a wicked and degenerate race, and aye the langer the waur, till they hae reached the utmost bounds o' earthly wickedness; and it's time the deil were looking after his ain."

"Ah, Wattie Blythe, ye never said a truer say. And that's just the very point where your story ends and mine begins; for hasna the deil, or the fairies, or the brownies ta'en away our leddy bodily! and the haill country is running and riding in search o' her, and there is twenty hunder merks offered to the first that can find her and bring her safe back. They hae ta'en her away skin and bane, body and soul and a', Wattie!"

"Hech-wow, but that is awesome! And where is it thought they have ta'en her to, Bessie?"

"Oh, they hae some guess at that frae her ain hints afore. It is thought they hae carried her after that Satan of a creature wha wrought sae muckle wae about the house. It is for him they are a' looking, for they ken weel that where they get the tane they will get the tither."

"Whew! is that the gate o't, Bessie? Why, then, the awfu' story is nouther mair nor less than this, that the leddy has made a 'lopement, as they ca't, and run away after a blackguard jotteryman. Hech-wow! wae's me for human frailty! But that's just the gate. When ainee the deil gets in the point o' his finger he will soon have in his haill hand. Ay, he wants but a hair to make a tether of ony day! I hae seen her a braw sonsy lass; but even then I feared she was devoted to destruction, for she aye mockit at religion, Bessie, and that's no a good mark of a young body. And she made a' its servants her enemies; and think you these good men's prayers were a' to blaw away i' the wind, and be nae mair regarded? Na, na, Bessie, my woman, take ye this mark baith o' our ain bairns and other folk's:—If ever ye see a young body that disregards the Sabbath, and makes a mock at the ordinances o' religion, ye will never see that body come to muckle good. A braw hand our leddy has made o' her gibes and jeers at religion, and her mockeries o' the poor persecuted hill-folk!—sunk down by degrees into the very dregs o' sin and misery! run away after a scullion!"

"Fy, fy, Wattie; how can ye say sae? It was weel kenn'd that she hatit him wi' a perfect and mortal hatred, and tried to make away wi' him mae ways nor ane."

"Aha, Bessie, but nipping and scarting is Scots folk's wooing; and though it is but right that we suspend our judgments, there will naebody persuade me, if she be found alang wi' the creature, but that she has run away after him in the natural way, on her twa shanks, without help either frae fairy or brownie."

"I'll never believe sic a thing of ony woman born, let be a leddy weel up in years."

"'Od help ye, Bessie! ye dinna ken the stretch o' corrupt nature. The best o' us, when left to our-

sels, are nae better than strayed sheep that will never find the way back to their ain pastures; and of a' things made o' mortal flesh a wicked woman is the warst."

"Alack-a-day! we get the blame o' muckle that we little deserve. But, Wattie, keep ye a geyan sharp look-out about the cleuchs and the caves o' our Hope, for the leddy kens them a' geyan weel; and gin the twenty hunder merks wad come our way, it might gang a waur gate. It wad tocher a' our bonny lasses."

"Ay, weel I wat, Bessie, that's nae lee. And now when ye bring me amind o't, I'm sair mistaen if I didna hear a creature up in the Brockholes this morning skirling as if something were cutting its throat. It gars a' the hairs stand on my head when I think it may hae been our leddy, and the droich of a creature murdering her. I took it for a battle of wulcats, and wished they might pu' out ane anither's thrapples; but when I think on it again, they were unco like some o' our leddy's unearthly screams."

"His presence be about us, Wattie! Haste ye; pit on your bonnet, tak' your staff in your hand, and gang and see what it is."

"Shame fa' me if I daur gang, Bessie."

"Hout, Wattie, trust in the Lord."

"Aweel, sae I do. But ane's no to throw himsel ower a linn, and trust that the Lord will kep him in a blanket. And its nae muckle safer for an auld stiff man like me to gang away out to a wild remote place, where there is ae body murdering another. —What is that I hear, Bessie? Haud the lang tongue o' you, and rin to the door and see what noise that is."

Bessie ran to the door, but soon returned with her mouth wide open, and her eyes set in her head.

"It is them, Wattie! it is them! His presence be about us! What will we do?

"Them! Whaten them?"

"Why, that blackguard creature coming here leading our leddy by the hair o' the head, and yerking her wi' a stick. I am terrified out o' my wits. What will we do?"

"We'll *see* what they *say*," said Wattie, manifestly in as great terror as his wife; and by a natural impulse or as a last resource he opened the Bible, not knowing what he did, and then hurried on his spectacles; but before he got two leaves turned over, the two entered—a frightful-looking couple indeed. Merodach, with his old withered face and ferret eyes, leading the Lady of Wheelhope by the long hair, which was mixed with gray, and whose face was all bloated with wounds and bruises, and having stripes of blood on her garments.

"How's this! how's this, sirs?" said Wattie Blythe.

"Close that book and I will tell you, goodman," said Merodach.

"I can hear what you hae to say wi' the beuk open, sir," said Wattie, turning over the leaves, pretending to look for some particular passage, but apparently not knowing what he was doing. "It is a shamefu' business this, but some will hae to answer for't. My leddy, I am unco grieved to see you in sic a plight. Ye hae surely been dooms sair left to yoursel."

The lady shook her head, uttered a feeble hollow laugh, and fixed her eyes on Merodach. But such a look! It almost frightened the simple aged couple out of their senses. It was not a look of love nor of hatred exclusively, neither was it of desire or disgust, but it was a combination of them all. It was such a look as one fiend would cast on another in whose everlasting destruction he rejoiced. Wattie was glad to take his eyes from such countenances, and look into the Bible, that firm foundation of all his hopes and all his joy.

"I request that you will shut that book, sir," said the horrible creature, "or if you do not, I will shut it for you with a vengeance," and with that he seized it, and flung it against the wall. Bessie uttered a scream, and Wattie was quite paralyzed; and although he seemed disposed to run after his best friend, as he called it, the hellish looks of the brownie interposed, and glued him to his seat.

"Hear what I have to say first," said the creature, "and then pore your fill on that precious book of yours. One concern at a time is enough. I came to do you a service. Here, take this cursed, wretched woman, whom you style your lady, and deliver her up to the lawful authorities, to be restored to her husband and her place in society. She has followed one that hates her, and never said one kind word to her in his life; and though I have beat her like a dog, still she clings to me, and will not depart, so enchanted is she with the laudable purpose of cutting my throat. Tell your master and her brother that I am not to be burdened with their maniac. I have scourged, I have spurned and kicked her, afflicting her night and day, and yet from my side she will not depart. Take her; claim the reward in full, and your fortune is made; and so farewell!"

The creature went away, and the moment his back was turned, the lady fell a-screaming and struggling, like one in an agony, and, in spite of all the couple's exertions, she forced herself out of their hands, and ran after the retreating Merodach. When he saw better would not be, he turned upon her, and, by one blow with his stick, struck her down; and, not content with that, continued to maltreat her in such a manner, as to all appearance would have killed twenty ordinary persons. The poor devoted dame could do nothing but now and then utter a squeak like a half-worried cat, and writhe and grovel on the sward, till Wattie and his wife came up, and withheld her tormentor from further violence. He then bound her hands behind her back with a strong cord, and delivered her once more to the charge of the old couple, who con-

trived to hold her by that means, and take her home.

Wattie was ashamed to take her into the hall, but led her into one of the out-houses, whither he brought her brother to receive her. The man of the law was manifestly vexed at her reappearance, and scrupled not to testify his dissatisfaction; for when Wattie told him how the wretch had abused his sister, and that, had it not been for Bessie's interference and his own, the lady would have been killed outright, he said, "Why, Walter, it is a great pity that he did *not* kill her outright. What good can her life now do to her, or of what value is her life to any creature living? After one has lived to disgrace all connected with them, the sooner they are taken off the better."

The man, however, paid old Walter down his two thousand merks, a great fortune for one like him in those days; and not to dwell longer on this unnatural story, I shall only add, very shortly, that the Lady of Wheelhope soon made her escape once more, and flew, as if drawn by an irresistible charm, to her tormentor. Her friends looked no more after her; and the last time she was seen alive, it was following the uncouth creature up the water of Daur, weary, wounded, and lame, while he was all the way beating her, as a piece of excellent amusement. A few days after that, her body was found among some wild haggs, in a place called Crook-burn, by a party of the persecuted Covenanters that were in hiding there, some of the very men whom she had exerted herself to destroy, and who had been driven, like David of old, to pray for a curse and earthly punishment upon her. They buried her like a dog at the Yetts of Keppel, and rolled three huge stones upon her grave, which are lying there to this day. When they found her corpse, it was mangled and wounded in a most shocking manner, the fiendish creature having manifestly tormented her to death. He was never more seen or heard of in this kingdom, though all that country side was kept in terror for him many years afterwards; and to this day, they will tell you of THE BROWNIE OF THE BLACK HAGGS, which title he seems to have acquired after his disappearance.

This story was told to me by an old man named Adam Halliday, whose great-grandfather, Thomas Halliday, was one of those that found the body and buried it. It is many years since I heard it; but, however ridiculous it may appear, I remember it made a dreadful impression on my young mind. I never heard any story like it, save one of an old fox-hound that pursued a fox through the Grampians for a fortnight, and when at last discovered by the Duke of Athole's people, neither of them could run, but the hound was still continuing to walk after the fox, and when the latter lay down, the other lay down beside him, and looked at him steadily all the while, though unable to do him the least harm. The passion of inveterate malice seems to have influenced these two exactly alike. But, upon the whole, I can scarcely believe the tale can be true.

CHAPTER IX.

TIBBY HYSLOP'S DREAM.

In the year 1807, when on a jaunt through the valleys of Nith and Annan, I learned the following story on the spot where the incidents occurred, and even went and visited all those connected with it, so that there is no doubt with regard to its authenticity.

In a cottage called Knowe-back, on the large farm of Drumlochie, lived Tibby Hyslop, a respectable spinster, about the age of forty I thought when I saw her, but, of course, not so old when the first incidents occurred which this singular tale relates. Tibby was represented to me as being a good Christian, not in name and profession only, but in word and in deed, and I believe I may add, in heart and in soul. Nevertheless, there was something in her manner and deportment different from other people, a sort of innocent simplicity bordering on silliness, together with an instability of thought, that, in the eyes of many, approached to abstraction.

But then Tibby could repeat the book of the evangelist Luke by heart, and many favourite chapters both of the Old and New Testament; while there was scarcely one in the whole country so thoroughly acquainted with those books from beginning to end; for, though she had read a portion every day for forty years, she had never perused any other books but the Scriptures. They were her week-day books and her Sunday books, her books of amusement and books of devotion. Would to God that all our brethren and sisters of the human race—the poor and comfortless, as well as the great and wise—knew as well how to estimate these books as Tibby Hyslop did!

Tibby's history is shortly this: Her mother married a sergeant of a recruiting party. The year following he was obliged to go to Ireland, and from thence nobody knew whither; but neither he nor his wife appeared again in Scotland. On their departure, they left Tibby, then a helpless babe, with her grandmother, who lived in a hamlet somewhere about Tinwald; and with that grandmother was she brought up, and taught to read her Bible, to card, spin, and work at all kinds of country labour to which women are accustomed. Jane Hervey was her grandmother's name, a woman then scarcely past her prime, certainly within forty years of age; with whom lived her elder sister, named Douglas; and with these two were the early years of Tibby Hyslop spent, in poverty, contentment, and devotion.

At the age of eighteen, Tibby was hired at the Candlemas fair, for a great wage, to be a byre-woman to Mr. Gilbert Forret, then farmer at Drumlochie. Tibby had then acquired a great deal of her mother's dangerous bloom—dangerous, when attached to poverty and so much simplicity of heart; and when she came home and told what she had done, her mother and aunt, as she always denominated the two, marvelled much at the extravagant conditions, and began to express some fears regarding her new master's designs, till Tibby put them all to rest by the following piece of simple information:

"Dear, ye ken, ye needna be feared that Mr. Forret has ony design o' courting me, for dear, ye ken, he has a wife already, and fine bonnie bairns; and he'll never be sae daft as fa' on and court anither ane. I'se warrant he finds ane enow for him, honest man!"

"Oh, then, you are safe enough, since he is a married man, my bairn," said Jane.

The truth was, that Mr. Forret was notorious for debauching young and pretty girls, and was known in Dumfries market by the name of Gibby Gledger, from the circumstance of his being always looking slily after them. Perceiving Tibby so comely, and at the same time so simple, he hired her at nearly double wages, and moreover gave her a crown as arle-money.

Tibby went home to her service, and being a pliable, diligent creature, she was beloved by all. Her master commended her for her neatness, and whenever a quiet opportunity offered, would pat her rosy cheek, and say kind things. Tibby took all these in good part, judging them tokens of approbation of her good services, and was proud of them; and if he once or twice whispered a place and an hour of assignation, she took it for a joke, and paid no further attention to it. A whole year passed over without the worthy farmer having accomplished his cherished purpose regarding poor Tibby. He hired her to remain with him, still on the former high conditions, and moreover he said to her: "I wish your grandmother and grand-aunt would take my pleasant cottage of Knoweback. They should have it for a mere trifle—a week's shearing or so—so long as you remain in my service; and as it is likely to be a long while before you and I part, it would be better to have them near you, that you might see them often, and attend to their wants. I could give them plenty of work through the whole year, on the best conditions. What think you of this proposal, Rosy?"—a familiar name he often called her by.

"Oh, I'm sure, sir, I think ye are the kindest man that ever existed. What a blessing is it when riches open up the heart to acts of charity and benevolence! My poor auld mother and aunty will be blythe to grip at the kind offer, for they sit under a hard master yonder. The Almighty will bestow a blessing on you for this, sir!"

Tibby went immediately with the joyful news to her poor mother and aunt. Now, they had of late found themselves quite easy in their circumstances, owing to the large wages Tibby received, every farthing of which was added to the common stock; and though Tibby displayed a little more finery at the meeting-house, it was her grandmother who purchased it for her, without any consent on her part. "I am sure," said her grandmother, when Tibby told the story of her master's kindness and attention, "I am sure it was the kindest intervention o' Providence that ever happened to poor things afore, when ye fell in wi' that kind worthy man, i' the mids o' a great hiring market, where ye might just as easily hae met wi' a knave, or a niggard, as wi' this man o' siccan charity an' mercy."

> "'Ay, the wulcat maun hae his collop,
> And the raven maun hae his part;
> And the tod will creep through the heather,
> For the bonny moor-hen's heart,'

said old Douglas Hervey, poking the fire all the while wi' the tongs, and speaking only as if speaking to herself, "Hech-wow, and lack-a-day! but the times are altered sair since I first saw the sun! Poor, poor Religion, wae's me for her! She was first driven out o' the lord's castle into the baron's ha', out o' the baron's ha' into the farmer's bien dwelling, and at last out o' that into the poor cauld-rife shiel, where there's nae ither comfort but what she brings wi' her."

"What has set ye onna thae reflections the day, aunty?" cried Tibby aloud at her ear, for she was half deaf, and had so many flannel mutches on, besides a blue napkin, which she always wore over them all, that her deafness was nearly completed altogether.

"Oogh! what's the lassie saying?" said she, after listening a good while, till the sounds penetrated to the interior of her ear, "what's the young light-head saying about the defections o' the day! what kens she about them? oogh! Let me see your face, dame, and find your hand, for I hae neither seen the ane, nor felt the tither, this lang and mony a day." Then taking her grandniece by the hand, and looking close into her face through the spectacles, she added, "Ay, it is a weel-faured sonsy face, very like the mother's that bore ye; and hers was as like her mother's, and there was never as muckle common sense among a' the three as to keep a brock out o' the kail-yard. Ye hae an unco good master, I hear—oogh! I'm glad to hear't—hoh-oh-oh-oh!—verra glad. I hope it will lang continue, this kindness. Poor Tibby! as lang as the heart disna gang wrang we maun excuse the head, for it'll never ance gang right. I hope they were baith made for a better warld, for nane o' them were made for this."

When she got this length, she sat hastily down, and began her daily and hourly task of carding wool for her sister's spinning, abstracting herself from all external considerations.

"I think aunty's unco parabolical the day," said Tibby to her grandmother; what make's her that gate?"

"O dear hinny, she's aye that gate now. She speaks to naebody but hersel," said Jane. "But —lownly be it spoken—I think whiles there's ane speaks till her again that my een canna see."

"The angels often conversed wi' good folks langsyne. I ken o' naething that can hinder them to do sae still, if they're sae disposed," said Tibby; and so the dialogue closed for the present.

Mr. Forret sent his carts at the term, and removed the old people to the cottage of Knoweback, free of all charge, like a gentleman as he was; and things went on exceedingly well. Tibby had a sincere regard for her master, and as he continued to speak to her, when alone, in a kind and playful manner, she had several times ventured to broach religion to him, trying to discover the state of his soul. Then he would shake his head, and look demure in mockery, and repeat some grave, becoming words. Poor Tibby thought he *was* a righteous man.

But in a short time his purposes were divulged in such a manner as to be no more equivocal. That morning immediately preceding the development of this long-cherished atrocity, Jane Hervey was awaked at an early hour by the following unintelligible dialogue in her elder sister's bed.

"Have ye seen the news o' the day, kerlin?"

"Oogh?"

"Have ye seen the news o' the day?"

"Ay, that I hae, on a braid open book, without clasp or seal. Whether will you or the deil win?"

"That depends on the citadel. If it stand out, a' the powers o' hell winna shake the fortress, nor sap a stane o' its foundation."

"Ah! the fortress is a good ane, and a sound ane; but the poor head captain! ye ken what a sweet-lipped, turnip-headed brosey he is. O, lack-a-day, my poor Tibby Hyslop! my innocent, kind, thowless Tibby Hyslop!"

Jane was frightened at hearing such a colloquy, but particularly at that part of it where her darling child was mentioned. She sprung from her own bed to that of her sister, and cried in her ear with a loud voice, "Sister, sister Douglas, what is that you are saying about our dear bairn?"

"Oogh? I was saying naething about your bairn. She lies in great jeopardy yonder, but nane as yet. Gang away to your bed—wow, but I was sound asleep."

"There's naebody can make aught out o' her but nonsense," said Jane.

After the two had risen from their scanty breakfast, which Douglas had blessed with more fervency than ordinary, she could not settle at her carding, but always stopped short, and began mumbling and speaking to herself. At length, after a long pause, she looked over her shoulder, and said, "Jeanie, warna ye speaking o' ganging ower to see our bairn the day? Haste thee and gang away, then; and stay nouther to put on clean bussing, kirtle, nor barrie, else ye may be an antrin minute or twa ower lang."

Jane made no reply, but, drawing the skirt of her gown ower her shoulders, she set out for Drumlochie, a distance of nearly a mile; and as she went by the corner of the byre, she imagined she heard her grandchild's voice, in great passion or distress, and ran straight into the byre, crying, "What's the matter wi' you, Tibby? what ails you, my bairn?" but receiving no answer, she thought the voice must have been somewhere without, and slid quietly away, looking everywhere, and at length went down to the kitchen.

Mr. Forret, *alias* Gledging Gibby, had borne the brunt of incensed kirk-sessions before that time, and also the unlicensed tongues of mothers, roused into vehemence by the degradation of beloved daughters, but never in his life did he bear such a rebuke as he did that day from the tongue of one he had always viewed as a mere simpleton. It was a lesson—a warning of the most sublime and terrible description, couched in the pure and emphatic language of Scripture. Gibby cared not a doit for these things, but found himself foiled, and exposed to his family and the whole world, if this fool chose to do it. He was, therefore, glad to act a part of deep hypocrisy, pretending the sincerest contrition, regretting with tears his momentary derangement. Poor Tibby readily believed and forgave him; and thinking it hard to ruin a repentant sinner in his worldly and family concerns, she promised never to divulge what had passed, and he, knowing well the value of her word, was glad at having so escaped.

Jane found her grand-daughter apparently much disturbed, but having asked if she was well enough, and receiving an answer in the affirmative, she was satisfied, and only added, "Your crazed aunty wad gar me believe ye war in some jeopardy, and hurried me away to see you, without giving me leave to change a steek." One may easily conceive Tibby's astonishment at hearing this, considering the moment at which her grandmother arrived. As soon as the latter was gone, she kneeled before her Maker, and poured out her soul in grateful thanksgiving for her deliverance, and, in particular, for such a manifest interference of some superior intelligence in her behalf.

"How did you find our poor bairn the day, titty Jean? Did she no tell you onything?" asked Douglas, on Jane's return.

"She tauld me naething, but said she was weel."

"She's ae fool, and ye're anither! If I had been her, I wad hae blazed it baith to kirk and council —to his wife's ear and to his minister's! She's very weel, is she? Oogh! Ay. Hoh—oh—oh —oh! silly woman—silly woman—Hoh—oh— oh!"

In a few weeks Mr. Forret's behaviour to his simple dairymaid altered very materially. He called

her no more by the endearing name of Rosy; poor idiot was oftener the term; and finding he was now safe from accusation, his malevolence towards her had scarcely any bounds. She made out her term with difficulty, but he refused to pay the stipulated wage on pretence of her incapacity; and as she had by that time profited well at his hand, she took what he offered, thanked him, and said no more about it. She was no more hired as a servant, but having at the first taken a long lease of the cottage, she continued, from year to year, working on the farm by the day, at a very scanty allowance. Old Douglas in a few years grew incapable of any work, through frailty of person, being constantly confined to bed, though in mind as energetic and mysterious as ever.

Jane wrought long, till at length a severe illness in 1799 rendered her unfit to do anything further than occasionally knit a stocking, and Tibby's handiwork was all that herself and the two old women had to depend upon. They had brought her up with care and kindness amid the most pinching poverty, and now, indeed, her filial affection was severely put to the proof; but it was genuine, and knew no bounds. Night and day she toiled for her aged and feeble relatives, and a murmur or complaint never was heard from her lips. Many a blessing was bestowed on her as they raised their palsied heads to partake of her hard-earned pittance; and many a fervent prayer was poured out, when no mortal heard it.

Times grew harder and harder. Thousands yet living remember what a period that was for the poor, while meal, for seasons, was from four to five shillings a stone, and even sometimes as high as seven. Tibby grew fairly incapable of supporting herself and her aged friends. She stinted herself for their sakes, and that made her still more incapable; yet often with tears in her eyes did she feed these frail beings, her heart like to melt because she had no more to give them. There are no poor-rates in that country. Knoweback is quite retired—nobody went near it, and Tibby complained to none, but wrought on, night and day, in sorrow and anxiety, but still with a humble and thankful heart.

In this great strait, Mrs. Forret was the first who began, unsolicited, to take compassion on the destitute group. She could not conceive how they existed on the poor creature's earnings. So she went privately to see them, and when she saw their wretched state, and heard their blessings on their dear child, her heart was moved to pity, and she determined to assist them in secret, for her husband was such a churl that she durst not venture to do it publicly. Accordingly, whenever she had an opportunity, she made Tibby come into the kitchen, and get a meal for herself; and often the considerate lady slid a small loaf, or a little tea and sugar, into her lap, for the two aged invalids—for gentle woman is always the first to pity, and the first to relieve.

Poor Tibby! how her heart expanded with gratitude on receiving these little presents! for her love for the two old dependent creatures was of so pure and sacred a sort as scarcely to retain in it anything of the common feelings of humanity. There was no selfish principle there—they were to her as a part of her own nature.

Tibby never went into the kitchen unless her mistress desired her, or sent her word by some of the other day labourers to come in as she went home. One evening, having got word in this last way, she went in, and the lady of the house, with her own hand, presented her with a little bowl of beat potatoes and some milk. This was all, and one would have thought it was an aliment so humble and plain that scarcely any person would have grudged it to a hungry dog. It so happened, however, that as Tibby was sitting behind backs enjoying the meal, Mr. Forret chanced to come into the kitchen to give some orders, and perceiving Tibby so comfortably engaged, he, without speaking a word, seized her by the neck with one hand, and by the shoulder with the other, and hurrying her out at the back-door into the yard, flung her with all his might on a dunghill. "Wha bade you come into my house and eat up the meat that was made for others!" cried he, in a demoniac voice, choking with rage; and then he swore a terrible oath, which I do not choose to set down, that "if he found her again at such employment, he would cut her throat, and fling her to the dogs."

Poor Tibby was astounded beyond the power of utterance, or even of rising from the place where he had thrown her down, until lifted by two of the maid-servants, who tried to comfort her as they supported her part of the way home; and bitterly did they blame their master, saying it would have been a shame to any one who had the feelings of a man to do such an act; but as for their master, he scarcely had the feelings of a beast. Tibby never opened her mouth, neither to blame nor complain, but went on her way crying till her heart was like to break.

She had no supper for the old famishing pair that night. They had tasted nothing from the time that she left them in the morning, and as she had accounted herself sure of receiving something from Mrs. Forret that night, she had not asked her day's wages from the grieve, glad to let a day run up now and then, when able to procure a meal in any other honest way. She had nothing to give them that night, so what could she do? She was obliged, with a sore heart, to kiss them and tell them so; and then, as was her custom, she said a prayer over their couch, and laid herself down to sleep, drowned in tears.

She had never so much as mentioned Mr. Forret's name, either to her grandmother or grand-aunt that night, or by the least insinuation given them to understand that he had used her ill; but no sooner were they composed to rest, and all the cottage quiet, than old Douglas began abusing him with great

vehemence. Tibby, to her astonishment, heard some of his deeds spoken of with great familiarity, which she was sure never had been whispered to the ear of flesh. But what shocked her most of all, was the following terrible prognostication, which she heard repeated three several times: "Na, na, I'll no see it, for I'll never see aught earthly again beyond the wa's o' this cottage; but Tibby will live to see it—ay, ay, she'll see it." Then a different voice asked, "What will *she* see, kerlin?" "She'll see the craws picking his banes at the back o' the dyke."

Tibby's heart grew cold within her when she heard this terrible announcement, because, for many years bygone, she had been convinced, from sensible demonstration, that old Douglas Hervey had commerce with some superior intelligence; and after she had heard the above sentence repeated again and again, she shut her ears, that she might hear no more—committed herself once more to the hands of a watchful Creator, and fell into a troubled sleep.

The elemental spirits that weave the shadowy tapestry of dreams, were busy at their aerial looms that night in the cottage of Knoweback, bodying forth the destinies of men and women in brilliant and quick succession. One only of these delineations I shall here set down, precisely as it was related to me, by my friend, the worthy clergyman of that parish, to whom Tibby told it the very next day. There is no doubt that her grand-aunt's disjointed prophecy formed the groundwork of the picture; but be that as it may, this was her dream, and it was for the sake of telling it, and tracing it to its fulfilment, that I begin this story:

Tibby Hyslop dreamed, that on a certain spot which she had never seen before between a stone-dyke and the verge of a woody precipice, a little, sequestered, inaccessible corner, of a triangular shape, or, as she called it to the minister, "a three neukit crook o' the linn," she saw Mr. Forret lying without his hat, with his throat slightly wounded, and blood running from it; but he neither appeared to be dead, nor yet dying, but in excellent spirits. He was clothed in a fine new black suit, had full boots on, which appeared likewise to be new, and gilt spurs. A great number of rooks and hooded crows were making free with his person—some picking out his eyes, some his tongue, and some tearing out his bowels. In place of being distressed by their voracity, he appeared much delighted, encouraging them all that he could, and there was perfectly good understanding between the parties. In the midst of this horrible feast, a large raven dashed down from a dark cloud, and driving away all the meaner birds, fell a-feasting himself—opened the breast of his victim, who was still alive, and encouraging him on; and after preying on his vitals for some time, at last picked out his heart, and devoured it; and then the mangled wretch, after writhing for a short time in convulsive agonies, groaned his last.

This was precisely Tibby's dream as it was told to me, first by my friend, Mr. Cunningham of Dalswinton, and afterwards by the clergyman to whom she herself had related it next day. But there was something in it not so distinctly defined, for though the birds which she saw devouring her master, were rooks, blood-crows, and a raven, still each individual of the number had a likeness, by itself, distinguishing it from all the rest; a certain character, as it were, to support; and these particular likenesses were so engraven on the dreamer's mind, that she never forgot them, and she could not help looking for them both among "birds and bodies," as she expressed it, but never could distinguish any of them again; and the dream, like many other distempered visions, was forgotten, or only remembered now and then with a certain tremor of antecedent knowledge.

Days and seasons passed over, and with them the changes incident to humanity. The virtuous and indefatigable Tibby Hyslop was assisted by the benevolent, who had heard of her exertions and patient sufferings; and the venerable Douglas Hervey had gone in peace to the house appointed for all living, when one evening in June, John Jardine, the cooper, chanced to come to Knoweback, in the course of his girding and hooping peregrinations. John was a living and walking chronicle of the events of the day, all the way from the head of Glen Breck to the Bridge of Stony-Lee. He knew every man, and every man's affairs — every woman and every woman's failings; and his intelligence was not like that of many others, for it was generally to be depended on. How he got his information so correctly was a mystery to many, but whatever John the cooper told as a fact was never disputed, and any woman, at least, might have ventured to tell it over again.

"These are hard times for poor folks, Tibby. How are you and auld granny coming on?"

"Just fechtin on as we hae done for mony a year. She is aye contentit, poor body, and thankfu', whether I hae little to gie her, or muckle. This life's naething but a fecht, Johnnie, frae beginning to end."

"It's a' true ye say, Tibby," said the cooper, interrupting her, for he was afraid she was about to enter upon religious topics, a species of conversation that did not accord with John's talents or dispositions; "it's a' true ye say, Tibby; but your master will soon be sic a rich man now, that we'll a' be made up, and you among the lave will be made a lady."

"If he get his riches honestly, and the blessing o' the Almighty wi' them, John, I shall rejoice in his prosperity; but neither me nor ony ither poor body will ever be muckle the better o' them. What way is he gaun to get siccan great riches? If a' be true that I hear, he is gaun to the wrang part to seek them."

"Aha, lass, that's a' that ye ken about it. Did ye no hear that he had won the law-plea on his laird,

whilk has been afore the lords for mair than seven years? Did ye no hear that he had won ten pleas afore the courts o' Dumfries, a' rising out o' ane anither, like ash girderings out o' ae root, and that he's to get, on the haill, about twenty thousand punds worth o' damages."

"That's an unco sight o' siller, John. How muckle is that?"

"Aha, lass, ye hae fixed me now; but they say it will come to as muckle gowd as six men can carry on their backs. And we're a' to get twenties, and thirties, and forties o' punds for bribes, to gar us gie faithfu' and true evidence at the great concluding trial afore the lords; and you are to be bribit amang the rest, to gar ye tell the haill truth, and nothing but the truth."

"There needs nae waste o' siller to gar me do that. But, Johnnie, I wad like to ken whether that mode o' taking oaths—solemn and saucred oaths, about the miserable trash o' this warld, be according to the tenor o' Gospel revelation, and the third o' the Commands?"

"Aha, lass, ye *hae* fixed me now! That's rather a kittle point, but I believe it is a' true that ye say. However, ye'll get the offer of a great bribe in a few days; and take ye my advice, Tibby: Get haud o' the bribe aforehand, for if ye lippen to your master's promises, you will never finger a bodle after the job's done."

"I'm but a poor simple body, Johnnie, and canna manage ony siccan things. But I shall need nae fee to gar me tell the truth, and I winna tell an untruth for a' my master's estate, and his sax backfu's o' gowd into the bargain. If the sin o' the soul, Johnnie——"

"Ay, ay, that's very true, Tibby, very true, indeed, about the sin o' the soul! But as ye were saying about being a simple body, what wad ye think if I were to cast up that day Gledging Gibby came here to gie you your lesson. I could maybe help you on a wee bit. What wad ye gie me if I did?"

"Alack, I hae naething to gie you but my blessing; but I shall pray for the blessing o' God on ye."

"Ay, ay, as ye say. I daresay there might be waur things. But could ye think o' naething else to gie a body wha likes as weel to be paid aff-hand as to gie credit? That's the very thing I'm cautioning you against."

"I dinna expect ony siller frae that fountain-head, Johnnie. It is a dry ane to the puir and the needy, and an unco sma' matter wad gar me make over my rights to a pose that I hae neither faith nor hope in. But ye're kenn'd for an auld-farrant man; if ye can bring a little honestly my way, I sall gie you the half o't; for weel I ken it will never come by ony art or shift o' mine."

"Ay, ay, that's spoken like a sensible and reasonable woman, Tibby Hyslop, as ye are and hae always been. But think you that nae way could be contrived"—and here the cooper gave two winks with his left eye—"by the whilk ye could gie me it a', and yet no rob yoursel of a farthing?"

"Na, na, Johnnie Jardine, that's clean aboon my comprehension: but ye're a cunning draughty man, and I leave the haill matter to your guidance."

"Very weel, Tibby, very weel. I'll try to ca' a gayan substantial gird round your success, if I can hit the width o' the chance and the girth o' the gear. Gude day to you the day; and think about the plan o' equal-aqual that I spake o'."

Old maids are in general very easily courted, and very apt to take a hint. I have, indeed, known a great many instances in which they took hints very seriously, before ever they were given. Not so with Tibby Hyslop. So heavy a charge had lain upon her the greater part of her life, that she had never turned her thoughts to any earthly thing beside, and she knew no more what the cooper aimed at, than if the words had not been spoken. When he went away, her grandmother called her to the bedside, and asked if the cooper had gone away. Tibby answered in the affirmative; on which granny said, "What has he been havering about sae lang the day? I thought I heard him courting ye."

"Courting me! Dear granny, he was courting nane o' me; he was telling me how Mr. Forret had won as muckle siller at the law as sax men can carry on their backs, and how we are a' to get a part of it."

"Dinna believe him, hinny; the man that can win siller at the law will lose it naewhere. But Tibby, I heard the cooper courting you, and I thought I heard you gie him your consent to manage the matter as he likit. Now you hae been a great blessing to me. I thought you sent to me in wrath, as a punishment of my sins, but I have found that you were indeed sent to me in love and in kindness. You have been the sole support of my old age, and of hers wha is now in the grave, and it is natural that I should like to see you put up afore I leave you. But, Tibby Hyslop, John Jardine is not the man to lead a Christian life with. He has nae mair religion than the beasts that perish—he shuns it as a body would do a loathsome or poisonous draught. And besides, it is weel kenn'd how sair he neglected his first wife. Hae naething to do wi' him, my dear bairn, but rather live as you are. There is neither sin nor shame in being unwedded; but there may be baith in joining yourself to an unbeliever."

Tibby was somewhat astonished at this piece of information. She had not conceived that the cooper meant anything in the way of courtship; but found that she rather thought the better of him for what it appeared he had done. Accordingly she made no promises to her grandmother, but only remarked that "it was a pity no to gie the cooper a chance o' conversion, honest man."

The cooper kept watch about Drumlochie and the hinds' houses, and easily found out all the farmer's movements, and even the exact remuneration he could be prevailed on to give to such as were pleased

to remember according to his wishes. Indeed, it was believed that the most part of the hinds and labouring people recollected nothing of the matter in dispute further than he was pleased to inform them, and that in fact they gave evidence to the best of their knowledge or remembrance, although that evidence might be decidedly wrong.

One day Gibby took his gun and went out towards Knoweback. The cooper also, guessing what his purpose was, went thither by a circuitous route, in order to come in as it were by chance. Ere he arrived, Mr. Forret had begun his queries and instructions to Tibby. The two could not agree by any means; Tibby either could not recollect the yearly crops on each field on the farm of Drumlochie, or recollected wrong. At length, when the calculations were at the keenest, the cooper came in, and at every turn he took Mr. Forret's side, with the most strenuous asseverations, abusing Tibby for her stupidity and want of recollection.

"Hear me speak, Johnnie Jardine, afore ye condemn me aff-loof. Mr. Forret says that the Crooked Holm was pease in the '96, and corn in the '97. I say it was corn baith the years. How do ye say about that?"

"Mr. Forret's right—perfectly right. It grew pease in the '96, and aits, good Angus aits, in the '97. Poor gowk! dinna ye think that he has a' thae things merkit down in black and white? and what good could it do to him to mislead you? Depend on't, he is right there."

"Could ye tak your oath on that, Johnnie Jardine?"

"Ay, this minute—sax times repeated if it were necessary."

"Then I yield—I am but a poor silly woman, liable to mony errors and shortcomings—I maun be wrang, and I yield that it is sae. But I am sure, John, you cannot but remember this sae short while syne, for ye shure wi' us that har'st—Was the lang field niest Robie Johnston's farm growing corn in the dear year, or no? I say it was."

"It was the next year, Tibby," said Mr. Forret; "you are confounding one year with another again; and I see what is the reason. It was oats in '99, grass in 1800, and oats again in 1801; now you never remember any of the intermediate years, but only those that you shore on these fields. I cannot be mistaken in a rule I never break."

The cooper had now got his cue. He perceived that the plea ultimately depended on proof relating to the proper cropping of the land throughout the lease: and he supported the farmer so strenuously, that Tibby, in her simplicity, fairly yielded, although not convinced; but the cooper assured the farmer that he would put all to rights, provided she received a handsome acknowledgment; for there was not the least doubt that Mr. Forret was right in every particular.

This speech of the cooper's gratified the farmer exceedingly, as his whole fortune now depended upon the evidence to be elicited in the court at Dumfries, on a day that was fast approaching, and he was willing to give anything to secure the evidence on his side; so he made a long set speech to Tibby, telling her how necessary it was that she should adhere strictly to the truth—that, as it would be an awful thing to make oath to that which was false, he had merely paid her that visit to instruct her remembrance a little in that which was the truth, it being impossible, on account of his jottings, that he could be mistaken; and finally it was settled, that for thus telling the truth, and nothing but the truth, Tibby Hyslop, a most deserving woman, was to receive a present of £15, as wages for time bygone. This was all managed in a very sly manner by the cooper, who assured Forret that all should go right, as far as related to Tibby Hyslop and himself.

The day of the trial arrived, and counsel attended from Edinburgh for both parties, to take full evidence before the two circuit lords and sheriff. The evidence was said to have been unsatisfactory to the judges, but upon the whole in Mr. Forret's favour. The cooper's was decidedly so, and the farmer's counsel were crowing and bustling immoderately, when at length Tibby Hyslop was called to the witnesses' box. At the first sight of her master's counsel, and the Dumfries writers and notaries that were hanging about him, Tibby was struck dumb with amazement, and almost bereaved of sense. She at once recognized them all and severally, as the birds that she saw in her dream devouring her master, and picking the flesh from his bones; while the great lawyer from Edinburgh was, in feature, eye, and beak, the identical raven which at last devoured his vitals and heart.

This singular coincidence brought reminiscences of such a nature over her spirit, that, on the first questions being put, she could not answer a word. She knew from thenceforward that her master was a ruined man, and her heart failed on thinking of her kind mistress and his family. The counsel then went, and whispering Mr. Forret, inquired what sort of a woman she was, and if her evidence was likely to be of any avail. As the cooper had behaved in a very satisfactory way, and had answered for Tibby, the farmer was intent on not losing her evidence, and answered his counsel that she was a worthy honest woman, who would not swear to a lie for the king's dominions, and that her evidence was of much consequence. This intelligence the lawyer announced to the bench with great pomposity, and the witness was allowed a little time to recover her spirits.

Isabella Hyslop, spinster, was again called, answered to her name, and took the oath distinctly and without hesitation, until the official querist came to the usual question, "Now, has any one instructed you what to say, or what you are to answer?" when Tibby replied with a steady coun-

tenance, "Nobody, except my master." The counsel and client stared at one another, while the court could hardly maintain their gravity of deportment. The querist went on—

"What? Do you say your master instructed you what to say?"

"Yes."

"And did he give, or promise to give you, any reward for what you were to say?"

"Yes."

"How much did he give, or promise you, for answering as he directed you?"

"He gave me fifteen pound-notes."

Here Mr. Forret and his counsel, losing all patience at seeing the case take this unexpected turn, interrupted the proceedings, the latter addressing the judges with vehemence to the following purport:—

"My lords, in my client's name, and in the names of justice and reason, I protest against proceeding with this woman's evidence, it being manifest that she is talking through a total derangement of intellect. At first she is dumb, and cannot answer nor speak a word, and now she is answering in total disregard of all truth and propriety. I appeal to your lordships if such a farrago as this can be at all inferential or relevant?"

"Sir, it was but the other minute," said the junior judge, "that you announced to us with great importance, that this woman was a person noted for honesty and worth, and one who would not tell a lie for the king's dominions. Why not then hear her evidence to the end? For my own part, I perceive no tokens of discrepancy in it, but rather a scrupulous conscientiousness. Of that, however, we shall be better able to judge when we have heard her out. I conceive that, for the sake of both parties, this woman ought to be strictly examined."

"Proceed with the evidence, Mr. Wood," said the senior lord, bowing to his assistant.

Tibby was reminded that she was on her great oath, and examined over again; but she adhered strictly to her former answers.

"Can you repeat anything to the court that he desired you to say?"

"Yes; he desired me, over and over again, to tell the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

"And, in order that you should do this, he paid you down fifteen pounds sterling?"

"Yes."

"This is a very singular transaction: I cannot perceive the meaning of it. You certainly must be sensible that you made an advantageous bargain?"

"Yes."

"But you depone that he charged you to tell only the truth?"

"Yes, he did, and before witnesses, too."

Here Mr. Forret's counsel began to crow amain, as if the victory had been his own; but the junior judge again took him short by saying, "Have patience, sir. My good woman, I esteem your principles and plain simplicity very highly. We want only to ascertain the truth, and you say your master charged you to tell that only. Tell me this, then—did he not inform you what the truth was?"

"Yes. It was for that purpose he came over to see me, to help my memory to what was the truth, for fear I should hae sworn wrang; which wad hae been a great sin, ye ken."

"Yes, it would so. I thought that would be the way. You may now proceed with your questions regularly, Mr. Wood."

"Are you quite conscious, now, that those things he brought to your remembrance were actually the truth?"

"No."

"Are you conscious they were *not* the truth?"

"Yes; at least some of them, I am sure, were not."

"Please to condescend on one instance."

"He says he has it markit in his buik, that the Crookit Houm, that lies at the back o' the wood, ye ken, grew pease in the ninety-sax, and corn in the ninety-se'en; now, it is unco queer that he should hae settin't down wrang, for the Houm was really and truly aits baith the years."

"It is a long time since: perhaps your memory may be at fault."

"If my master had not chanced to mention it, I could not have been sure, but he set me a-calculating and comparing; and my mother and me have been consulting about it, and have fairly settled it."

"And are you absolutely positive it was oats both years?"

"Yes."

"Can you mention any circumstance on which you rest your conclusions?"

"Yes; there came a great wind ae Sabbath day in the ninety-sax, and that raised the shearer's wages, at Dumfries, to three shillings the day. We began to the Crookit Houm on a Monanday's morning, at three shillings a-day, and that very day twalmonth we began till't again at tenpence. We had a gude deal o' speaking about it, and I said to John Edie, 'What need we grumble? I made nae muckle at shearing the last year that its no a' done yet.' And he said, 'Ah, Tibby, Tibby, but wha can hain like you.'"

"Were there any others that you think your master had marked down wrong?"

"There was ane, at ony rate—the lang field neist Robie Johnston's march: he says it was clover in the drouthy dear year, and aits the neist; but that's a year I canna forget; it was aits baith years. I lost a week's shearing on it the first year, waiting on my aunty, and the neist year she was dead: and I shore the lang field neist Robie Johnston's wi' her sickle-heuk, and black ribbons on my mutch."

The whole of Tibby's evidence went against Mr. Forret's interest most conclusively, and the judges at last dismissed her, with high compliments on her

truth and integrity. The cause was again remitted to the Court of Session for revisal after this evidence taken; and the word spread over all the country that Mr. Forret had won. Tibby never contradicted this, nor disputed it; but she was thoroughly convinced, that in place of winning, he would be a ruined man.

About a month after the examination at Dumfries he received a letter from his agents in Edinburgh, buoying him up with hopes of great and instant success, and urging the utility of his presence in town at the final decision of the cause on which all the minor ones rested. Accordingly he equipped himself, and rode into Dumfries in the evening, to be ready to proceed by the mail the following morning, saying to his wife, as he went away, that he would send home his mare with the carrier, and that as he could not possibly name the day on which he would be home, she was to give herself no uneasiness. The mare was returned the following night, and put up in her own stall, nobody knew by whom; but servants are such sleepy, careless fellows, that few regarded the circumstance. This was on a Tuesday night. A whole week passed over, and still Mrs. Forret received no news of her husband, which kept her very uneasy, as their whole fortune, being, and subsistence now depended on the issue of this great lawsuit, and she suspected that the case still continued dubious, or was found to be going against him.

A more unhappy result followed than that she anticipated. On the arrival of the Edinburgh papers next week, the whole case, so important to farmers, was detailed; and it was there stated, that the great farmer and improver, Mr. Forret of Drumlochie, had not only forfeited his whole fortune by improper husbandry and manifest breaches of the conditions on which he held his lease, but that criminal letters had been issued against him for attempts to pervert justice, and rewards offered for his detention or seizure. This was terrible news for the family at Drumlochie; but there were still sanguine hopes entertained that the circumstances were mis-stated, or, if the worst should prove true, that perhaps the husband and father might make his escape; and as there was no word from him day after day, this latter sentiment began to be cherished by the whole family as their only remaining and forlorn hope.

But one day, as poor Tibby Hyslop was going over to the Cat Linn, to gather a burden of sticks for firewood, she was surprised, on looking over the dike, to see a great body of crows collected, all of which were so intent on their prey that they seemed scarcely to regard her presence as a sufficient cause for their desisting; she waved her burden-rope at them over the dike, but they refused to move. Her heart nearly failed her, for she remembered of having before seen the same spectacle, with some fearful concomitants. But pure and unfeigned religion, the first principle of which teaches a firm reliance on divine protection, can give courage to the weakest of human beings. Tibby climbed over the dike, drove the vermin away, and there lay the corpse of her late unfortunate master, woefully mangled by these voracious birds of prey. He had bled himself to death in the jugular vein, was lying without the hat, and clothed in a fine new black suit of clothes, top-boots, which appeared likewise to be new, and gilt-spurs; and the place where he lay was a little three-cornered sequestered spot, between the dike and the precipice, and inaccessible by any other way than through the field. It was a spot that Tibby had never seen before.

A letter was found in Mr. Forret's pocket, which had blasted all his hopes, and driven him to utter distraction; he had received it at Dumfries, returned home, and put up his mare carefully in the stable, but not having courage to face his ruined family, he had hurried to that sequestered spot, and perpetrated the deed of self-destruction.

The only thing more I have to add is, that the lord-president, having made the remark that he paid more regard to that poor woman, Isabella Hyslop's evidence, than to all the rest elicited at Dumfries, the gainers of the great plea became sensible that it was principally in consequence of her candour and invincible veracity that they were successful, and sent her a present of twenty pounds. She was living comfortably at Knoweback when I saw her, a contented and happy old maiden.

CHAPTER X.

MARY BURNET.

The following incidents are related as having occurred at a shepherd's house, not a hundred miles from St. Mary's Loch; but, as the descendants of one of the families still reside in the vicinity, I deem it requisite to use names which cannot be recognized, save by those who have heard the story.

John Allanson, the farmer's son of Inverlawn, was a handsome, roving, and incautious young man, enthusiastic, amorous, and fond of adventure, and one who could hardly be said to fear the face of either man, woman, or spirit. Among other love adventures, he fell a-courting Mary Burnet, of Kirkstyle, a most beautiful and innocent maiden, and one who had been bred up in rural simplicity. She loved him, but yet she was afraid of him; and though she had no objection to meeting with him among others, yet she carefully avoided meeting him alone, though often and earnestly urged to it. One day, the young man, finding an opportunity, at Our Lady's Chapel after mass, urged his suit for a private meeting so ardently, and with so many vows of love and sacred esteem, that Mary was so far won as to promise that *perhaps* she would come and meet him.

The trysting place was a little green sequestered spot, on the very verge of the lake, well known to many an angler, and to none better than the writer of this old tale; and the hour appointed, the time when the King's Elwand (now foolishly termed the Belt of Orion) set his first golden knob above the hill. Allanson came too early; and he watched the sky with such eagerness and devotion, that he thought every little star that arose in the south-east the top knob of the King's Elwand. At last the Elwand did arise in good earnest, and then the youth, with a heart palpitating with agitation, had nothing for it but to watch the heathery brow by which bonny Mary Burnet was to descend. No Mary Burnet made her appearance, even although the King's Elwand had now measured its own equivocal length five or six times up the lift.

Young Allanson now felt all the most poignant miseries of disappointment; and, as the story goes, uttered in his heart an unhallowed wish—he wished that some witch or fairy would influence his Mary to come to him in spite of her maidenly scruples. This wish was thrice repeated with all the energy of disappointed love. It was thrice repeated, and no more, when, behold, Mary appeared on the brae, with wild and eccentric motions, speeding to the appointed place. Allanson's excitement seems to have been more than he was able to bear, as he instantly became delirious with joy, and always professed that he could remember nothing of their first meeting, save that Mary remained silent, and spoke not a word, either good or bad. In a short time she fell a-sobbing and weeping, refusing to be comforted, and then, uttering a piercing shriek, sprung up, and ran from him with amazing speed.

At this part of the loch, which, as I said, is well known to many, the shore is overhung by a precipitous cliff, of no great height, but still inaccessible, either from above or below. Save in a great drought, the water comes to within a yard of the bottom of this cliff, and the intermediate space is filled with rough unshapely pieces of rock fallen from above. Along this narrow and rude space, hardly passable by the angler at noon, did Mary bound with the swiftness of a kid, although surrounded with darkness. Her lover, pursuing with all his energy, called out, "Mary! Mary! my dear Mary, stop and speak with me. I'll conduct you home, or anywhere you please, but do not run from me. Stop, my dearest Mary—stop!"

Mary would not stop; but ran on, till, coming to a little cliff that jutted into the lake, round which there was no passage, and, perceiving that her lover would there overtake her, she uttered another shriek, and plunged into the lake. The loud sound of her fall into the still water rung in the young man's ears like the knell of death; and if before he was crazed with love, he was now as much so with despair. He saw her floating lightly away from the shore towards the deepest part of the loch; but, in a short time, she began to sink, and gradually disappeared, without uttering a throb or a cry. A good while previous to this, Allanson had flung off his bonnet, shoes, and coat, and plunged in. He swam to the place where Mary disappeared; but there was neither boil nor gurgle on the water, nor even a bell of departing breath, to mark the place where his beloved had sunk. Being strangely impressed, at that trying moment, with a determination to live or die with her, he tried to dive, in hopes either to bring her up or to die in her arms; and he thought of their being so found on the shore of the lake, with a melancholy satisfaction; but by no effort of his could he reach the bottom, nor knew he what distance he was still from it. With an exhausted frame, and a despairing heart, he was obliged again to seek the shore, and, dripping wet as he was, and half naked, he ran to her father's house with the woeful tidings. Everything there was quiet. The old shepherd's family, of whom Mary was the youngest, and sole daughter, were all sunk in silent repose; and Oh how the distracted lover wept at the thoughts of wakening them to hear the doleful tidings! But waken them he must; so, going to the little window close by the goodman's bed, he called, in a melancholy tone, "Andrew! Andrew Burnet, are you waking!"

"Troth, man, I think I be; or, at least, I'm half-and-half. What hast thou to say to auld Andrew Burnet at this time o' night?"

"Are you waking, I say?"

"Gudewife, am I waking? Because if I be, tell that stravaiger sae. He'll maybe tak your word for it, for mine he winna tak."

"O Andrew, none of your humour to-night: I bring you tidings the most woeful, the most dismal, the most heart-rending, that ever were brought to an honest man's door."

"To his window, you mean," cried Andrew, bolting out of bed and proceeding to the door. "Gude sauff us, man, come in, whaever you be, and tell us your tidings face to face: and then we'll can better judge of the truth of them. If they be in concord wi' your voice, they are melancholy indeed. Have the reavers come, and are our kye driven?"

"Oh, alas! waur than that—a thousand times waur than that! Your daughter, your dear beloved and only daughter Mary—"

"What of Mary?" cried the goodman. "What of Mary?" cried her mother, shuddering and groaning with terror: and at the same time she kindled a light.

The sight of their neighbour, half-naked, and dripping with wet, and madness and despair in his looks, sent a chillness to their hearts that held them in silence, and they were unable to utter a word, till he went on thus:—"Mary is gone: your darling and mine is lost, and sleeps this night in a watery grave; and I have been her destroyer!"

"Thou art mad, John Allanson," said the old man vehemently, "raving mad: at least I hope so.

Wicked as thou art, thou hadst not the heart to kill my dear child. O yes, you are mad—God be thanked, you are mad. I see it in your looks and demeanour. Heaven be praised, you are mad! You *are* mad; but you'll get better again. But what do I say?" continued he, as recollecting himself, "we can soon convince our own senses. Wife, lead the way to our daughter's bed."

With a heart throbbing with terror and dismay, old Jean Linton led the way to Mary's chamber, followed by the two men, who were eagerly gazing, one over each of her shoulders. Mary's little apartment was in the farther end of the long narrow cottage; and as soon as they entered it, they perceived a form lying on the bed, with the bedclothes drawn over its head; and on the lid of Mary's little chest that stood at the bedside, her clothes were lying neatly folded, as they wont to be. Hope seemed to dawn on the faces of the two old people when they beheld this, but the lover's heart sank still deeper in despair. The father called her name, but the form on the bed returned no answer; however, they all heard distinctly sobs, as of one weeping. The old man then ventured to pull down the clothes from her face; and strange to say, there indeed lay Mary Burnet, drowned in tears, yet apparently nowise surprised at the ghastly appearance of the three naked figures. Allanson gasped for breath, for he remained still incredulous. He touched her clothes; he lifted her robes one by one, and all of them were dry, neat, and clean, and had no appearance of having sunk in the lake.

There can be no doubt that Allanson was confounded by the strange event that had befallen him, and felt like one struggling with a frightful vision, or some energy beyond the power of man to comprehend. Nevertheless the assurance that Mary was there in life, weeping although she was, put him once more beside himself with joy; and he kneeled at her bedside, beseeching permission but to kiss her hand. She, however, repulsed him with disdain, saying with great emphasis:—"You are a bad man, John Allanson, and I intreat you to go out of my sight. The sufferings that I have undergone this night have been beyond the power of flesh and blood to endure; and by some cursed agency of yours have these sufferings been brought about. I therefore pray you, in His name whose law you have transgressed, to depart out of my sight."

Wholly overcome by conflicting passions, by circumstances so contrary to one another, and so discordant with everything either in the works of nature or providence, the young man could do nothing but stand like a rigid statue, with his hands lifted up, and his visage like that of a corpse, until led away by the two old people from their daughter's apartment. They then lighted up a fire to dry him, and began to question him with the most intense curiosity; but they could elicit nothing from him but the most disjointed exclamations, such as, "Lord in heaven, what can be the meaning of this?" And at other times, "It is all the enchantment of the devil; the evil spirits have got dominion over me!"

Finding they could make nothing of him, they began to form conjectures of their own. Jean affirmed that it had been the mermaid of the loch that had come to him in Mary's shape, to allure him to his destruction; but Andrew Burnet, setting his bonnet to one side, and raising his left hand to a level with it, so that he might have full scope to motion and flourish, suiting his action to his words, thus began, with a face of sapience never to be excelled:—

"Gudewife, it doth strike me that thou art very wide of the mark. It must have been a spirit of a great deal higher quality than a meer-maiden who played this extra-ōrdinary prank. The meer-maiden is not a spirit, but a beastly sensitive creature, with a malicious spirit within it. Now, what influence could a cauld clatch of a creature like that, wi' a tail like a great saumont-fish, hae ower our bairn, either to make her happy or unhappy? Or where could it borrow her claes, Jean? Tell me that. Na, na, Jean Linton, depend on it, the spirit that courtit wi' poor sinfu' Jock there, has been a fairy; but whether a good ane or an ill ane, it is hard to determine."

Andrew's disquisition was interrupted by the young man falling into a fit of trembling that was fearful to look at, and threatened soon to terminate his existence. Jean ran for the family cordial, observing by the way, that "though he was a wicked person, he was still a fellow-creature, and might live to repent," and influenced by this spark of genuine humanity, she made him swallow two horn-spoonfuls of strong aqua-vitæ. Andrew then put a piece of scarlet thread round each wrist, and taking a strong rowan-tree staff in his hand, he conveyed his trembling and astonished guest home, giving him at parting this sage advice:—

"I'll tell you what it is, Jock Allanson, ye hae run a near risk o' perdition, and, escaping that for the present, o' losing your right reason. But tak an auld man's advice—never gang again out by night to beguile ony honest man's daughter, lest a worse thing befall thee."

Next morning Mary dressed herself more neatly than usual, but there was manifestly a deep melancholy settled on her lovely face, and at times the unbidden tear would start into her eye. She spoke no word, either good or bad, that ever her mother could recollect, that whole morning; but she once or twice observed her daughter gazing at her as with an intense and melancholy interest. About nine o'clock in the morning, she took a hay-raik over her shoulder, and went down to a meadow at the east end of the loch, to coil a part of her father's hay, her father and brother engaging to join her about noon, when they came from the sheepfold. As soon as old Andrew came home, his wife and he, as was natural,

instantly began to converse on the events of the preceding night; and in the course of their conversation Andrew said, "Gudeness be about us, Jean, was not yon an awfu' speech o' our bairn's to young Jock Allanson last night?"

"Ay, it was a downsetter, gudeman, and spoken like a good Christian lass."

"I'm no sae sure o' that, Jean Linton. My good woman, Jean Linton, I'm no sae sure o' that. Yon speech has gi'en me a great deal o' trouble o' heart; for d'ye ken, an take my life, ay, an take your life, Jean, nane o' us can tell whether it was in the Almighty's name or the devil's that she discharged her lover."

"O fy, Andrew, how can ye say sae? How can ye doubt that it was in the Almighty's name?"

"Couldna she have said sae then, and that wad hae put it beyond a' doubt? And that wad hae been the natural way too; but instead of that she says, 'I pray you, in the name of him whose law you have transgressed, to depart out o' my sight.' I confess I'm terrified when I think about yon speech, Jean Linton. Didna she say too that 'her sufferings had been beyond what flesh and blood could have endured?' What was she but flesh and blood? Didna that remark infer that she was something mair than a mortal creature? Jean Linton, Jean Linton! what will you say if it should turn out that our daughter *is* drowned, and that yon was the fairy we had in the house a' the night and this morning?"

"O haud your tongue, Andrew Burnet, and dinna make my heart cauld within me. We hae aye trusted in the Lord, and he has never forsaken us, nor will he yet gie the wicked one power ower us or ours."

"Ye say very weel, Jean, and we maun e'en hope for the best," quoth old Andrew; and away he went, accompanied by his son Alexander, to assist their beloved Mary on the meadow.

No sooner had Andrew set his head over the bents, and come in view of the meadow, than he said to his son, "I wish Jock Allanson maunna hae been east the loch fishing for geds the day, for I think my Mary has made very little progress in the meadow."

"She's ower muckle ta'en up about other things this while to mind her wark," said Alexander: "I wadna wonder, father, if that lassie gangs a black gate yet."

Andrew uttered a long and a deep sigh, that seemed to ruffle the very fountains of life, and, without speaking another word, walked on to the hay-field. It was three hours since Mary had left home, and she ought at least to have put up a dozen coils of hay each hour. But, in place of that, she had put up only seven altogether, and the last was unfinished. Her own hay-raik, that had an M and a B neatly cut on the head of it, was leaning on the unfinished coil, and Mary was wanting. Her brother, thinking she had hid herself from them in sport, ran from one coil to another, calling her many bad names, playfully; but after he had turned them all up, and several deep swathes besides, she was not to be found. This young man, who slept in the byre, knew nothing of the events of the foregoing night, the old people and Allanson having mutually engaged to keep them a profound secret, and he had therefore less reason than his father to be seriously alarmed. When they began to work at the hay Andrew could work none; he looked this way and that way, but in no way could he see Mary approaching; so he put on his coat and went away home, to pour his sorrows into the bosom of his wife; and in the mean time, he desired his son to run to all the neighbouring farming-houses and cots, every one, and make inquiries if anybody had seen Mary.

When Andrew went home and informed his wife that their darling was missing, the grief and astonishment of the aged couple knew no bounds. They sat down and wept together, and declared over and over that this act of Providence was too strong for them, and too high to be understood. Jean besought her husband to kneel instantly, and pray urgently to God to restore their child to them; but he declined it, on account of the wrong frame of his mind, for he declared that his rage against John Allanson was so extreme as to unfit him for approaching the throne of his Maker. "But if the profligate refuses to listen to the intreaties of an injured parent," added he, "he shall feel the weight of an injured father's arm."

Andrew went straight away to Inverlawn, though without the least hope of finding young Allanson at home; but on reaching the place, to his amazement, he found the young man lying ill of a burning fever, raving incessantly of witches, spirits, and Mary Burnet. To such a height had his frenzy arrived, that when Andrew went there, it required three men to hold him in the bed. Both his parents testified their opinion openly, that their son was bewitched, or possessed of a demon, and the whole family was thrown into the greatest consternation. The good old shepherd, finding enough of grief there already, was obliged to confine his to his own bosom, and return disconsolate to his little family circle, in which there was a woeful blank that night.

His son returned also from a fruitless search. No one had seen any traces of his sister; but an old crazy woman, at a place called Oxcleuch, said that she had seen her go by in a grand chariot with young Jock Allanson, toward the Birkhill Path, and by that time they were at the cross of Dumgree. The young man said he asked her what sort of a chariot it was, as there was never such a thing in that country as a chariot, nor yet a road for one. But she replied that he was widely mistaken, for that a great number of chariots sometimes passed that way, though never any of them returned. These words appearing to be merely the ravings of superannuation,

they were not regarded: but when no other traces of Mary could be found, old Andrew went up to consult this crazy dame once more, but he was not able to bring any such thing to her recollection. She spoke only in parables, which to him were incomprehensible.

Bonny Mary Burnet was lost. She left her father's house at nine o'clock on Wednesday morning, the 17th of September, neatly dressed in a white jerkin and green bonnet, with her hay-raik over her shoulder; and that was the last sight she was doomed ever to see of her native cottage. She seemed to have had some presentiment of this, as appeared from her demeanour that morning before she left it. Mary Burnet of Kirkstyle was lost, and great was the sensation produced over the whole country by the mysterious event. There was a long ballad extant at one period on the melancholy catastrophe, which was supposed to have been composed by the chaplain of St. Mary's, but I have only heard tell of it, without ever hearing it sung or recited. Many of the verses concluded thus:—

"But bonny Mary Burnet
We will never see again."

The story soon got abroad, with all its horrid circumstances (and there is little doubt that it was grievously exaggerated), and there was no obloquy that was not thrown on the survivor. In one thing the whole country agreed, that it had been the real Mary Burnet who was drowned in the loch, and that the being which was found in her bed, lying weeping, and complaining of suffering, and which vanished the next day, had been a fairy, an evil spirit, or a changeling of some sort, for that it never spoke save once, and that in a mysterious manner; nor did it partake of any food with the rest of the family. Her father and mother knew not what to say or what to think, but they wandered through this weary world like people wandering in a dream. Everything that belonged to Mary Burnet was kept by her parents as the most sacred relics, and many a tear did her aged mother shed over them. Every article of her dress brought the once comely wearer to mind. Andrew often said, "That to have lost the darling child of their old age in any way would have been a great trial, but to lose her in the way that they had done, was really mair than human frailty could endure."

Many a weary day did he walk by the shores of the loch, looking eagerly for some vestige of her garments, and though he trembled at every appearance, yet did he continue to search on. He had a number of small bones collected, that had belonged to lambs and other minor animals, and, haply, some of them to fishes, from a fond supposition that they might once have formed joints of her toes or fingers. These he kept concealed in a little bag, in order, as he said, "to let the doctors see them." But no relic, besides these, could he ever discover of Mary's body.

Young Allanson recovered from his raging fever scarcely in the manner of other men, for he recovered all at once, after a few days' raving and madness. Mary Burnet, it appeared, was by him no more remembered. He grew ten times more wicked than before, and hesitated at no means of accomplishing his unhallowed purposes. The devout shepherds and cottagers around detested him, and, both in their families and in the wild, when there was no ear to hear but that of Heaven, they prayed protection from his devices, as if he had been the Wicked One; and they all prophesied that he would make a bad end.

One fine day about the middle of October, when the days begin to get very short, and the nights long and dark, on a Friday morning, the next year but one after Mary Burnet was lost, a memorable day in the fairy annals, John Allanson, younger, of Inverlawn, went to a great hiring fair at a village called Moffat, in Annandale, in order to hire a housemaid. His character was so notorious that not one young woman in the district would serve in his father's house; so away he went to the fair at Moffat, to hire the prettiest and loveliest girl he could there find, with the intention of ruining her as soon as she came home. This is no suppositious accusation, for he acknowledged his plan to Mr. David Welch of Cariferan, who rode down to the market with him, and seemed to boast of it and dwell on it with delight. But the maidens of Annandale had a guardian angel in the fair that day, of which neither he nor they were aware.

Allanson looked through the hiring market, and through the hiring market, and at length fixed on one young woman, which indeed was not difficult to do, for there was no such form there for elegance and beauty. Mr. Welch stood still and eyed him. He took the beauty aside. She was clothed in green, and as lovely as a new-blown rose.

"Are you to hire, pretty maiden?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you hire with me?"

"I care not though I do. But if I hire with you, it must be for the long term."

"Certainly. The longer the better. What are your wages to be?"

"You know, if I hire, I must be paid in kind. I must have the first living creature that I see about Inverlawn to myself."

"I wish it may be me, then. But what do you know about Inverlawn?"

"I think I *should* know about it."

"Bless me! I know the face as well as I know my own, and better. But the name has somehow escaped me. Pray, may I ask your name?"

"Hush! hush!" said she solemnly, and holding up her hand at the same time; "Hush, hush, you had better say nothing about that here."

"I am in utter amazement!" he exclaimed. "What is the meaning of this? I conjure you to tell me your name?"

"It is Mary Burnet," said she, in a soft whisper;

and at the same time she let down a green veil over her face.

If Allanson's death-warrant had been announced to him at that moment, it could not have deprived him so completely of sense and motion. His visage changed into that of a corpse, his jaws fell down, and his eyes became glazed, so as apparently to throw no reflections inwardly. Mr. Welch, who had kept his eye steadily on them all the while, perceived his comrade's dilemma, and went up to him. "Allanson! Mr. Allanson! What is the matter with you, man?" said he. "Why, the girl has bewitched you, and turned you into a statue!"

Allanson made some sound in his throat, as if attempting to speak, but his tongue refused its office, and he only jabbered. Mr. Welch, conceiving that he was seized with some fit, or about to faint, supported him into the Johnston Arms, but he either could not, or would not, grant him any explanation. Welch being, however, resolved to see the maiden in green once more, persuaded Allanson, after causing him to drink a good deal, to go out into the hiring-market again, in search of her. They ranged the market through and through, but the maiden in green was gone, and not to be found. She had vanished in the crowd the moment she divulged her name, and even though Welch had his eye fixed on her, he could not discover which way she went. Allanson appeared to be in a kind of stupor as well as terror, but when he found that she had left the place, he began to recover himself, and to look out again for the top of the market.

He soon found one more beautiful than the last. She was like a sylph, clothed in robes of pure snowy white, with green ribands. Again he pointed this new flower out to Mr. David Welch, who declared that such a perfect model of beauty he had never in his life seen. Allanson, being resolved to have this one at any wages, took her aside, and put the usual question: "Do you wish to hire, pretty maiden?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you hire with me?"

"I care not though I do."

"What, then, are your wages to be? Come—say; and be reasonable; I am determined not to part with you for a trifle."

"My wages must be in kind; I work on no other conditions. Pray, how are all the good people about Inverlawn?"

Allanson's breath began to be cut, and a chillness to creep through his whole frame, and he answered, with a faltering tongue, "I thank you—much in their ordinary way."

"And your aged neighbours," rejoined she, "are they still alive and well?"

"I—I—I think they are," said he, panting for breath. "But I am at a loss to know whom I am indebted to for these kind recollections."

"What!" said she, "have you so soon forgot Mary Burnet of Kirkstyle?"

Allanson started as if a bullet had gone through his heart. The lovely sylph-like form glided into the crowd, and left the astounded libertine once more standing like a rigid statue, until aroused by his friend Mr. Welch. He tried a third fair one, and got the same answers, and the same name given. Indeed, the first time ever I heard the tale, it bore that he tried *seven*, who all turned out to be Mary Burnets of Kirkstyle; but I think it unlikely that he would try so many, as he must long ere that time have been sensible that he laboured under some power of enchantment. However, when nothing else would do, he helped himself to a good proportion of strong drink. While he was thus engaged, a phenomenon of beauty and grandeur came into the fair, that caught the sole attention of all present. This was a lovely dame, riding in a gilded chariot, with two liverymen before, and two behind, clothed in green and gold; and never sure was there so splendid a meteor seen in a Moffat fair. The word instantly circulated in the market, that this was the Lady Elizabeth Douglas, eldest daughter to the Earl of Morton, who then sojourned at Auchincastle, in the vicinity of Moffat, and which lady at that time was celebrated as a great beauty all over Scotland. She was afterwards Lady Keith; and the mention of this name in the tale, as it were by mere accident, fixes the era of it in the reign of James the Fourth, at the very time that fairies, brownies, and witches were at the rifest in Scotland.

Every one in the market believed the lady to be the daughter of the Earl of Morton; and when she came to the Johnston Arms, a gentleman in green came out bareheaded, and received her out of the carriage. All the crowd gazed at such unparalleled beauty and grandeur, but none was half so much overcome as Allanson. He had never conceived aught half so lovely either in earth, or heaven, or fairyland; and while he stood in a burning fever of admiration, think of his astonishment, and the astonishment of the countless crowd that looked on, when this brilliant and matchless beauty beckoned him towards her! He could not believe his senses, but looked this way and that to see how others regarded the affair; but she beckoned him a second time, with such a winning courtesy and smile, that immediately he pulled off his beaver cap and hasted up to her; and without more ado she gave him her arm, and the two walked into the hostel.

Allanson conceived that he was thus distinguished by Lady Elizabeth Douglas, the flower of the land, and so did all the people of the market; and greatly they wondered who the young farmer could be that was thus particularly favoured; for it ought to have been mentioned that he had not one personal acquaintance in the fair save Mr. David Welch of Cariferan. The first thing the lady did was to inquire kindly after his health. Allanson thanked her ladyship with all the courtesy he was master of; and being by this time persuaded that she was in love with him,

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he became as light as if treading on the air. She next inquired after his father and mother.—Oho! thought he to himself, poor creature, she is terribly in for it! but her love shall not be thrown away upon a backward or ungrateful object.—He answered her with great politeness, and at length began to talk of her noble father and young Lord William, but she cut him short by asking if he did not recognize her.

"Oh, yes! He knew who her ladyship was, and remembered that he had seen her comely face often before, although he could not, at that particular moment, recall to his memory the precise time or places of their meeting."

She next asked for his old neighbours of Kirkstyle, and if they were still in life and health!

Allanson felt as if his heart were a piece of ice. A chillness spread over his whole frame; he sank back on a seat, and remained motionless; but the beautiful and adorable creature soothed him with kind words, till he again gathered courage to speak.

"What!" said he; "and has it been your own lovely self who has been playing tricks on me this whole day?"

"A first love is not easily extinguished, Mr. Allanson," said she. "You may guess from my appearance, that I have been fortunate in life; but, for all that, my first love for you has continued the same, unaltered and unchanged, and you must forgive the little freedoms I used to-day to try your affections, and the effect my appearance would have on you."

"It argues something for my good taste, however, that I never pitched on any face for beauty to-day but your own," said he. "But now that we have met once more, we shall not so easily part again. I will devote the rest of my life to you, only let me know the place of your abode."

"It is hard by," said she, "only a very little space from this; and happy, happy, would I be to see you there to-night, were it proper or convenient. But my lord is at present from home, and in a distant country."

"I should not conceive that any particular hinderance to my visit," said he.

With great apparent reluctance she at length consented to admit of his visit, and offered to leave one of her gentlemen, whom she could trust, to be his conductor; but this he positively refused. It was his desire, he said, that no eye of man should see him enter or leave her happy dwelling. She said he was a self-willed man, but should have his own way; and after giving him such directions as would infallibly lead him to her mansion, she mounted her chariot and was driven away.

Allanson was uplifted above every sublunary concern. Seeking out his friend, David Welch, he imparted to him his extraordinary good fortune, but he did not tell him that she was not the Lady Elizabeth Douglas. Welch insisted on accompanying him on the way, and refused to turn back till he came to the very point of the road next to the lady's splendid mansion; and in spite of all that Allanson could say, Welch remained there till he saw his comrade enter the court gate, which glowed with lights as innumerable as the stars of the firmament.

Allanson had promised to his father and mother to be home on the morning after the fair to breakfast. He came not either that day or the next; and the third day the old man mounted his white pony, and rode away towards Moffat in search of his son. He called at Cariferan on his way, and made inquiries at Mr. Welch. The latter manifested some astonishment that the young man had not returned; nevertheless he assured his father of his safety, and desired him to return home; and then with reluctance confessed that the young man was engaged in an amour with the Earl of Morton's beautiful daughter; that he had gone to the castle by appointment, and that he, David Welch, had accompanied him to the gate, and seen him enter, and it was apparent that his reception had been a kind one, since he had tarried so long.

Mr. Welch, seeing the old man greatly distressed, was persuaded to accompany him on his journey, as the last who had seen his son, and seen him enter the castle. On reaching Moffat they found his steed standing at the hostel, whither it had returned on the night of the fair, before the company broke up; but the owner had not been heard of since he was seen in company with Lady Elizabeth Douglas. The old man set out for Auchincastle, taking Mr. David Welch along with him; but long ere they reached the place Mr. Welch assured him he would not find his son there, as it was nearly in an opposite direction that they rode on the evening of the fair. However, to the castle they went, and were admitted to the earl, who, after hearing the old man's tale, seemed to consider him in a state of derangement. He sent for his daughter Elizabeth, and questioned her concerning her meeting with the son of the old respectable countryman—of her appointment with him on the night of the preceding Friday, and concluded by saying he hoped she had him still in some safe concealment about the castle.

The lady, hearing her father talk in this manner, and seeing the serious and dejected looks of the old man, knew not what to say, and asked an explanation. But Mr. Welch put a stop to it by declaring to old Allanson that the Lady Elizabeth was not the lady with whom his son made the appointment, for he had seen her, and would engage to know her again among ten thousand; nor was that the castle towards which he had accompanied his son, nor anything like it. "But go with me," continued he, "and, though I am a stranger in this district, I think I can take you to the very place."

They set out again; and Mr. Welch traced the road from Moffat, by which young Allanson and he had gone, until, after travelling several miles, they

came to a place where a road struck off to the right at an angle. "Now I know we are right," said Welch; "for here we stopped, and your son intreated me to return, which I refused, and accompanied him to yon large tree, and a little way beyond it, from whence I saw him received in at the splendid gate. We shall be in sight of the mansion in three minutes."

They passed on to the tree, and a space beyond it; but then Mr. Welch lost the use of his speech, as he perceived that there was neither palace nor gate there, but a tremendous gulf, fifty fathoms deep, and a dark stream foaming and boiling below.

"How is this?" said old Allanson. "There is neither mansion nor habitation of man here!"

Welch's tongue for a long time refused its office, and he stood like a statue, gazing on the altered and awful scene. "He only who made the spirits of men," said he, at last, "and all the spirits that sojourn in the earth and air, can tell how this is. We are wandering in a world of enchantment, and have been influenced by some agencies above human nature, or without its pale; for here of a certainty did I take leave of your son—and there, in that direction, and apparently either on the verge of that gulf, or the space above it, did I see him received in at the court gate of a mansion, splendid beyond all conception. How can human comprehension make anything of this?"

They went forward to the verge, Mr Welch leading the way to the very spot on which he saw the gate opened, and there they found marks where a horse had been plunging. Its feet had been over the brink, but it seemed to have recovered itself, and deep, deep down, and far within, lay the mangled corpse of John Allanson; and in this manner, mysterious beyond all example, terminated the career of that flagitious young man.—What a beautiful moral may be extracted from this fairy tale?

But among all these turnings and windings there is no account given, you will say, of the fate of Mary Burnet; for this last appearance of hers at Moffat seems to have been altogether a phantom or illusion. Gentle and kind reader, I can give you no account of the fate of that maiden; for though the ancient fairy tale proceeds, it seems to me to involve her fate in ten times more mystery than what we have hitherto seen of it.

The yearly return of the day on which Mary was lost was observed as a day of mourning by her aged and disconsolate parents—a day of sorrow, of fasting, and humiliation. Seven years came and passed away, and the seventh returning day of fasting and prayer was at hand. On the evening previous to it, old Andrew was moving along the sands of the loch, still looking for some relic of his beloved Mary, when he was aware of a little shrivelled old man, who came posting towards him. The creature was not above five spans in height, and had a face scarcely like that of a human creature; but he was, nevertheless, civil in his deportment, and sensible in speech. He bade Andrew a good evening, and asked him what he was looking for. Andrew answered, that he was looking for that which he should never find.

"Pray, what is your name, ancient shepherd?" said the stranger; "for methinks I should know something of you, and perhaps have a commission to you."

"Alas! why should you ask after my name?" said Andrew. "My name is now nothing to any one."

"Had you not once a beautiful daughter, named Mary?" said the stranger.

"It is a heart-rending question, man," said Andrew; "but certes, I had once a beloved daughter named Mary."

"What became of her?" asked the stranger.

Andrew shook his head, turned round, and began to move away; it was a theme that his heart could not brook. He sauntered along the loch sands, his dim eye scanning every white pebble as he passed along. There was a hopelessness in his stooping form, his gait, his eye, his features—in every step that he took there was a hopeless apathy. The dwarf followed him, and began to expostulate with him. "Old man, I see you are pining under some real or fancied affliction," said he. "But in continuing to do so, you are neither acting according to the dictates of reason nor true religion. What is man that he should fret, or the son of man that he should repine, under the chastening hand of his Maker?"

"I am far frae justifying mysel," returned Andrew, surveying his shrivelled monitor with some degree of astonishment. "But there are some feelings that neither reason nor religion can o'ermaster; and there are some that a parent may cherish without sin."

"I deny the position," said the stranger, "taken either absolutely or relatively. All repining under the supreme decree is leavened with unrighteousness. But, subtleties aside, I ask you, as I did before. What became of your daughter?"

"Ask the Father of her spirit, and the Framer of her body," said Andrew, solemnly; "ask Him into whose hands I committed her from childhood. He alone knows what became of her, but I do not!"

"How long is it since you lost her?"

"It is seven years to-morrow."

"Ay! you remember the time well. And have you mourned for her all that while?"

"Yes; and I will go down to the grave mourning for my only daughter, the child of my age, and of all my affection. O thou unearthly-looking monitor, knowest thou aught of my darling child? for if thou dost, thou wilt know that she was not like other women. There was a simplicity and a purity about my Mary that was hardly consistent with our frail nature."

"Wouldst thou like to see her again?" said the dwarf.

Andrew turned round, his whole frame shaking as with a palsy, and gazed on the audacious imp.

"See her again, creature!" cried he vehemently; "Would I like to see her again, sayest thou?"

"I said so," replied the dwarf, "and I say further, Dost thou know this token? Look, and see if thou dost?"

Andrew took the token, and looked at it, then at the shrivelled stranger, and then at the token again; and at length he burst into tears, and wept aloud; but they were tears of joy, and his weeping seemed to have some breathings of laughter intermingled in it. And still as he kissed the token, he called out in broken and convulsive sentences, "Yes, auld body, I *do* know it!—I *do* know it!—I *do* know it! It is indeed the same golden Edward, with three holes in it, with which I presented my Mary on her birth-day, in her eighteenth year, to buy a new suit for the holidays. But when she took it, she said—ay, I mind weel what my bonny woman said—'It is sae bonny and sae kenspeckle,' said she, 'that I think I'll keep it for the sake of the giver.' O dear, dear! Blessed little creature, tell me how she is, and where she is? Is she living, or is she dead?"

"She is living, and in good health," said the dwarf; "and better, and braver, and happier, and lovelier than ever; and if you make haste, you will see her and her family at Moffat to-morrow afternoon. They are to pass there on a journey, but it is an express one, and I am sent to you with that token, to inform you of the circumstance, that you may have it in your power to see and embrace your beloved daughter once before you die."

"And am I to meet my Mary at Moffat? Come away, little, dear, welcome body, thou blessed of heaven, come away, and taste of an auld shepherd's best cheer, and I'll gang foot for foot with you to Moffat, and my auld wife shall gang foot for foot with us too. I tell you, little, blessed, and welcome crile, come along with me."

"I may not tarry to enter your house, or taste of your cheer, good shepherd," said the being. "May plenty still be within your walls, and a thankful heart to enjoy it! But my directions are neither to taste meat nor drink in this country, but to haste back to her that sent me. Go—haste, and make ready, for you have no time to lose."

"At what time will she be there?" cried Andrew, flinging the plaid from him to run home with the tidings.

"Precisely when the shadow of the Holy Cross falls due east," cried the dwarf; and turning round, he hasted on his way.

When old Jean Linton saw her husband coming hobbling and running home without his plaid, and having his doublet flying wide open, she had no doubt that he had lost his wits, and, full of anxiety, she met him at the side o' the kail-yard. "Gudeness preserve us a' in our right senses, Andrew Burnet, what's the matter wi' you, Andrew Burnet?"

"Stand out o' my gate, wife, for, d'ye see, I am rather in a haste, Jean Linton."

"I see that indeed, gudeman; but stand still, and tell me what has putten you *in* sic a haste. Are ye dementit?"

"Na, na; gudewife, Jean Linton, I'm no dementit. I'm only gaun away till Moffat."

"O, gudeness pity the puir auld body! How can ye gang to Moffat, man? Or what have ye to do at Moffat? Dinna ye mind that the morn is the day o' our solemnity?"

"Haud out o' my gate, auld wife, and dinna speak o' solemnities to me. I'll keep it at Moffat the morn. Ay, gudewife, and ye shall keep it at Moffat too. What d'ye think o' that, woman? Too-whoo! ye dinna ken the metal that's in an auld body till it be tried."

"Andrew—Andrew Burnet!"

"Get awa' wi' your frightened looks, woman; and haste ye, gang and fling me out my Sabbath-day claes. And, Jean Linton, my woman, d'ye hear, gang and pit on your bridal-gown, and your silk hood, for ye maun be at Moffat the morn too; and it is mair nor time we were awa'. Dinna look sae surprised, woman, till I tell ye, that our ain Mary is to meet us at Moffat the morn."

"O, Andrew! dinna sport wi' the feelings of an auld forsaken heart!"

"Gude forbid, my auld wife, that I should ever sport wi' feeling o' yours," cried Andrew, bursting into tears; "they are a' as sacred to me as breathings frae the throne o' grace. But it is true that I tell ye; our dear bairn is to meet us at Moffat the morn, wi' a son in every hand; and we maun e'en gang and see her aince again, and kiss her, and bless her afore we dee."

The tears now rushed from the old woman's eyes like fountains, and dropped from her sorrow-worn cheeks to the earth, and then, as with a spontaneous movement, she threw her skirt over her head, kneeled down at her husband's feet, and poured out her soul in thanksgiving to her Maker. She then rose up, quite deprived of her senses through joy, and ran crouching away on the road towards Moffat, as if hasting beyond her power to be at it. But Andrew brought her back, and they prepared themselves for their journey.

Kirkstyle being twenty miles from Moffat, they set out on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 16th of September; slept that night at a place called Turnberry Shiel, and were in Moffat next day by noon. Wearisome was the remainder of the day to that aged couple; they wandered about conjecturing by what road their daughter would come, and how she would come attended. "I have made up my mind on baith these matters," said Andrew; at first I thought it was likely that she would come out of the

east, because a' our blessings come frae that airt; but finding now that would be o'er near to the very road we hae come oursels, I now take it for granted she'll come frae the south; and I just think I see her leading a bonny boy in every hand, and a servant lass carrying a bit bundle ahint her."

The two now walked out on all the southern roads, in hopes to meet their Mary, but always returned to watch the shadow of the Holy Cross, and, by the time it fell due east, they could do nothing but stand in the middle of the street, and look round them in all directions. At length, about half a mile out on the Dumfries road, they perceived a poor beggar woman approaching with two children following close to her, and another beggar a good way behind. Their eyes were instantly riveted on these objects, for Andrew thought he perceived his friend the dwarf in the one that was behind, and now all other earthly objects were to them nothing, save these approaching beggars. At that moment a gilded chariot entered the village from the south, and drove by them at full speed, having two livery-men before, and two behind, clothed in green and gold. "Ach-wow! the vanity of worldly grandeur!" ejaculated Andrew, as the splendid vehicle went thundering by; but neither he nor his wife deigned to look at it further, their whole attention being fixed on the group of beggars. "Ay, it is just my woman," said Andrew, "it is just hersel; I ken her gang yet, sair pressed down wi' poortith although she be. But I dinna care how poor she be, for baith her and hers sall be welcome to my fireside as lang as I hae ane."

While their eyes were thus strained, and their hearts melting with tenderness and pity, Andrew felt something embracing his knees, and, on looking down, there was his Mary, blooming in splendour and beauty, kneeling at his feet. Andrew uttered a loud hysterical scream of joy, and clasped her to his bosom, and old Jean Linton stood trembling, with her arms spread, but durst not close them on so splendid a creature, till her daughter first enfolded her in a fond embrace, and then she hung upon her and wept. It was a wonderful event—a restoration without a parallel. They indeed beheld their Mary, their long lost darling—they held her in their embraces, believed in her identity, and were satisfied. Satisfied, did I say? They were happy beyond the lot of mortals. She had just alighted from her chariot, and, perceiving her aged parents standing together, she ran and kneeled at their feet. They now retired into the hostel, where Mary presented her two sons to her father and mother. They spent the evening in every social endearment, and Mary loaded the good old couple with rich presents, watched over them till midnight, when they both fell into a deep and happy sleep, and then she remounted her chariot, and was driven away. If she was any more seen in Scotland, I never heard of it; but her parents rejoiced in the thoughts of her happiness till the day of their death.

CHAPTER XI.

THE LAIRD OF WINEHOLM.

"Have you heard anything of the apparition which has been seen about Wineholm Place?" said the dominie.

"Na, I never heard of sic a thing as yet," quoth the smith; "but I wadna wonder muckle that the news should turn out to be true."

The dominie shook his head, and uttered a long "h'm-h'm-h'm," as if he knew more than he was at liberty to tell.

"Weel, that beats the world," said the smith as he gave over blowing the bellows, and looked anxiously in the dominie's face.

The dominie shook his head again.

The smith was now in the most ticklish quandary, eager to learn particulars, that he might spread the astounding news through the whole village, and the rest of the parish to boot, but yet afraid to press the inquiry, for fear the cautious dominie should take the alarm of being reported as a tattler, and keep all to himself. So the smith, after waiting till the wind-pipe of the great bellows ceased its rushing noise, covered the gloss neatly up with a mixture of small coals, culm, and cinders, and then, perceiving that nothing more was forthcoming from the dominie, he began blowing again with more energy than before—changed his hand—put the other sooty one in his breeches-pocket—leaned to the horn—looked in a careless manner to the window, or rather gazed on vacancy, and always now and then stole a sly look at the dominie's face. It was quite immoveable. His cheek was leaning on his open hand, and his eyes fixed on the glowing fire. It was very teasing this for poor Clinkum the smith. But what could he do? He took out his glowing iron, and made a shower of fire sweep through the whole smithy, whereof a good part, as intended, sputtered upon the dominie, but that imperturbable person only shielded his face with his elbow, turned his shoulder half round, and held his peace. Thump, thump! clink, clink! went the hammer for a space, and then when the iron was returned to the fire, "Weel, that beats the world!" quoth the smith.

"What is this that beats the world, Mr. Clinkum!" asked the dominie, with the most cool and provoking indifference.

"This story about the apparition," quoth the smith.

"What story?" said the dominie.

Now really this perversity was hardly to be endured, even in a learned dominie, who, with all his cold indifference of feeling, was sitting toasting himself at a good smithy fire. The smith felt this (for he was a man of acute feeling,) and therefore he spit upon his hand and fell a-clinking and pelting at

the stithy with both spirit and resignation, saying within himself, "These dominie bodies just beat the world!"

"What story?" reiterated the dominie. "For my part, I related no story, nor have ever given assent to a belief in such a story that any man has heard. Nevertheless, from the results of ratiocination, conclusions may be formed, though not algebraically, yet corporately, by constituting a quantity which shall be equivalent to the difference, subtracting the less from the greater, and striking a balance in order to get rid of any ambiguity or paradox."

At the long adverb, *nevertheless*, the smith gave over blowing, and pricked up his ears; but the definition went beyond his comprehension.

"Ye ken, that just beats the whole world for deepness," said the smith; and again began blowing the bellows.

"You know, Mr. Clinkum," continued the dominie, "that a proposition is an assertion of some distinct truth, which only becomes manifest by demonstration. A corollary is an obvious, or easily inferred consequence *of* a proposition; while an hypothesis is a *sup*-position, or concession made, during the process of demonstration. Now do you take me along with you? because, if you do not, it is needless to proceed."

"Yes, yes, I understand you middling weel; but I wad like better to hear what other folks say about it than you."

"And why so? Wherefore would you rather hear another man's demonstration than mine?" said the dominie, sternly.

"Because, ye ken, ye just beat the whole world for words," quoth the smith.

"Ay, ay! that is to say, words without wisdom," said the dominie, rising and stepping away. "Well, well, every man to his sphere, and the smith to the bellows."

"Ye're quite mista'en, master," cried the smith after him; "it isna the want o' wisdom in you that plagues me, it is the o'erplush o't."

This soothed the dominie, who returned and said mildly—"By the bye, Clinkum, I want a leister of your making; for I see there is no other tradesman makes them so well. A five-grained one make it; at your own price."

"Very weel, sir. When will you be needing it?"

"Not till the end of close-time."

"Ay, ye may gar the three auld anes do till then."

"What do you wish to insinuate, sir? Would you infer, because I have three leisters, that therefore I am a breaker of the laws? That I, who am placed here as a pattern and monitor of the young and rising generation, should be the first to set them an example of insubordination?"

"Na, but, ye ken, that just beats the world for words! but we ken what we ken, for a' that, naster."

"You had better take a little care what you say, Mr. Clinkum; just a little care. I do not request you to take particular care, for of that your tongue is incapable, but a very little is necessary. And mark you—don't go to say that I said this or that about a ghost, or mentioned such a ridiculous story."

"The crabbitness o' that body beats the world!" said the smith to himself, as the dominie went halting homeward.

The very next man that entered the smithy door was no other than John Broadcast, the new laird's hind, who had also been hind to the late laird for many years, and who had no sooner said his errand than the smith addressed him thus:—"Have *you* ever seen this ghost that there is such a noise about?"

"Ghost! Na, goodness be thankit, I never saw a ghost in my life, save aince a wraith. What ghost do you mean?"

"So you never saw nor heard tell of any apparition about Wineholm Place lately?"

"No, I hae reason to be thankfu' I have not."

"Weel, that beats the world! Whow, man, but ye are sair in the dark! Do you no think there are siccan things in nature as folk no coming fairly to their right ends, John!"

"Goodness be wi' us! Ye gar a' the hairs o' my head creep, man. What's that you're saying?"

"Had ye never ony suspicions o' that kind, John?"

"No; I canna say that I had."

"None in the least? Weel, that beats the world!"

"Oh, haud your tongue, haud your tongue! We hae great reason to be thankfu' that we are as we are!"

"How as we are?"

"That we arena stocks or stones, or brute beasts, as the minister o' Traquair says. But I hope in God there is nae siccan thing about my master's place as an unearthly visitor."

The smith shook his head, and uttered a long hem, hem, hem! He had felt the powerful effect of that himself, and wished to make the same appeal to the feelings and longings after information of John Broadcast. The bait took; for the latent spark of superstition, not to say anything about curiosity, was kindled in the heart of honest John, and there being no wit in the head to counteract it, the portentous hint had its full sway. John's eyes stelled in his head, and his visage grew long, assuming something of the hue of dried clay in winter. "Hech, man, but that's an awsome story!" exclaimed he. "Folks hae great reason to be thankfu' that they are as they are. It is truly an awsome story."

"Ye ken, it just beats the world for that," quoth the smith.

"And is it really thought that this laird made away wi' our auld master?" said John.

The smith shook his head again, and gave a strait wink with his eyes.

"Weel, I hae great reason to be thankfu' that I

never heard siccan a story as that!" said John. "Wha was it tauld you a' about it?"

"It was nae less a man than our mathewmatical dominie," said the smith; "he that kens a' things, and can prove a proposition to the nineteenth part of a hair. But he is terrified the tale should spread; and therefore ye maunna say a word about it."

"Na, na; I hae great reason to be thankfu' I can keep a secret as weel as the maist feck o' men, and better than the maist feck o' women. What did he say? Tell us a' that he said."

"It is not so easy to repeat what he says, for he has sae mony lang-nebbit words, which just beat the world. But he said, though it was only a supposition, yet it was easily made manifest by positive demonstration."

"Did you ever hear the like o' that! Now, havena we reason to be thankful that we are as we are? Did he say that it was by poison that he was taken off, or that he was strangled?"

"Na; I thought he said it was by a collar, or a collary, or something to that purpose."

"Then, it wad appear there is no doubt of it? I think the doctor has reason to be thankfu' that he's no taken up. Is not that strange?"

"Oh, ye ken, it just beats the world!"

"He deserves to be torn at young horses' tails," said the ploughman.

"Ay, or nippit to death with red-hot pinchers," quoth the smith.

"Or harrowed to death, like the children of Ammon," continued the ploughman.

"Na, I'll tell you what should be done wi' him—he should just be docked and fired like a farcied horse," quoth the smith. "Od help ye, man, I could beat the world for laying on a proper poonishment."

John Broadcast went home full of terror and dismay. He told his wife the story in a secret—she told the dairymaid with a tenfold degree of secrecy; and so ere long it reached the ears of Dr. Davington himself, the new laird, as he was called. He was unusually affected at hearing such a terrible accusation against himself; and the dominie being mentioned as the propagator of the report, a message was forthwith despatched to desire him to come up to the place, and speak with the laird. The dominie suspected there was bad blood a-brewing against him; and as he had too much self-importance to think of succumbing to any man alive, he sent an impertinent answer to the laird's message, bearing, that if Dr. Davington had any business with him, he would be so good as attend at his class-room when he dismissed his scholars.

When this message was delivered, the doctor, being almost beside himself with rage, instantly despatched two village constables with a warrant to seize the dominie, and bring him before him; for the doctor was a justice of the peace. Accordingly, the poor dominie was seized at the head of his pupils, and dragged away, crutch and all, up before the new laird, to answer for such an abominable slander. The dominie denied everything concerning it, as indeed he might, save having asked the smith the simple question, "if he had heard ought of a ghost at the Place?" But he refused to tell why he asked that question. He had his own reasons for it, he said, and reasons that to him were quite sufficient; but as he was not obliged to disclose them, neither would he.

The smith was then sent for, who declared that the dominie had told him of the ghost being seen, and a murder committed, which he called a rank *assassination*, and said it was obvious and easily inferred that it was done by a collar.

How the dominie did storm! He even twice threatened to knock down the smith with his crutch; not for the slander—he cared not for that nor the doctor a pin, but for the total subversion of his grand illustration from geometry; and he therefore denominated the smith's head *the logarithm to number one*, a reproach of which I do not understand the gist, but the appropriation of it pleased the dominie exceedingly, made him chuckle, and put him in better humour for a good while. It was in vain that he tried to prove that his words applied only to the definition of a problem in geometry—he could not make himself understood; and the smith maintaining his point firmly, and apparently with conscientious truth, appearances were greatly against the dominie, and the doctor pronounced him a malevolent and dangerous person.

"O, ye ken, he just beats the world for that," quoth the smith.

"I a malevolent and dangerous person, sir!" said the dominie fiercely, and altering his crutch from one place to another of the floor, as if he could not get a place to set it on. "Dost thou call me a malevolent and dangerous person, sir? What then art thou! If thou knowest not, I will tell thee. Add a cipher to a ninth figure, and what does that make! Ninety, you will say. Ay, but then put a cipher *above* a nine, and what does that make? ha—ha—ha—I have you there. Your case exactly in higher geometry! for say the chord of sixty degrees is radius, then the sine of ninety degrees is equal to the radius, so the secant of 0, that is nihil-nothing, as the boys call it, is radius, and so is the co-sine of 0. The versed sine of ninety degrees is radius (that is nine with a cipher added, you know), and the versed sine of 180 degrees is the diameter; then of course the sine increases from 0 (that is cipher or nothing) till it becomes radius, and then it decreases till it becomes nothing. After this you note it lies on the *contrary* side of the diameter, and consequently, if positive before, is negative now, so that it must end in 0, or a cipher above a nine at most."

"This unintelligible jargon is out of place here, Mr. Dominie; and if you can show no better reason for raising such an abominable falsehood, in repu-

senting me as an incendiary and murderer, I shall procure you a lodging in the house of correction."

"Why, sir, the long and short of the matter is this—I only asked at that fellow there, that logarithm of stupidity! if he had heard aught of a ghost having been seen about Wineholm Place. I added nothing further either positive or negative. Now, do you insist on my reasons for asking such a question?"

"I insist on having them."

"Then what will you say, sir, when I inform you, and declare my readiness to depone to the truth of it, that I saw the ghost myself?—yes, sir—that I saw the ghost of your late worthy father-in-law myself, sir; and though I said no such thing to that decimal fraction, yet it told me, sir—yes, the spirit of your father-in-law told me, sir, that you are a murderer."

"Lord, now, what think ye o' that?" quoth the smith. "Ye had better hae letten him alane; for od, ye ken, he's the deevil of a body that ever was made! He just beats the world!"

The doctor grew as pale as death, but whether from fear or rage, it was hard to say. "Why, sir, you are mad! stark, raving mad," said the doctor; "therefore, for your own credit, and for the peace and comfort of my wife and myself, and our credit among our retainers, you must unsay every word that you have now said."

"I'll just as soon say that the parabola and the ellipsis are the same," said the dominie; "or that the diameter is not the longest line that can be drawn in the circle. And now, sir, since you have forced me to divulge what I was much in doubt about, I have a great mind to have the old laird's grave opened to-night, and have the body inspected before witnesses."

"If you dare disturb the sanctuary of the grave," said the doctor vehemently, "or with your unhallowed hands touch the remains of my venerable and revered predecessor, it had been better for you, and all who make the attempt, that you never had been born. If not then for my sake, for the sake of my wife, the sole daughter of the man to whom you have all been obliged, let this abominable and malicious calumny go no further, but put it down; I pray of you to put it down, as you would value your own advantage."

"I have seen him, and spoke with him—that I aver," said the dominie. "And shall I tell you what he said to me?"

"No, no! I'll hear no more of such absolute and disgusting nonsense," said the laird.

"Then, since it hath come to this, I will declare it in the face of the whole world, and pursue it to the last," said the dominie, "ridiculous as it is, and I confess that it is even so. I have seen your father-in-law within the last twenty hours; at least a being in his form and habiliments, and having his aspect and voice. And he told me, that he believed you were a very great scoundrel, and that you had helped him off the stage of time in a great haste, for fear of the operation of a will, which he had just executed, very much to your prejudice. I was somewhat aghast, but ventured to remark, that he must surely have been sensible whether you murdered him or not, and in what way. He replied, that he was not absolutely certain, for at the time you put him down, he was much in his customary way of nights—very drunk; but that he greatly suspected you had hanged him, for, ever since he had died, he had been troubled with a severe crick in his neck. Having seen my late worthy patron's body deposited in the coffin, and afterwards consigned to the grave, these things overcame me, and a kind of mist came over my senses; but I heard him saying as he withdrew, what a pity it was that my nerves could not stand this disclosure. Now, for my own satisfaction, I am resolved that to-morrow, I shall raise the village, with the two ministers at the head of the multitude, and have the body, and particularly the neck of the deceased, minutely inspected."

"If you do so, I shall make one of the number," said the doctor. "But I am resolved that in the first place every means shall be tried to prevent a scene of madness and absurdity so disgraceful to a well-regulated village, and a sober community."

"There is but one direct line that can be followed, and any other would either form an acute or obtuse angle," said the dominie; "therefore I am resolved to proceed right forward, on mathematical principles;" and away he went, skipping on his crutch, to arouse the villagers to the scrutiny.

The smith remained behind, concerting with the doctor how to controvert the dominie's profound scheme of unshrouding the dead; and certainly the smith's plan, viewed professionally, was not amiss. "O, ye ken, sir, we maun just gie him another heat, and try to saften him to reason, for he's just as stubborn as Muirkirk ir'n. He beats the world for that."

While the two were in confabulation, Johnston, the old house-servant, came in and said to the doctor—"Sir, your servants are going to leave the house, every one, this night, if you cannot fall on some means to divert them from it. The old laird is, it seems, risen again, and come back among them, and they are all in the utmost consternation. Indeed, they are quite out of their reason. He appeared in the stable to Broadcast, who has been these two hours dead with terror, but is now recovered, and telling such a tale down stairs, as never was heard from the mouth of man."

"Send him up here," said the doctor. "I will silence him. What does the ignorant clown mean by joining in this unnatural clamour?"

John came up, with his broad bonnet in his hand, shut the door with hesitation, and then felt twice with his hand if it really was shut. "Well, John," said the doctor, "what absurd lie is this that you are vending among your fellow-servants, of having seen a ghost?" John picked some odds and ends of

threads out of his bonnet, and said nothing. "You are an old superstitious dreaming dotard," continued the doctor; "but if you propose in future to manufacture such stories, you must, from this instant, do it somewhere else than in my service, and among my domestics. What have you to say for yourself?"

"Indeed, sir, I hae naething to say but this, that we hae a' muckle reason to be thankfu' that we are as we are."

"And whereon does that wise saw bear? What relation has that to the seeing of a ghost? Confess then this instant, that you have forged and vended a deliberate lie."

"Indeed, sir, I hae muckle reason to be thankfu'"—

"For what?"

"That I never tauld a deliberate lee in my life. My late master came and spake to me in the stable; but whether it was his ghaist or himsel—a good angel or a bad ane, I hae reason to be thankfu' I never said; for I *do—not—ken*."

"Now, pray let us hear from that sage tongue of yours, so full of sublime adages, what this doubtful being said to you?"

"I wad rather be excused, an it were your honour's will, and wad hae reason to be thankfu'."

"And why should you decline telling this?"

"Because I ken ye wadna believe a word o't, it is siccan a strange story. O sirs, but folks hae muckle reason to be thankfu' that they are as they are!"

"Well, out with this strange story of yours. I do not promise to credit it, but shall give it a patient hearing, provided you swear that there is no forgery in it."

"Weel, as I was suppering the horses the night, I was dressing my late kind master's favourite mare, and I was just thinking to mysel, An he had been leeving, I wadna hae been my lane the night, for he wad hae been standing over me cracking his jokes, and swearing at me in his good-natured hamely way. Ay, but he's gane to his lang account, thinks I, and we poor frail dying creatures that are left ahind hae muckle reason to be thankfu' that we are as we are; when I looks up, and behold there's my auld master standing leaning against the trivage, as he used to do, and looking at me. I canna but say my heart was a little astoundit, and maybe lap up through my midriff into my breath-bellows—I couldna say; but in the strength o' the Lord I was enabled to retain my senses for a good while. 'John Broadcast,' said he, with a deep and angry tone,—'John Broadcast, what are you thinking about? You are not currying that mare half. What lubberly way of dressing a horse is that?'"

"'Make us thankfu', master!' says I; 'are you there?'

"'Where else would you have me to be at this hour of the night, old blockhead?' says he.

"'In another hame than this, master,' says I; 'but I fear me it is nae good ane, that ye are sae soon tired o't.'

"'A horrid bad one, I assure you,' says he.

"'Ay, but, master,' says I, 'ye hae muckle reason to be thankfu' that ye are as ye are.'

"'In what respects, dotard?' says he.

"'That ye hae liberty to come out o't a start now and then to get the air,' says I; and oh my heart was sair for him when I thought o' his state! and though I was thankfu' that I was as I was, my heart and flesh began to fail me, at thinking of my speaking face to face wi' a being frae the unhappy place. But out he briks again wi' a grit round o' swearing about the mare being ill keepit; and he ordered me to cast my coat and curry her weel, for that he had a lang journey to take on her the morn.

"'You take a journey on her!' says I, 'I fear my new master will dispute that privilege with you, for he rides her himsel the morn.'

"'He ride her!' cried the angry spirit; and then it burst out into a lang string of imprecations, fearsome to hear, against you, sir; and then added, 'Soon, soon shall he be levelled with the dust! The dog! the parricide! first to betray my child, and then to put down myself!—But he shall not escape! he shall not escape!' cried he with such a hellish growl, that I fainted, and heard no more."

"Weel, that beats the world!" quoth the smith: "I wad hae thought the mare wad hae luppen over yird and stane, or fa'en down dead wi' fright."

"Na, na," said John, "in place o' that, whenever she heard him fa' a-swearing, she was sae glad that she fell a nichering."

"Na, but that beats the haill world a'thegither" quoth the smith. "Then it has been nae ghaist ava, ye may depend on that."

"I little wat what it was," said John, "but it was a being in nae good or happy state o' mind, and is a warning to us a' how muckle reason we hae to be thankfu' that we are as we are."

The doctor pretended to laugh at the absurdity of John's narrative, but it was with a ghastly and doubtful expression of countenance, as though he thought the story far too ridiculous for any clodpole to have contrived out of his own head; and forthwith he dismissed the two dealers in the marvellous, with very little ceremony, the one protesting that the thing beat the world, and the other that they had both reason to be thankfu' that they were as they were.

The next morning the villagers, small and great, were assembled at an early hour to witness the lifting of the body of their late laird, and headed by the established and dissenting clergymen, and two surgeons, they proceeded to the tomb, and soon extracted the splendid coffin, which they opened with all due caution and ceremony. But instead of the murdered body of their late benefactor, which they expected in good earnest to find, there was nothing in the coffin but a layer of gravel, of about the weight of a corpulent man!

The clamour against the new laird then rose all

at once into a tumult that it was impossible to check, every one declaring aloud that he had not only murdered their benefactor, but, for fear of the discovery, had raised the body, and given, or rather sold it, for dissection. The thing was not to be tolerated; so the mob proceeded in a body up to Wineholm Place, to take out their poor deluded lady, and burn the doctor and his basely acquired habitation to ashes. It was not till the multitude had surrounded the house, that the ministers and two or three other gentlemen could stay them, which they only did by assuring the mob that they would bring out the doctor before their eyes, and deliver him up to justice. This pacified the throng; but on inquiry at the hall, it was found that the doctor had gone off early that morning, so that nothing further could be done for the present. But the coffin, filled with gravel, was laid up in the aisle, and kept open for inspection.

Nothing could now exceed the consternation of the simple villagers of Wineholm at these dark and mysterious events. Business, labour, and employment of every sort were at a stand, and the people hurried about to one another's houses, and mingled their conjectures together in one heterogeneous mass. The smith put his hand to the bellows, but forgot to blow till the fire went out; the weaver leaned on his beam, and listened to the legends of the ghastly tailor. The team stood in mid furrow, and the thrasher a-gaping over his flail; and even the dominie was heard to declare that the geometrical series of events was increasing by no *common* ratio, and therefore ought to be calculated rather arithmetically than by logarithms; and John Broadcast saw more and more reason for being thankful that he was as he was, and neither a stock, nor a stone, nor a brute beast.

Every new thing that happened was more extraordinary than the last: and the most puzzling of all was the circumstance of the late laird's mare, saddle, bridle, and all, being off before day the next morning; so that Dr. Davington was obliged to have recourse to his own, on which he was seen posting away on the road towards Edinburgh. It was thus but too obvious that the ghost of the late laird had ridden off on his favourite mare, Heaven only knew whither! for as to that point none of the sages of Wineholm could divine. But their souls grew chill as an iceberg, and their very frames rigid, at the thoughts of a spirit riding away on a brute beast to the place appointed for wicked men. And had not John Broadcast reason to be thankful that he was as he was?

However, the outcry of the community became so outrageous, of murder, and foul play in so many ways, that the officers of justice were compelled to take note of it; and accordingly the sheriff-substitute, the sheriff-clerk, the fiscal, and two assistants, came in two chaises to Wineholm to take a precognition; and there a court was held, which lasted the whole day, at which Mrs. Davington, the late laird's only daughter, all the servants, and a great number of the villagers, were examined on oath. It appeared from the evidence that Dr. Davington had come to the village and set up as a surgeon—that he had used every endeavour to be employed in the laird's family in vain, as the latter detested him. That he, however, found means of inducing his only daughter to elope with him, which put the laird quite beside himself, and from thenceforward he became drowned in dissipation. That such, however, was his affection for his daughter, that he caused her to live with him, but would never suffer the doctor to enter his door; that it was nevertheless quite customary for the doctor to be sent for to his lady's chamber, particularly when her father was in his cups; and that on a certain night, when the laird had had company, and was so overcome that he could not rise from his chair, he had died suddenly of apoplexy; and that no other skill was sent for, or near him, but this his detested son-in-law, whom he had by will disinherited, though the legal term for rendering that will competent had not expired. The body was coffined the second day after death, and locked up in a low room in one of the wings of the building; and nothing further could be elicited. The doctor was missing, and it was whispered that he had absconded; indeed it was evident, and the sheriff acknowledged, that according to the evidence taken, the matter had a very suspicious aspect, although there was no direct proof against the doctor. It was proved that he had attempted to bleed the patient, but had not succeeded, and that at that time the old laird was black in the face.

When it began to wear nigh night, and nothing further could be learned, the sheriff-clerk, a quiet considerate gentleman, asked why they had not examined the wright who made the coffin, and also placed the body in it? The thing had not been thought of; but he was found in court, and instantly put into the witness's box, and examined on oath. His name was James Sanderson, a stout-made, little, shrewd-looking man, with a very peculiar squint. He was examined thus by the procurator-fiscal.

"Were you long acquainted with the late Laird of Wineholm, James?"

"Yes, ever since I left my apprenticeship; for I suppose about nineteen years."

"Was he very much given to drinking of late?"

"I could not say. He took his glass geyan heartily."

"Did you ever drink with him?"

"O yes, mony a time."

"You must have seen him very drunk then? Did you ever see him so drunk that he could not rise, for instance?"

"O never! for, lang afore that, I could not have kenn'd whether he was sitting or standing."

"Were you present at the corpse-chesting?"

"Yes, I was."

"And were you certain the body was then deposited in the coffin?"

"Yes; quite certain."

"Did you screw down the coffin-lid firmly then, as you do others of the same make?"

"No, I did not."

"What were your reasons for that?"

"They were no reasons of mine; I did what I was ordered. There were private reasons, which I then wist not of. But, gentlemen, there are some things connected with this affair which I am bound in honour not to reveal; I hope you will not compel me to divulge them at present."

"You are bound by a solemn oath, James, which is the highest of all obligations; and for the sake of justice, you must tell everything you know; and it would be better if you would just tell your tale straightforward, without the interruption of question and answer."

"Well then, since it must be so: that day, at the chesting, the doctor took me aside, and says to me, 'James Sanderson, it will be necessary that something be put into the coffin to prevent any unpleasant flavour before the funeral; for, owing to the corpulence, and inflamed state of the body by apoplexy, there will be great danger of this.'

"'Very well, sir,' says I, 'what shall I bring?'

"'You had better only screw down the lid lightly at present, then,' said he, 'and if you could bring a bucketful of quicklime a little while hence, and pour it over the body, especially over the face, it is a very good thing, an excellent thing for preventing any deleterious effluvia from escaping.'

"'Very well, sir,' says I; and so I followed his directions. I procured the lime; and as I was to come privately in the evening to deposit it in the coffin, in company with the doctor alone, I was putting off the time in my workshop, polishing some trifle, and thinking to myself that I could not find in my heart to choke up my old friend with quicklime, even after he was dead, when, to my unspeakable horror, who should enter my workshop but the identical laird himself, dressed in his dead-clothes, in the very same manner in which I had seen him laid in the coffin, but apparently all streaming in blood to the feet. I fell back over against a cart-wheel, and was going to call out, but could not; and as he stood straight in the door, there was no means of escape. At length the apparition spoke to me in a hoarse trembling voice, enough to have frightened a whole conclave of bishops out of their senses; and it says to me, 'Jamie Sanderson! O, Jamie Sanderson! I have been forced to appear to you in a d——d frightful guise!' These were the very first words it spoke, and they were far frae being a lie; but I hafflins thought to mysel, that a being in such circumstances might have spoke with a little more caution and decency. I could make no answer, for my tongue refused all attempts at articulation, and my lips would not come together; and all that I could do was to lie back against my new cart-wheel, and hold up my hands as a kind of defence. The ghastly and blood-stained apparition, advancing a step or two, held up both its hands, flying with dead ruffles, and cried to me in a still more frightful voice, 'O my faithful old friend! I have been murdered! I am a murdered man, Jamie Sanderson! and if you do not assist me in bringing upon the wretch due retribution, you will be condemned to hell, sir.'"

"This is sheer raving, James," said the sheriff, interrupting him. "These words can be nothing but the ravings of a disturbed and heated imagination. I intreat you to recollect, that you have appealed to the great Judge of heaven and earth for the truth of what you assert here, and to answer accordingly."

"I know what I am saying, my lord sheriff," said Sanderson; "and I am telling naething but the plain truth, as nearly as my state of mind at the time permits me to recollect. The appalling figure approached still nearer and nearer to me, breathing threatenings if I would not rise and fly to its assistance, and swearing like a sergeant of dragoons at both the doctor and myself. At length it came so close on me, that I had no other shift but to hold up both feet and hands to shield me, as I had seen herons do when knocked down by a goshawk, and I cried out; but even my voice failed, so that I only cried like one through his sleep.

"'What the devil are you lying gaping and praying at there?' said he, seizing me by the wrists, and dragging me after him. 'Do you not see the plight I am in, and why won't you fly to succour me!'

"I now felt to my great relief, that this terrific apparition was a being of flesh, blood, and bones like myself; that, in short, it was indeed my kind old friend the laird popped out of his open coffin, and come over to pay me an evening visit, but certainly in such a guise as earthly visit was never paid. I soon gathered up my scattered senses, took my old friend into my room, bathed him all over, and washed him well in lukewarm water; then put him into a warm bed, gave him a glass or two of warm punch, and he came round amazingly. He caused me to survey his neck a hundred times I am sure; and I had no doubt he had been strangled, for there was a purple ring round it, which in some places was black, and a little swollen; his voice creaked like a door hinge, and his features were still distorted. He swore terribly at both the doctor and myself; but nothing put him half so mad as the idea of the quicklime being poured over him, and particularly over his face. I am mistaken if that experiment does not serve him for a theme of execration as long as he lives."

"So he is then alive, you say?" asked the fiscal.

"O yes, sir! alive and tolerably well, considering. We two have had several bottles together in my quiet room; for I have still kept him concealed, in

see what the doctor would do next. He is in terror for him somehow, until sixty days be over from some date that he talks of, and seems assured that that dog will have his life by hook or crook, unless he can bring him to the gallows betimes, and he is absent on that business to-day. One night lately, when fully half seas over, he set off to the schoolhouse, and frightened the dominie; and last night he went up to the stable, and gave old Broadcast a hearing for not keeping his mare well enough.

"It appeared that some shaking motion in the coffining of him had brought him to himself, after bleeding abundantly both at mouth and nose; that he was on his feet ere he knew how he had been disposed of, and was quite shocked at seeing the open coffin on the bed, and himself dressed in his grave-clothes, and all in one bath of blood. He flew to the door, but it was locked outside; he rapped furiously for something to drink; but the room was far removed from any inhabited part of the house, and none regarded. So he had nothing for it but to open the window, and come through the garden and the back loaning to my workshop. And as I had got orders to bring a bucketful of quicklime, I went over in the forenight with a bucketful of heavy gravel, as much as I could carry, and a little white lime sprinkled on the top of it; and being let in by the doctor, I deposited that in the coffin, screwed down the lid, and left it, and the funeral followed in due course, the whole of which the laird viewed from my window, and gave the doctor a hearty day's cursing for daring to support his head and lay it in the grave. And this, gentlemen, is the substance of what I know concerning this enormous deed, which is, I think, quite sufficient. The laird bound me to secresy until such time as he could bring matters to a proper bearing for securing of the doctor; but as you have forced it from me, you must stand my surety, and answer the charges against me."

The laird arrived that night with proper authority, and a number of officers, to have the doctor, his son-in-law, taken into custody; but the bird had flown; and from that day forth he was never seen, so as to be recognized, in Scotland. The laird lived many years after that; and though the thoughts of the quicklime made him drink a great deal, yet from that time he never suffered himself to get *quite* drunk, lest some one might have taken it into his head to hang him, and he not know anything about it. The dominie acknowledged that it was as impracticable to calculate what might happen in human affairs as to square the circle, which could only be effected by knowing the ratio of the circumference to the radius. For shoeing horses, vending news, and awarding proper punishments, the smith to this day just beats the world. And old John Broadcast is as thankful to Heaven as ever that things are as they are.

CHAPTER XII.

WINDOW WAT'S COURTSHIP.

Great have been the conquests, and grievous the deray wrought in the hearts of the rustic youth by some mountain nymphs. The confusion that particular ones have sometimes occasioned for a year or two almost exceeds credibility. When any young woman has obtained a great reputation for beauty, every young man in the bounds is sure either to be in love with her, or to believe that he is so; and as all these run on a Friday's evening to woo her, of course the pride and vanity of the fair is raised to such a height, that she will rarely yield a preference to any, but is sure to put them all off with jibes and jeers. This shyness, instead of allaying, never fails to increase the fervour of the flame; an emulation, if not a rivalship, is excited among the younkers, until the getting a single word exchanged with the reigning beauty becomes a matter of thrilling interest to many a tender-hearted swain; but, generally speaking, none of these admired beauties are married till they settle into the more quiet vale of life, and the current of admiration has turned towards others. Then do they betake themselves to sober reflection, listen to the most rational, though not the most youthful of their lovers, and sit down, contented to share through life the toils, sorrows, and joys of the humble cot.

I am not now writing of ladies, nor of "farmers' bonny daughters;" but merely of country maidens, such as ewe-milkers, hay-workers, har'st-shearers, the healthy and comely daughters of shepherds, hinds, country tradesmen, and small tenants; in short, all the rosy, romping, and light-hearted dames that handle the sickle, the hoe, the hay-rake, and the fleece. And of these I can say, to their credit, that rarely an instance happens of a celebrated beauty turning out a bad, or even an indifferent wife. This is perhaps owing to the circumstance of their never marrying very young (for a youthful marriage of a pair who have nought but their exertions and a good name to depend on for the support of a family, is far from being a prudent or highly commendable step), or that these belles, having had too much experience in the follies and flippancies of youthful love and youthful lovers, make their choice at last on principles of reason; or it may be owing to another reason still, namely, that among the peasantry young men never flock about, or make love to a girl who is not noted for activity as well as beauty. Cleverness is always the first recommendation; and consequently, when a young woman so endowed chooses to marry, it is natural to suppose that the good qualities, which before were only occasionally called into exercise, will then be exerted to the utmost. Experience is

the great teacher among the labouring class, and her maxims are carried down from father to son in all their pristine strength. Seldom are they violated in anything, and never in this. No young man will court a beautiful daw, unless he be either a booby or a rake.

In detailing a signal instance of the power of country beauty, I shall make use of fictitious names; and as I have not been an eye-witness to the scenes I mean to detail, I judge it best to give them in the colloquial style, exactly in the same manner as they have been rehearsed to me. Without adopting this mode, I might make a more perfect arrangement in my present story, but could not give it any degree of the interest it appeared to me to possess; nor could the characters be exhibited so well in any way as by letting them speak for themselves.

"Wat, what was the matter wi' you that ye never keepit your face to the minister the last Sabbath-day? Yon's an unco unreverend gate in a kirk, man. I hae seen you keep a good ee on the preacher, and take good tent to what was gaun, too; and troth I'm wae to see you altered to the waur."

"I kenna how I might chance to be looking, but I hope I was listening as weel as you, or ony that was there.—Heighow! It's a weary warld this!"

"What has made it siccan a weary warld, Wat? I'm sure it wasna about the ills o' life that the minister was preaching that day, that has gart ye change sae sair? Now, Wat, I tentit ye weel a' the day, and I'll be in your debt for a toop lamb at Michaelmas, gin ye'll just tell me ae distinct sentence o' the sermon on Sabbath last."

"Hout, Jock, man! ye ken I dinna want to make a jest about ony saucred thing; and as for your paulie toop lamb, what care I for it?"

"Ye needna think to win aff that gate, callant. Just confess the truth, that ye never heard a word the good man said, and that baith your heart and your ee war fixed on some object in the contrair direction. And I may be mista'en, but I think I could guess what it was."

"Whisht, lad, and let us alane o' your sinfu' surmeeses. I might turn my back on the minister during the time o' the prayer; but that was for getting a lean on the seat, and what ill was in that?"

"Ay, and ye might likewise hirsel yoursel up to the corner o' the seat a' the time o' baith the sermons, and lean your head on your hand, and look through your fingers too. Can ye deny this? or that your een were fixed the haill day on ae particular place?"

"Aweel, I winna gie a friend the lee to his face. But this I will say—that an you had been gieing a' the attention to the minister, that ane should do wha takes it upon him to lecture his neighbours at this rate, ye wadna hae been sae weel aveesed with respect to my behaviour in the kirk. Take that for your share o' blame. And mair than that, if I'm nae waur than you, neither am I waur than other folk; for an ye had lookit as weel at a' the rest as it seems ye did at me, ye wad hae seen that a' the men in the kirk were looking the same gate."

"And a' at the same object too! And a' as deeply interested in it as you? Isna that what ye're thinking? Ah, Wat, Wat! love winna hide! I saw a pair o' slae-black een that threw some geyan saucy disdainfu' looks up the kirk, and I soon saw the havoc they were making, and had made, i' your simple honest heart. Wow, man! but I fear me you are in a bad predickiment."

"Weel, weel, murder will out, and I confess between twa friends, Jock, there never was a lad in sic a predickiment as I am. I needna keep ought frae you; but for the life that's i' your bouk, dinna let a pater about it escape frae atween your lips. I wadna that it were kenn'd how deeply I am in love, and how little it is like to be requited, for the haill warld! But I am this day as miserable a man as breathes the breath o' life. For I like yon lass as man never likit another, and a' that I get is scorn, and gibes, and mockery in return. O Jock, I wish I was dead in an honest natural way, and that my burial-day were the morn!"

"Weel, after a', I daresay that is the best way o' winding up a hopeless love concern. But only it ought surely to be the last resource. Now, will ye be candid, and tell me gin ye hae made all lawful endeavours to preserve your ain life, as the commandment requires us to do, ye ken? Hae ye courtit the lass as a man ought to court her who is in every respect her equal?"

"O yes, I have! I have told her a' my love, and a' my sufferings; but it has been only to be mockit, and dismissed about my business."

"And for that ye whine and make wry faces, as you are doing just now? Na, na, Wat, that's no the gate o't;—a maid maun just be wooed in the same spirit she shows; and when she shows sauciness, there's naething for it but taking a step higher than her in the same humour, letting her always ken, and always see, that you are naturally her superior, and that you havena forgotten that you are even stooping from your dignity when you condescend to ask her to become your equal. If she refuse to be your joe at the fair, never either whine or look disappointed, but be sure to wale the bonniest lass you can get in the market, and lead her to the same party where your saucy dame is. Take her to the top o' the dance, the top o' the table at dinner, and laugh, and sing: and aye between hands, whisper your bonny partner; and if your ain lass dinna happen to be unco weel buckled, it is ten to ane she will find an opportunity of offering you her company afore night. If she look angry or offended at your attention to others, you are sure o' her. They are queer creatures the lasses, Wat, and I rather dread ye haena muckle skill or experience in their bits o'

wily gates. For, to tell you the truth, there's naething pleases me sae weel as to see them begin to pout, and prim their bits o' gabs, and look sulky out frae the wick o' the ee, and gar ilka feather and flower-knot quiver wi' their angry capers; for let me tell you, it is a great matter to get them to take offence—it lets a man see they are vexed for the loss o' him."

"If you had ever loved as I do, Jock, ye wad hae found little comfort in their offence. For my part, every disdainfu' word that yon dear lovely lassie says gangs to my heart like a red-hot spindle. My life is bound up in her favour. It is only in it that I can live, move, or breathe; and whenever she says a severe or cutting word to me, I feel as if ane o' my members were torn away, and I am glad to escape as lang as I am onything ava; for I find, if I war to remain, a few mae siccan sentences wad soon annihilate me."

"Ou ay! you're a buirdly chield, to be sure; but I have nae doubt ye wad melt away like snaw off a dike, or a dead sheep weel pykit by the corbies! Wow, man, but it maks me wae to think o't! and sae, to save you frae sic a melancholy end, I shall take in hand to bring her to your ain terms, in three months' time, if you will take my advice."

"O man, speak; for ye are garring a' the blood in my veins rin up to my head, as gin it war a thousand ants galloping like mad, running races."

"Weel, Wat, in the first place, I propose to gang down yonder a night by mysel, and speak baith to her father and her, to find how the land lies; and after that we can gang down baith thegither, and gie her a fair broadside—The deil's in't, if we sanna bring her to reason."

Wat scratched his head, and pulled the grass (that was quite blameless in the affair) furiously up by the roots, but made no answer. On being urged to declare his sentiments, he said, "I dinna ken about that way o' ganging down your lane; I wish you maunna stick by the auld fisher's rule, 'Every man for his ain hand.' For I ken weel, that nae man alive can see her, and speak to her, and no be in love wi' her."

"It is a good thing in love affairs, Wat, that there are hardly two in the world wha think the same way."

"Ay, but this is a particular case; for a' the men in the country think the same gate here, and rin the same gate to the wooing. It is impossible to win near the house on a Friday night without knocking your head against that of some rival. Na, na, John, this plan o' ganging down by yoursel winna do. And now when I think on't, ye had better no gang down ava; for if we gang down friends, we'll come up enemies; and that wadna be a very agreeable catastroff."

"Now shame fa' me, gin ever I heard sic nonsense! To think that a' the warld see wi' your een! Hear ye, Wat—I wadna gie that snap o' my fingers for her. I never saw her till Sunday last, when I came to your kirk ance errand for that purpose, and I wadna ken her again gin I war to meet her here come out to the glen wi' your whey—what ails you, ye fool, that you're dighting your een?"

"Come out to the glen wi' *my* whey! Ah, man! the words gaed through me like the stang of a bumbee. Come out to the glen wi' my whey! Gude forgie my sin, what is the reason I canna thole that thought? That were a consummation devoutly to be wussed, as the soloquy in the Collection says. I fear I'll never see that blessed sight! But, Jock, take my advice; stay at hame, and gangna near her, gin ye wad enjoy ony peace o' conscience."

"Ye ken naething about women, Wat, and as little about me. If I gang near her, it will only be to humble her a wee, and bring her to reason, for your sake. Jock the Jewel wadna say 'Wae's me!' for the best lass's frown in a' the kingdom o' Britain—whatever some of them might do for his."

Jock the Jewel went down in all his might and high experience, to put everything to rights between his friend Wat and the bonny Snaw-fleck, as this pink of a mountain damsel was called: for be it understood, that every girl in the parish was named after one of the birds of the air; and every man, too, young and old, had his by-name, by which we shall distinguish them all for the present. Thus the Snaw-fleck's father was called Tod-Lowrie (the fox); his eldest daughter, the Eagle; the second, the Sea-maw; and his only son was denominated the Foumart (polecat), on account of a notable hunt he once had with one of these creatures in the middle of the night, in a strange house;—and it was the worst name I ever heard for a young man. Our disconsolate lover was called Window Wat, on account of his bashful nature, and, as was alleged, because he was in the habit of hanging about the windows when he went a courting, and never venturing in. It was a good while after this first rencounter before the two shepherds met again with the opportunity of resuming the discussion of their love affairs. But at length an occasion offered, and then——But we must suffer every man to tell his own tale, else the sport will be spoiled.

"Weel, Wat, hae ye been ony mair down at Lowrie's Lodge, sin' I saw you?"

"And if I hae, I hae been little the better'o' you. I heard that you were there before me—and sinsyne too."

"Now, Wat, that's mere jealousy and suspicion, for ye didna see the lass to ken whether I was there or not. I ken ye wad be hinging about the window-soles as usual, keeking in, feasting your een, seeing other woosters beiking their shins at the ingle; but for a' that durstna venture ben. Come, I dinna like siccan sachless gates as thae. I *was* down, I'se no deny't, but I gaed to wark in a manner different from yours. Unco cauldrife wark that o' standing peenging about windows, man! Come, tell me a'

your expedition, and I'll tell you mine—like friends, ye ken."

"Mine's no ill to tell. I gaed down that night after I saw you, e'en though Wednesday be the widower's night. More than I were there, but I was fear'd ye had got there afore me, and then, wi' your great skill o' the ways o' women, ye might hae left me nae chance at a'. I was there, but I might as weel hae stayed at hame, for there were sae mony o' the out-wale wallie tragle kind o' wooers there, like mysel, a' them that canna win forret on a Friday night, that I got the back o' the hallan to keep; but there's ae good thing about the auld Tod's house—they never ditt up their windows. Ane sees aye what's gaun on within doors. They leave a' their actions open to the ee o' man, yon family; and I often think it is nae ill sign o' them. Auld Tod-Lowrie himsel sometimes looks at the window in a kind o' considering mood, as if doubtful that at that moment he is both overheard and overseen; but, or it is lang, he cocks up his bonnet and cracks as crouse as ever, as if he thought again:—'There's aye ae ee that sees me at a' times, and a ear that hears me; and when that's the case, what need I care for a' the birkies o' the land?'—I like that open independent way that the family has. But oh, they are surely sair harassed wi' wooers!"

"The wooers are the very joy o' their hearts, excepting the Foumart's; he hates them a' unless they can tell him hunders o' lies about battles, bogles, and awfu' murders and persecutions. And the leaving o' the windows open too is not without an aim. The Eagle is beginning to weary for a husband; and if ye'll notice how dink she dresses hersel ilka night, and jinks away at the muckle wheel as she war spinning for a wager. They hae found out that they are often seen at night, yon lasses; and though they hae to work the foulest work o' the bit farm a' the day when naebody sees them, at night they are a' dressed up like pet-ewes for a market, and ilka ane is acting a part. The Eagle is yerking on at the wheel, and now and then gieing a smirk wi' her face to the window. The Snaw-fleck sits busy in the neuk, as sleek as a kinnen, and the auld clocker fornent her admiring and misca'ing her a' the time. The white Sea-maw flees up and down the house, but and ben, ae while i' the spence, ane i' the awmrie, and then to the door wi' a soap-suds. Then the Foumart, he sits knitting his stocking, and quarrelling wi' the haill o' them. The feint a haet he minds but sheer ill-nature. If there be a good body i' the house, the auld Tod is the ane. He is a geyan honest, downright carle, the Tod."

"It is hardly the nature o' a tod to be sae; and there's no ae bit o' your description that I gang in wi'! It is a fine douce family.

"'But O the Snaw-fleck!
The bonny, bonny Snaw-fleck!
She is the bird for me, O!'"

"If love wad make you a poeter, Wat, I wad say it had wrought miracles. Ony mair about the bonny Snaw-fleck, eh? I wonder how you can make glowing love-sangs standing at a cauld window—No the way that, man. Tell me plainly, did ye ever get a word o' the bonny lass ava?'

"Hey how me!—I can hardly say that I did; and yet I hae been three times there sin' I saw you."

"And gat your travel for your pains a' the times!"

"No sae bad as that, neither. I had the pleasure o' seeing her, bonny, braw, innocent, and happy, busy working her mother's wark. I saw her smile at her brother's crabbit words, and I saw the approving glances beam frae the twa auld folk's een. When her father made family-worship, she took her Bible, and followed devoutly wi' her ee the words o' holy writ, as the old man read them; and her voice in singing the psalm was as mellow and as sweet as the flute playing afar off. Ye may believe me, Jock, when I saw her lift up her lovely face in sweet devotion, I stood on the outside o' the window and grat like a bairn. It was mair than my heart could thole; and gin it warna for shame, I wad gang every night to enjoy the same heavenly vision."

"As I'm a Christian man, Wat, I believe love *has* made a poeter of you. Ye winna believe me, man, that very woman is acting her part. Do you think she didna ken that ye saw her, and was making a' thae fine murgeons to throw glamour in your een, and gar you trow she was an angel? I managed otherwise; but it is best to tell a' plain out, like friends, ye ken. Weel, down I goes to Lowrie's Lodge, and, like you, keeks in at the window; and the first thing I saw was the auld Tod toving out tobacco-reek like a moorburn. The haill biggin was sae chokefu' o' the vapour, it was like a dark mist, and I could see naething through it but his ain braid bonnet moving up and down like the tap o' the smith's bellows, at every poogh he gave. At length he handit by the pipe to the auld wife, and the reek soon turned mair moderate. I could then see the lasses a' dressed out like dolls, and several young boobies o' hinds, thrashers, and thrum-cutters, sitting gashing and glowring among them.—I shall soon set your backs to the wa', thinks I, if I could get ony possible means o' introduction.—It wasna lang till ane offered; out comes a lass wi' a cog o' warm water, and she gars it a' clash on me. 'Thanks t'ye for your kindness, my woman,' says I. 'Ye canna say I hae gi'en ye a cauld reception,' says she. 'But wha are ye, standing like a thief i' the mirk'—'Maybe kenn'd folk, gin it war daylight,' quo' I. 'Ye had better come in by, and see gin candle-light winna beet the mister,' says she. 'Thanks t'ye,' says I; 'but I wad rather hae you to come out by, and try gin sternlight winna do!'—'Catch me doing that,' cried she, and bounced into the house again.

"I then laid my lug close to the window, and heard ane asking wha that was she was speaking to. 'I dinna ken him,' quo' she; 'but I trow I hae

gi'en him a mark to ken him by; I hae gi'en him a balsam o' boiling water.'

"'I wish ye may hae peeled a' the hide aff his shins,' quo' the Foumart, and he mudged and leugh; 'haste ye, dame, rin awa out and lay a plaster o' lime and linseed-oil to the lad's trams," continued he.

"'I can tell ye wha it is,' said ane o' the hamlet wooers; 'it will be Jock the Jewel comed down frae the moors; for I saw him waiting about the chop and the smiddy till the darkness came on. If ye hae disabled him, lady Sea-bird, the wind will blaw nae mair out o' the west.'

"I durstna trust them wi' my character and me in hearing; sae, without mair ado, I gangs bauldly ben.—'Gude-e'en to ye, kimmers a' in a ring,' says I.

"'Gude-e'en t'ye, honest lad,' quo' the Eagle. 'How does your cauld constitution and our potato-broo sort?'

"'Thanks t'ye, bonny lass,' says I. 'I hae gotten a right sair skelloch; but I wish I warna woundit nae deeper somewhere else than i' the shinbanes; I might shoot a flying herne for a' that's come and gane yet.'

"'That's weel answered, lad,' quo' the Tod. 'Keep her down, for she's unco glib o' the gab, especially to strangers.'

"'You will never touch a feather o' her wing, lad,' quo she. 'But if ye could———I'll say nae mair.'

"'Na, na, Mistress Eagle, ye soar ower high for me,' says I. 'I'll bring down nae sky-cleaving harpies to pick the een out o' my sheep, and my ain into the bargain, maybe. I see a bit bonny norland bird in the nook here, that I would rather woo to my little hamely nest. The Eagle maun to her eyry; or, as the auld ballant says—

> 'Gasp and speel to her yermit riven,
> Amid the mists and the rains of heaven.'

It is the innocent, thrifty little Snaw-fleck that will suit me, wi' the white wings and the blue body. She's pleased wi' the hardest and hameliest fare; a picking o' the seeds o' the pipe-bent is a feast to her.'"

"Now, by the faith o' my body, Jewel, that wasna fair. Was that preparing the way for your friend's success?"

"Naething but sheer banter, man; like friends, ye ken. But ye sall hear. 'The Snaw-fleck's a braw beast,' said I, 'but the Eagle's a waster and a destroyer.'

"'She's true to her mate, though,' said the dame; 'but the tither is a bird o' passage, and mate to the haill flock.'

"I was a wee startled at this observe, when I thought of the number of wooers that were rinning after the bonny Snaw-fleck. However, I didna like to yield to the haughty Eagle; and I added, that I wad take my chance o' the wee Snaw-bird, for though she war ane of a flock, that flock was an honest ane. This pleased them a'; and the auld slee Tod, he spake up and said, he hadna the pleasure o' being acquaint wi' me, but he hoped he shouldna hae it in his power to say sae again. Only there was ae thing he beggit to remind me o', before I went any farther, and that was, that the law of Padan-aram was established in his family, and he could by no means give a younger daughter in marriage before one that was elder.

"'I think you will maybe keep them for a gay while, then,' said the Foumart. 'But if the Sea-gull wad stay at hame, I carena if the rest were at Banff. She's the only usefu' body I see about the house.'

"'Haud the tongue o' thee, thou illfa'red, cat-witted serf,' said the auld wife. 'I'm sure ony o' them's worth a faggald o' thee! And that lad, gin I dinna forecast aglee, wad do credit to ony kin.'

"'He's rather ower weel giftit o' the gab,' quo' the menseless thing. This remark drew a damp on my spirits a' the night after, and I rather lost ground than gained ony mair. The ill-hued weazel-blawn thing of a brother never missed an opportunity of gieing me a yerk wi' his ill-scrapit tongue, and the Eagle was aye gieing hints about the virtues o' potato-broo. The auld Tod chewed tobacco and thrawed his mouth, lookit whiles at ane and whiles at anither, and seemed to enjoy the joke as muckle as ony o' them. As for the bonny Snaw-bird, she never leugh aboon her breath, but sat as mim and as sleek as a moudie. There were some very pretty smiles and dimples gaun, but nae gaffawing. She is really a fine lass."

"There it goes now! I tauld you how it would be! I tell you, Jewel, the deil a bit o' this is fair play."

"Ane may tell what he thinks—like a friend, ye ken. Weel—to make a lang tale short—I couldna help seeing a' the forenight that she had an ee to me. I couldna help *that*, ye ken. Gat mony a sweet blink and smile thrawn o'er the fire to me—couldna help that either, ye ken—never lost that a friend gets. But at length a' the douce wooers drew off ane by ane—saw it was needless to dispute the point wi' me that night. Ane had to gang home to supper his horses, another to fodder the kye, and another had to be hame afore his master took the book, else he had to gang supperless to bed. I sat still—needless to lose a good boon for lack o' asking. The potatoes were poured and champit—naebody bade me bide to supper; but I sat still; and the auld wife she slippit away to the awmrie, and brought a knoll o' butter like ane's nieve, and slippit that into the potato-pot hidling ways, but the fine flavour that filled the house soon outed the secret. I drew in my seat wi' the rest, resolved to hae my share. I saw that I had a hearty welcome frae them a' but the Foumart, and I loot him girn as muckle as he likit. Weel, I saw it was turning late, and there was a necessity for proceeding to business, else the prayers wad be on. Sae I draws

to my plaid and staff, and I looks round to the lasses; but in the meantime I dropt half a wink to the Snaw-fleck, and I says, 'Weel, wha o' you bonny lasses sets me the length o' the townhead yett the night?'

"'The feint a ane o' them,' quo' the Foumart wi' a girn.

"'The townhead yett the night, honest lad?' quo' the wife. 'Be my certie, thou's no gaun nae siccan a gaet. Dis thou think thou can gang to the muirs the night? Nay, nay, thou shalt take share of a bed wi' our son till it be day, for the night's dark and the road's eiry.'

"'He needna stay unless he likes,' quo' the Foumart.

"'Haud thy tongue,' said the wife. So I sat down again, and we grew a' unco silent. At length the Eagle rose and flew to the door. It wadna do—I wadna follow; sat aye still, and threw another straight wink to the bonny Snaw-fleck, but the shy shirling sat snug in her corner, and wadna move. At length the Eagle comes gliding in, and in a moment, or ever I kenn'd what I was doing, claps down a wee table at my left hand, and the big Bible and psalm-book on't. I never got sic a stound, and really thought I wad sink down through the floor; and when I saw the lasses shading their faces wi' their hands, I grew waur.

"'What ails thee, honest lad, that thou looks sae baught?' said the auld wife. 'Sure thou's no ashamed to praise thy Maker? for an thou be, I shall be ashamed o' thee. It is an auld family custom we hae, aye to gie a stranger the honour o' being our leader in this duty; and gin he refuse that, we dinna countenance him nae mair.'

"That was a yerker! I now fand I was fairly in the mire. For the saul o' me I durstna take the book; for though I had a good deal o' good words by heart, I didna ken how I might gar them compluther. And as I took this to be a sort o' test to try a wooer's abilities, I could easily see that my hough was fairly i' the sheep-crook, and that what wi' sticking the psalm, bungling the prayer, potato-broo and a' thegither, I was like to come badly off. Sae I says, 'Gudewife, I'm obliged t'ye for the honour ye hae offered me; and sae far frae being ashamed o' my Maker's service, I rejoice in it; but I hae mony reasons for declining the honour. In the first place, war I to take the task out o' the gudeman's hand, it wad be like the youngest scholar o' the school pretending to teach his master; and were I to stay here a' night, it wad be principally for the purpose of hearing family worship frae his ain lips. But the truth is, and that's my great reason, I *can not* stay a' night. I want just ae single word o' this bonny lass, and then I maun take the road, for I'm far ower late already.'

"'I bide by my text, young man,' says the Tod; 'the law of Padan-aram is the law of this house.'

"'And, by the troth o' me, thou'lt find it nae bad law for thee, honest lad,' said the wife; 'our eldest will meak the *best* wife for thee—teak thou my word for that.'

"'Maybe she wad,' said I, 'but I want just a single word wi' this dink chicken; but it isna on my ain account—it is a word frae a friend, and I'm bound in honour to deliver it.'

"'That is spoken sae like an honest man, and a disinterested ane,' quo' the Tod, 'that I winna refuse the boon. Gae your ways ben to our ben-end, and say what ye hae to say; for I dinna suffer my bairns to gang out i' the dark wi' strangers.'

"'Come away, then, hinny,' says I. She rose wi' slow and ill will, for I saw she wad rather I had been to speak for mysel; and as I perceived this, as soon as I got her ben the house, and the door fairly steekit, I says till her, says I, 'Now, bonny lassie, I never saw your face afore but ainee, and that day I gaed mony fit to see't. I came here the night ainee errand to speak a word for a friend, but really'—Here she interrupted me as soon as she heard *but really*.

"'Could your friend no speak his word himsel!' said she.

"'As you say,' says I; 'that is good sense—I ca that good, sound common sense; for a man does always his own turn best; and therefore I maun tell you, that I am fairly fa'en in love wi' you mysel, and am determined to hae you for my ain, cost what it will.'"

At this part of the story, Wat sprung to his feet—"Did you say sae?" said he. "If ye did, ye are a fause loun, and a villain, and I am determined to hae pennyworths o' *you*, cost what it will."

"Hout, fych, fie, Wat, man! dinna be a fool. Sit down, and let us listen to reason, like friends, ye ken. Ye sall hear, man—ye sall hear."

"I winna hear another word, Jewel. Up to your feet; either single stick or dry nieves, ony o' them ye like. Ye gat the lass ben the house on the credit o' my name, and that was the use you made o't! Ye dinna ken how near my heart, and how near my life, ye war edging then, and I'll break every bane in your bouk for it; only ye shall hae fair play, to smash mine, gin ye can. Up, I say; for you was a deed I winna brook."

"Perhaps I was wrang; but I'll speak the truth. Sit down, and ye shall hear—and then, gin we maun fight, there's time enough for it after. If I had thought I acted wrang, I wadna hae tauld it sae plain out; but when twa folk think the same gate, it isna a good sign. 'I'm in love wi' you, and am determined to hae you,' says I.

"'I winna hear a single word frae ane that's betraying his friend,' said she;—not one word, after your avowal to my father. If he hae ony private word, say it—and if no, good night.'

"Did she say that, the dear creature? Heaven bless her bonny face!"

"'I did promise to a particular friend o' mine to

speak a kind word for him,' said I. 'He is unco blate and modest, but there's no a better lad; and I never saw ane as deeply and as distractedly in love; for though I feel I *do* love, it is with reason and moderation.'"

"There again!" cried Wat, who had begun to hold out his hand—"There again! Do you ca' that acting like a faithfu' friend?"

"'Not a word of yourself,' said she. 'Who is this friend of yours? And has he any more to say by you? Not one word more of yourself—at least not to-night.'"

"At least not to-night!" repeated Wat, again and again—"Did she say that? I dinna like the addition ava."

"That was what she said; and naething could be plainer than that she was inviting me back; but as I was tied down, I was obliged to say something about you. 'Ye ken Window Wat!' says I. 'He is o'er sight and judgment in love wi' you, and he comes here aince or twice every week, just for the pleasure o' seeing you through the window. He's a gay queer compost—for though he is a' soul, yet he wants spirit.'"

"Did ye ca' me a compost? That was rather a queer term, begging your pardon," observed Wat.

"'I hae seen the lad sometimes,' says she. 'If he came here to see me, he certainly need not be sae muckle ashamed of his errand as not to show his face. I think him a main saft ane.'

"'Ye're quite i' the wrang, lass,' says I. 'Wat's a great dab. He's an arithmeticker, a 'stronomer, a historian, and a grand poeter, and has made braw sangs about yoursel. What think ye o' being made a wife to sic a hero as him? Od help ye, it will raise ye as high as the moon.'"

"I'll tell ye what it is, Jock the Jewel—the neist time ye gang to court, court for yoursel; for a' that ye hae said about me is downright mockery, and it strikes me that you are baith a selfish knave and a gommeril. Sae good e'en t'ye for the present. I owe you a good turn for your kind offices down by. I'll speak for mysel in future, and do ye the same—*like friends, ye ken*—that's a' I say."

"If I speak for mysel, I ken wha will hae but a poor chance," cried Jock after him.

The next time our two shepherds met, it was in the identical smithy adjoining to Lowrie's Lodge, and that at six o'clock on a December evening. The smith looked exceedingly wise, and when he heard the two swains begin to cut and sneer at one another, it was delicate food for Vulcan. He puffed and blew at the bellows, and thumped at the stithy, and always between put in a disjointed word or two. "Mae hunters! mae hunters for the Tod's bairns—hem, phoogh, phoogh—will be worried now!—phoogh"—thump, thump—"will be run down now—hem!"

"Are ye gaun far this way the night, Jewel, an ane may speir?"

"Far enough for you, Wat, I'm thinking. How has the praying been coming on this while bygane?"

"What d'ye mean, Mr. Jewel? If ye will speak, let it no be in riddles. Rather speak nonsense, as ye used to do."

"I am speaking in nae riddles, lad. I wat weel a' the country-side kens that ye hae been gaun learning prayers aff Hervey's Meditations, and crooning them o'er to yoursel in every cleuch o' the glen, a' to tame a young she-fox wi'."

"And that ye hae been lying under the hands o' the moor doctor a month, and submitting to an operation frae the effects o' somebody's potato-broo—isna that as weel kent?"

"Till't, lads, till't!" cried the smith, "that's the right way o' ganging to work—phoogh!"—clink, clink—"pepper away!"—clink, clink—"soon be baith as het as nailstrings—phoogh!"

The mention of the potato-broo somewhat abated Jock's sarcastic humour, for he had suffered much inconvenience from the effects of it, and the circumstance had turned the laugh against him among his companions. Ere long he glided from the smithy, and after that Wat sat in the fidgets for fear his rival had effected a previous engagement with the Snaw-fleck. The smith perceiving it, seized him in good humour, and turned him out at the door. "Nae time to stay now, lad—nae time to wait here now. The hunt will be up, and the young Tod holed, if ye dinna make a' the better speed." Then, as Wat vanished down the way, the smith imitated the sound of the fox-hounds, and the cries of the huntsmen. "Will be run down now, thae young Tods—heavy metal laid on now; we'll have a walding heat some night, an' the track keep warm," said the smith, as he fell to the big bellows with both hands.

When Wat arrived at Lowrie's Lodge, he first came in contact with one wooer, and then another, hanging about the corners of the house, but finding that none of them was his neighbour and avowed rival, he hasted to his old quiet station at the back window, not the window where the Jewel stood when he met with his mischance, but one right opposite to it. There he saw the three bonniest birds of the air surrounded with admirers, and the Jewel sitting cheek by cheek with the lovely Snaw-bird. The unbidden tears sprung to Wat's eyes, but it was not from jealousy, but from the most tender affection, as well as intense admiration, that they had their source. The other wooers that were lingering without, joined him at the window, and Wat feeling this an incumbrance, and eager to mar his rival's success, actually plucked up courage, and strode in amongst them all.

"How came the twa moorland chiels on at the courting the other night?"

"It's hard to say; there are various accounts about the matter."

"What does the smith say? for though his sentences are but short, he says them loud enough, and often enough ower, and folks reckon there's aye some truth in the foundation."

"I can tell ye what he says, for I heard him on the subject aftener than aince, and his information was precisely as follows: 'The Tod's bairns maun gang now, lads—I'm saying, the Tod's bairns maun gang now—eh, Menye? fairly run down. Half-a-dozen tykes ower sair for ae young Tod—eh? Fairly holed the young ane, it seems—I'm sayin, the young ane's holed. Nought but a pick and shool wantit to hook her, Jewel has gi'en mouth there—I'm saying, auld Jewel has gi'en mouth there. Poor Wat has been obliged to turn to the auld ane—he's on the full track o' her—I'm saying, he's after her, full trot. But some thinks she'll turn her tail to a craig, and wear him up. It was Wat that got the honour o' the beuk, though—I'm saying, it was him that took the beuk—wan gloriously through, too. The saxteenth o' the Romans, without a hamp, hinny. Was that true, think ye?—I'm saying, think ye that was true? Cam to the holy kiss; a' the wooers' teeth watered—eh? Think ye that was true, hinny? The Jewel was amaist comed to grips at that verse about the kiss—eh?—I'm saying, the Jewel closed wi' the beauty there, I'm saying. Ha! ha! I think that wadna be true.' This is the length the smith's information gangs."

"I'm sure, gin the Snaw-fleck take the Jewel, in preference to Wat, it will show a strange perversion of taste."

"O, there's naebody can answer for the fancies of a woman. But they're a geyan auld-farrant set the Tods, and winna be easily outwitted. Did ye no hear ought of a moon-light match that was to be there?"

"Not a word; and if I had, I wadna hae believed it."

"The Jewel has been whispering something to that effect; he's sae uplifted, he canna haud his tongue, and I dinna wonder at it. But, for a' the offers the bonny lass had, that she should fix on him is a miracle. Time tries a'; and Jock may be cheated yet."

"Yes, time is the great trier of human events. Let any man review his correspondences for ten years back, and he will then see how widely different his own prospects of the future have been from the lessons taught him by that hoary monitor, Time. But, for the present, matters turned out as the fortunate wooer had insinuated; for, in a short month after this confabulation had taken place, the auld Tod's helpmate arose early one morning, and began a-bustling about the house in her usual busy way, and always now and then kept giving hints to her bonny lasses to rise and begin to their daily tasks. "Come, stir ye, stir ye, my bonny bairns. When the sterns o' heaven hae gane to their beds, it is time the flowers o' the yird war rising. Come, come! No stirring yet? Busk ye, busk ye, like thrifty bairns, and dinna let the lads say that ye are sleepie dowdies, that lie in your beds till the sun burns holes in your coverlets. Fie, fie! There has been a reek i' Jean Lowrie's lum this half-hour. The moor-cock has crawed, the mawkin cowered, and the whaup yammered abune the flower. Streek your young limbs—open your young een—a foot on the cauld floor, and sleep will soon be abune the cluds. Up, up, my winsome bairns!"

The white Lady Sea-bird was soon afoot, for she slept by herself, but the old dame still kept speaking away to the other two, at one time gibing, at another coaxing them to rise, but still there was no answer. "Peace be here, Helen, but this is an unco sleep-sleeping!" said she. "What has been asteer owernight? I wish your twa titties hasna been out wi' the men!"

"Ay, I wish they binna out wi' them still; for I heard them steal out yestreen, but I never heard them steal in again."

The old wife ran to the bed, and in a moment was heard exclaiming, "The sorrow be i' my een gin ever I saw the like o' that! I declare the bed's as cauld as a curling-stane! Ay, the nest's cauld, and the birds are flown. Oh, wae be to the day! wae be to the day! Gudeman, gudeman, get up and raise the parishen, for our bairns are baith stown away!"

"Stown away!" cried the father, "What does the woman mean?"

"Ay, let them gang," cried the son, "they're weel away, gin they bide."

"Tewhoo! hoo-hoo!" cried the daughter, weeping. "That comes o' your laws o' Padan-aram! What had ye ado with auld Laban's rules! Ye might hae letten us gang aff as we could win. There, I am left to spin tow, wha might hae been married the first, had it no been for your daft laws o' Padan-aram."

The girl cried, the son laughed, the old woman raved and danced through very despair, but the gudeman took the matter quite calmly, as if determined to wait the issue with resignation, for better or worse.

"Haud your tongues, ilk ane o' ye," said he. "What's a' the fy-gae-to about? I hae that muckle to trust to my lasses, that I can lippen them as weel out o' my sight as in my sight, and as weel wi' young men as wi' auld women. Bairns that are brought up in the fear, nurture, and admonition o' their Maker, will aye swee to the right side, and sae will mine. Gin they thought they had a right to choose for themselves, they were right in exercising that right; and I'm little feared that their choices be bad anes, or yet that they be contrary to my wishes. Sae I rede ye to haud a' your tongues, and tak nae mair notice o' ought that has happened than if it hadna been. We're a' in gude hands to guide us; and though we whiles pu' the reins out o'

his hand to tak a gallop our ain gate, yet He winna leave us lang to our ain direction."

With these sagacious words, the auld sly Tod settled the clamour and outcry in his family that morning; and the country has never doubted to this day that he plowed with his own heifers.

On the evening previous to this colloquy, the family of the Tods went to rest at an early hour. There had been no wooers admitted that night, and no sooner had the two old people begun to breathe deep, than the eldest and youngest girls, who slept in an apartment by themselves, and had everything in readiness, eloped from their father's cot, the Eagle with a lightsome heart and willing mind, but the younger with many fears and misgivings. For thus the matter stood: Wat sighed and pined in love for the Snaw-fleck, but he was young and modest, and could not tell his mind; but he was such a youth as a maiden would love—handsome, respectable, and virtuous, and a match with him was so likely, that no one ever supposed the girl would make objections to it. Jock, on the other hand, was nearly twice her age, talkative, forward, and self-conceited; and, it was thought, rather wanted to win the girl for a brag, than for any great love he bore her. But Jock was rich, and when one has told that, he has told enough. In short, the admired, the young, the modest, and reserved Snaw-fleck, in order to get quit of her father's laws of Padan-aram, agreed to make a run-away marriage with Jock the Jewel. But what was far more extraordinary, her youthful lover agreed to accompany her as bridesman, and, on that account, it may possibly be supposed, her eldest sister never objected to accompany her as maid.

The shepherds had each of them provided himself with a good horse, saddle, and pillion; and, as the custom is, the intended bride was committed to the care of the best-man, and the Eagle was mounted behind her brother-in-law that was to be. It was agreed, before mounting, that in case of their being parted in the dark by a pursuit, or any other accident, their place of rendezvous was to be at the Golden Harrow, in the Candlemaker-Row, towards which they were to make with all speed.

They had a wild moorland path to traverse for some space, on which there were a multiplicity of tracks, but no definitive road. The night was dark and chill, and, on such ground, the bride was obliged to ride constantly with her right hand round Wat's waist, and Wat was obliged to press that hand to his bosom, for fear of its being cold, and in the excess of his politeness he magnified the intemperance of the night at least sevenfold. When pressing that fair hand to his bosom, Wat sometimes thought to himself, what a hard matter it was that it should so soon be given away to another; and then he wiped a tear from his eye, and did not speak again for a good while. Now the night, as was said, being very dark, and the bride having made a pleasant remark, Wat spontaneously lifted that dear hand from his bosom, in order to attempt passing it to his lips, but (as he told me himself) without the smallest hope of being permitted. But behold! the gentle ravishment was never resisted! On the contrary, as Wat replaced the insulted hand in his bosom, he felt the pressure of his hand gently returned.

Wat was confounded, electrified! and felt as the scalp of his head had been contracting to a point. He felt, in one moment, as if there had been a new existence sprung up within him, a new motive for life, and for every great and good action; and, without any express aim, he felt a disposition to push onward. His horse soon began to partake of his rider's buoyancy of spirits (which a horse always does), so he cocked up his ears, mended his pace, and, in a short time, was far ahead of the heavy, stagnant-blooded beast on which the Jewel bridegroom and his buxom Eagle rode. She had *her* right arm round *his* waist too, of course; but her hand lacked the exhilarating qualities of her lovely sister's; and yet one would have thought that the Eagle's looks were superior to those of most young girls outgone thirty.

"I wish thae young fools wad take time and ride at leisure; we'll lose them on this black moor a'thegither, and then it is a question how we may foregather again," said the bridegroom; at the same time making his hazel sapling play yerk on the hind-quarters of his nag. "Gin the gowk let aught happen to that bit lassie o' mine under cloud o' night, it wad be a' ower wi' me—I could never get aboon that. There are some things, ye ken, Mrs. Eagle, for a' your sneering, that a man can never get aboon."

"No very mony o' them, gin a chield hae ony spirit," returned the Eagle. "Take ye time, and take a little care o' your ain neck and mine. Let them gang their gates. Gin Wat binna tired o' her, and glad to get quat o' her, or they win to the Ports o' Edinburgh, I hae tint my computation."

"Na, if he takes care o' *her*, that's a' my dread," rejoined he, and at the same time kicked viciously with both heels, and applied the sapling with great vigour. But "the mair haste the waur speed" is a true proverb; for the horse, instead of mending his pace, slackened it, and absolutely grew so frightened for the gutters on the moor that he could hardly be persuaded to take one of them, even though the sapling sounded loud and thick on his far loin. He tried this ford and the other ford, and smelled and smelled with long-drawn breathings. "Ay, ye may snuff!" cried Jock, losing all patience; "the deil that ye had ever been foaled!—Hilloa! Wat Scott, where are ye?"

"Hush, hush, for gudesake," cried the Eagle; "ye'll raise the country, and put a' out thegither."

They listened for Wat's answer, and at length heard a far-away whistle. The Jewel grew like a man half distracted, and in spite of the Eagle's remonstrances, thrashed on his horse, cursed him, and

bellowed out still the more; for he suspected what was the case, that, owing to the turnings and windings of his horse among the hags, he had lost his aim altogether, and knew not which way he went. Heavens! what a stentorian voice he sent through the moor before him! but he was only answered by the distant whistle, that still went farther and farther away.

When the bride heard these loud cries of desperation so far behind, and in a wrong direction, she was mightily tickled, and laughed so much that she could hardly keep her seat on the horse; at the same time she continued urging Wat to ride, and he, seeing her so much amused and delighted at the embarrassment of her betrothed and sister, humoured her with equal good-will, rode off, and soon lost all hearing of the unfortunate bridegroom. They came to the high-road at Middleton, cantered on, and reached Edinburgh by break of day, laughing all the way at their unfortunate companions. Instead, however, of putting up at the Golden Harrow, in order to render the bridegroom's embarrassment still more complete, at the bride's suggestion, they went to a different corner of the city, namely, to the White Horse, Canongate. There the two spent the morning, Wat as much embarrassed as any man could be, but his lovely companion quite delighted at the thoughts of *what* Jock and her sister *would do*. Wat could not understand her for his life, and he conceived that she did not understand herself; but perhaps Wat Scott was mistaken. They breakfasted together; but for all their long and fatiguing journey, neither of them seemed disposed to eat. At length Wat ventured to say, "We'll be obliged to gang to the Harrow, and see what's become o' our friends."

"O no, no! by no means!" cried she fervently; "I would not, for all the world, relieve them from such a delightful scrape. What the two *will do* is beyond my comprehension."

"If ye want just to bamboozle them a' thegither, the best way to do that is for you and me to marry," said Wat, "and leave them twa to shift for themselves."

"O that wad be so grand!" said she.

Though this was the thing nearest to honest Wat's heart of all things in the world, he only made the proposal by way of joke, and as such he supposed himself answered. Nevertheless, the answer made the hairs of his head creep once more. "My truly, but that wad gar our friend Jock loup twa gates at aince!" rejoined Wat.

"It wad be the grandest trick that ever was played upon man," said she.

"It wad mak an awfu' sound in the country," said Wat.

"It wad gang through the twa shires like a hand-bell," said she.

"Od, I really think it is worth our while to try't," said he.

"O by a' manner o' means!" cried she, clasping her hands together for joy.

Wat's breath cut short, and his visage began to alter. He was likely to acquire the blessing of a wife rather more suddenly than he anticipated, and he began to wish that the girl might be in her perfect senses. "My dear M—," said he, "are you serious? would you really consent to marry me!"

"Would I consent to marry you?" reiterated she. "That is siccan a question to speer!"

"It *is* a question," said Wat, "and I think a very natural ane."

"Ay, it is a question, to be sure," said she; "but it is ane that ye ken ye needna hae put to me to answer, at least till ye had tauld me whether ye wad marry me or no."

"Yes, faith, I will—there's my hand on it," eagerly exclaimed Wat. "Now, what say ye!"

"No," said she; "that is, I mean—yes."

"I wonder ye war sae lang o' thinking about that," said Wat. "Ye aught surely to hae tauld me sooner."

"Sae I wad, if ever ye had speered the question," said she.

"What a stupid idiot I was!" exclaimed Wat, and rapped on the floor with his stick for the landlord. "An it be your will sir, we want a minister," says Wat.

"There's one in the house, sir," said the landlord, chuckling with joy at the prospect of some fun. "Keep a daily chaplain here—Thirlstane's motto, 'Aye ready.' Could ye no contrive to do without him?"

"Na, na, sir, we're folk frae the country," said Wat; "we hae comed far and foul gate for a preevat but honest hand-fasting."

"Quite right, quite right," said my landlord. "Never saw a more comely country couple. Your business is done for you at once;" at the same time he tapped on the hollow of his hand, as much as to say some reward must be forthcoming. In a few minutes he returned, and setting the one cheek in at the side of the door, said, with great rapidity, "Could not contrive to do without the minister, then? Better?—no getting off again. Better!—what?—Can't do without him?"

"O no, sir," said Wat, who was beginning a long explanatory speech, but my landlord cut him short, by introducing a right reverend divine, more than half-seas over. He was a neat, well-powdered, cheerful little old gentleman, but one who never asked any farther warrant for the marrying of a couple than the full consent of parties. About this he was very particular, and advised them, in strong set phrases, to beware of entering rashly into that state ordained for the happiness of mankind. Wat thought he was advising him against the match, but told him he was very particularly situated. Parties soon came to a right understanding, the match was made, the minister had his fee, and afterwards he

[illegible] WAT'S COURTSHIP — THE FLIGHT.

[illegible]

and the landlord invited themselves to the honour and very particular pleasure of dining with the young couple at two.

What has become of Jock the Jewel and his partner all this while? We left him stabled in a mossy moor, surrounded with haggs, and bogs, and mires, every one of which would have taken a horse over the back; at least so Jock's great strong plough-horse supposed, for he became so terrified that he absolutely refused to take one of them. Now, Jock's horse happened to be wrong, for I know the moor very well, and there is not a bog on it all that will hold a horse still. But it was the same thing in effect to Jock and the Eagle—the horse would have gone eastward, or westward along and along and along the sides of these little dark stripes, which he mistook for tremendous quagmires; or if Jock would have suffered him to turn his head homeward, he would, as Jock said, have galloped for joy; but northwards towards Edinburgh, never a step would he proceed. Jock thrashed him at one time, stroked his mane at another, at one time coaxed, at another cursed him, till, ultimately, on the horse trying to force his head homeward in spite of Jock, the latter, in high wrath, struck him a blow on the far ear with all his might. This had the effect of making the animal take the motion of a horizontal wheel, or millstone. The weight of the riders fell naturally to the outer side of the circle; Jock held by the saddle, and the Eagle held by Jock, till down came the whole concern with a thump on the moss. "I daresay that beast's gane mad the night," said Jock; and, rising, he made a spring at the bridle, for the horse continued still to reel; but, in the dark, our hero missed his hold—off went the horse, like an arrow out of a bow, and left our hapless couple in the midst of a black moor.

"What shall we do now?—shall we turn back?" said Jock.

"Turn back!" said the Eagle; "certainly not, unless you hae ta'en the rue."

"I wasna thinking o' that ava," said he; "but, oh, it is an unfortunate-like business; I dinna like their leaving o' us, nor can I ken what's their meaning."

"They war fear'd for being catched, owing to the noise that you were making," said she.

"And wha wad hae been the loser gin we had been catched? I think the loss then wad hae fa'en on me," said Jock.

"We'll come better speed wanting the beast," said she; "I wadna wonder that we are in Edinburgh afore them yet."

Wearied and splashed with mud, the two arrived at the sign of the Harrow, a little after noon, and instantly made inquiries for the bride and best-man. A description of one man answers well enough for another to people quite indifferent. Such a country gentleman as the one described, the landlady said, had called twice in the course of the day, and looked into several rooms, without leaving his name. They were both *sure* it was Wat, and rested content. The gentleman came *not* back, so Jock and the Eagle sat and looked at one another. "They will be looking at the grand things o' this grand town," said she.

"Ay, maybe," said Jock, in manifest discontent. "I couldna say what they may be looking at, or what they may be doing. When folks gang ower the march to be married, they should gang by themselves twa. But some wadna be tauld sae."

"I canna comprehend where he has ta'en my sister to, or what he's doing wi' her a' this time," said the Eagle.

"I couldna say," said Jock, his chagrin still increasing, a disposition which his companion took care to cherish, by throwing out hints and insinuations that kept him constantly in the fidgets; and he seemed to be repenting heartily of the step he had taken. A late hour arrived, and the two, having had a sleepless night and a toilsome day, ordered supper, and apartments for the night. They had not yet sat down to supper, when the landlord requested permission for two gentlemen, acquaintances of his, to take a glass together in the same room with our two friends, which being readily granted, who should enter but the identical landlord and parson who had so opportunely buckled the other couple! They had dined with Wat and his bride, and the whisky-toddy had elicited the whole secret from the happy bridegroom. The old gentlemen were highly tickled with the oddity of the adventure, and particularly with the whimsical situation of the pair at the Harrow; and away they went at length on a reconnoitering expedition, having previously settled the measures to be pursued.

My landlord of the White Horse soon introduced himself to the good graces of the hapless couple by his affability, jokes, quips, and quibbles, and Jock and he were soon as intimate as brothers, and the maid and he as sweethearts, or old intimate acquaintances. He commended her as the most beautiful, handsome, courteous, and accomplished country lady he ever had seen in his life, and at length asked Jock if the lady was his sister. No, she was not. Some near relation, perhaps, that he had the charge of. No. "Oh! beg pardon—perceive very well—plain—evident—wonder at my blindness," said my landlord of the White Horse—"sweetheart—sweetheart? Hope 'tis to be a match? Not take back such a flower to the wilderness—unappropriated—to blush unseen—waste sweetness on the desert air? What? Hope so? Eh? More sense than that, I hope?"

"You mistak, sir; you mistak. My case is a very particular ane," said Jock.

"I wish it were mine, though," said he of the White Horse.

"Pray, sir, are you a married man?" said the Eagle.

"Married? Oh yes, mim, married and settled in life, with a White Horse," returned he.

"A gray mare, you mean," said the Eagle.

"Excellent! superlative!" exclaimed my landlord. "Minister, what think you of that? I'm snubbed—cut down—shorn to the quick! Delightful girl! something favoured like the young country bride we dined with to-day. What say you, minister? Prettier, though—decidedly prettier. More animation, too. Girls from the same country-side have always a resemblance."

"Sir, did you say you dined with a bride from our country-side?" said Jock.

"Did so—did so."

"What was the bridegroom like?"

"A soft-soles—milk-and-water."

"And his name? You will not tell, maybe—a W and an S?"

"The same—the same—mum!—W.S., writer to the signet. The same. An M and a T, too. You understand? Mum!"

"Sir, I'll be muckle obliged to you, gin ye'll tak me to where they are. I hae something to say to them," said Jock, with great emphasis.

"Oh! you are the father, are you? Minister, I'll take you a bet this is the bride's father and sister. You are too late, sir; far too late. They are bedded long ago!"

"Bedded!" cried Jock, in a shrill and desperate tone of voice.

"The case is past redemption now," began mine host; "a father is to be pitied! but—"

"Sir, you mistak—I'm not her father."

"About this stage of the conversation, a letter was handed in "to Miss Tod, at the Golden Harrow;" but the bearer went off, and waited no answer. The contents were as follows:—

"DEAR SISTER,—This cometh to let you know that I have married Walter, thinking you and John had turned on the height, and that he had taken the rue; so I thought, after leaving the country to be married, I could never set up my face in it again without a husband; for you know a woman leaving home with a man, as we both have done, can never be received into a church or family again, unless she be married on him; and you must consider of this; for if you are comed to Edinburgh with a man, you need never go home again. John hath used me very bad; and made me do the thing I may rue; but I could not help it. I hope he will die an old bachelor, as he is, and never taste the joys of the married state. We will remain here another night, for some refreshment, and then I go home to his mother. This business will make a terrible noise in the country. I would not have gone home, and me not married, for all the whole world."

When the Eagle read this, she assumed symptoms of great distress, and after much beseeching and great attention from the two strangers, she handed the letter to Jock, showing him that she could never go home again after what had happened. He scratched his head often, and acknowledged that "Maggie's was a tickliah case," and then observed that he would see what was to be done about it to-morrow. My landlord called for a huge bowl of punch, which he handed liberally round. The matter was discussed in all its bearings. The minister made it clearly out that the thing had been fore-ordained, and it was out of their power to counteract it. My landlord gave the preference to the Eagle in every accomplishment. Jock's heart grew mellow, while the maid blushed and wept; and, in short, they went to bed that night a married couple, to the great joy of the Eagle's heart; for it was never once doubted that the whole scheme was a contrivance of her own—a bold stroke to get hold of the man with the money.

She knew Wat would marry her sister at a word or hint, and then the Jewel had scarcely an alternative. He took the disappointment and affront so much to heart, that he removed with his Eagle to America at the Whitsunday following, where their success was beyond anticipation, and where they were both living at an advanced age about twelve years ago, without any surviving family.

CHAPTER XIII.

A STRANGE SECRET.

Some years ago, a poor man named Thomas Henderson came to me, and presented me with a letter from a valued friend. I showed some little kindness to the man; and as an acknowledgment, he gave me an account of himself, in that plain, simple, and drawling style, which removed all doubts of its authenticity. His story, as a whole, was one of very deep interest to himself, no doubt, but of very little to me, as it would be to the world at large if it were repeated; but as one will rarely listen to even the most common-place individual without hearing something to reward the attention bestowed upon him, so there was one incident in this man Henderson's life which excited my curiosity very much. I shall give it nearly in his own words:—

I was nine years a servant to the Earl of—, (said he), and when I left him, he made me a handsome present; but it was on condition that I should never again come within a hundred miles of his house. The truth is, that I would have been there to this day, had I not chanced to come at the knowledge of something relating to the family that I ought not to have known, and which I never would have known, had I gotten my own will. When the auld earl died, there was an unco confusion, and at length the young lord came hame frae abroad, and tuke the command. He hadna been master about

twa years when he rings the bell ae morning, and sends for me. I was merely a groom, and no used to gang up stairs to my lord; but he often spoke to me in the stables, for I had the charge o' his favourites Cleopatra and Venus, and I thought he wanted to gie me some directions about them. Weel, up the stair I rins, wanting the jacket and bonnet, and I opens the door, and I says, "What is't, my lord?" —"Shut the door, and come in," says he. Hech! what in the world is in the wind now? thinks I. Am I gaun to be made some grand secreter?

"Tom, has the Lady Julia ordered the coach to-day?" says he.

"I believe she has, my lord; I think Hector was saying so."

"And is it still to the old spot again in the forest?"

"That winna be kenn'd till Hector is on the seat. But there is little doubt that it is to the same place. She never drives to ony other."

"Tom, I was long absent from home, but you have been in the family all the while, and must know all its secrets. What is it supposed my sister Julia has always ado with the forester's wife at the shieling of Aberduchra?"

"That has never been kenn'd to ane o' us, my lord. But it is supposed there is some secret business connected wi' her visits there."

"That is a great strength of supposition, indeed, Tom! Of that there can be no doubt. But what do the servants suppose the secret relates to? Or what do *you* suppose concerning it? Come, tell me honestly and freely."

"Ou, naebody kens that, my lord; for Lady Julia just lights at a certain point o' the road, and orders the coach to be there again at a certain hour at night; and that's a' that has ever been kenn'd about it. But we a' notice that Lady Julia is sair altered. And folks they say—but as to that I am *ignorant*—they say, ye ken, that auld Eppie Cowan's a witch."

"And that it is on some business of enchantment or divination that my sister goes to her?"

"Na, na, I dinna say that, my lord; for a' that *I* say is just this, that I believe naebody in this world, excepting Lady Julia and auld Eppie themsels twa kens what their business is thegither, or how they came to be connected."

"Well, well, Tom, that is what I want particularly to know. Do you set out just now; go over the shoulder of Beinny-Veol, and through Glen-Ellich, by the straight route;' get to Aberduchra before my sister; conceal yourself somewhere, in the house or out of the house, in a thicket or in a tree; note all that you see Lady Julia engaged in—who meets her there—what they do, and what they say, and bring me a true report of everything; and your reward shall be according to your success."

Weel, aff I rins, and ower the hills at the nearest, and sair wark had I afore I got mysel concealed, for auld Eppie was running out and in, and in and out again, in an unco fyke, weel kenning wha was to be her visitor that day; for every time she cam to the door she gae a lang look down the glen, and then a' round about her, as if feared for being catched in a fault.

I had by this time got up to the top of a great elm-tree that almost overlooked the door o' the shieling, but when I saw the auld roudess looking about her sae sternly, I grew frighted; for I thought, if she be a witch, I shall soon be discovered; and then, should she cast ony cantrips that may dumfounder me, or should I see ought to put me beside mysel, what a fa' I will get! I wad now hae gien a' the claes on my back to have been safe down again, and had begun to study a quick descent, when I perceived Lady Julia coming rapidly up the glen, with manifest trepidation in her manner. My heart began now to quake like an aspen leaf, for I suspected that some awesome scene was gaun to be transacted, that could bring the accomplished Lady Julia to that wild retired spot. And yet when she drew near, her modest mien and fading beauty were sae unlike onything wicked or hellish, that, in short, I didna ken what to think or what to fear, but I had a considerable allowance o' baith.

With many kind and obsequious courtesies did old Eppie receive the lady on the green, and after exchanging a few words, they both vanished into the cottage, and shut the door. Now, thinks I, the infernal wark will begin; but goodness be thankit, I'll see nane o't frae here. I changed my place on the tree, however, and came as near to the top of the lum as the branches would carry me. From thence I heard the voices of the twa, but knew not what they were saying. The Lady Julia's voice was seldom heard, but when it was, it had the sounds of agony; and I certainly thought she was imploring the old hag to desist from something which the other persisted in. The voice of the latter never ceased; it went on with one continued mumble, like the sound of a distant waterfall. The sounds still increased, and I sometimes made myself believe that I heard the voice of a third person. I cannot tell what I would then have given to have heard what was going on, but though I strained my hearing to the uttermost, I could not attain it.

At length, all at once, I heard a piercing shriek, which was followed by low stifled moanings. "They are murdering a bairn, and what *will* I do!" said I to myself, sobbing till my heart was like to burst. And finding that I was just upon the point of losing my senses, as well as my hold, and falling from the tree, I descended with all expedition, and straightway ran and hid mysel under the bank of the burn behind the house, that thereby I might avoid hearing the cries of the suffering innocent, and secure myself from a fall.

Now, here shall be my watch, thinks I, for here I can see every ane that passes out frae or into the

house, and as for what is gaun on in the inside, that's mair than I'll meddle wi'.

I had got a nice situation now, and a safe ane, for there was a thick natural hedge of briers, broom, and brambles down the back o' the kail-yard. These overhung the burn-brae, so that I could hide mysel frae every human ee in case of great danger, and there was an opening in the hedge, through which I could see all that passed, and there I cowered down on my knees, and lay wi' my een stelled on that shieling o' sin and iniquity.

I hadna lain lang in this position till out comes the twasome, cheek for chowe, and the auld ane had a coffin under her arm, and straight on they comes for the very opening o' the hedge where I was lying. Now, thinks I, I'm a gone man, for in below this very bank where I am sitting, are they coming to hide the corpse o' the poor bairn, and here ten might lie till they consumed, unkenn'd to the haill warld. Ay, here they are coming, indeed, for there is not anither bit in the whole thicket where they can win through; and in half a minute I will have the witch and the murderess baith hinging at my throat like twa wulcats! I was ainee just setting a' my joints to make a clean splash down the middle of the burn like an otter, but the power was denied me, and a' that I could do was to draw mysel close into my cove, like a hare into her form, and there I sat and heard the following dialogue, and I think I remember it every word.

"Now, my good Eppie, are you certain that no person will come upon us, or within view of us, before we have done?" (*Good* Eppie! thinks I, heaven preserve us a' frae sic goodness!)

"Ay, ay, weel am I sure o' that, Lady July, for my ain goodman is on the watch, and he has a signal that I ken, which will warn us in good time if ony body leave the high-way."

"Then open the lid, and let me look into it once more, for the poor inanimate remains that are in that chest have a hold of this disconsolate and broken heart, which nothing else in this world can ever have again. O my dear boy! my comely, my beautiful, my murdered boy!"

Here Lady Julia burst into the most violent and passionate grief, shrieking and weeping like one in distraction. I was terrified out o' a' bounds, but I couldna help thinking to mysel what a strange inconsistent creature a woman was, first to take away a dear little boy's life, and then rair and scraugh over what she had done, like a mad woman. Her passion was sae violent and sae loud that I couldna take up what the auld crone was saying, although her tongue never lay for a moment; but I thought a' the time that she was trying to pacify and comfort Lady Julia, and I thought I heard her saying that the boy wasna murdered. Now, thinks I, that dings a' that ever I heard! If a man ainee understands a woman, he needna be feared to try ought in nature.

"Now, here they are, my Leddy July, just as your own fair hands laid them. There's no ane o' them out o' its place yet. There they a' lie, little and muckle, frae the crown o' the head to the soles o' the feet."

"Gude forgie the woman!" says I to mysel; "can these be the banes o' bairns that she is speaking about? It is a question how mony has been put into that black kist afore this time, and there their banes will be lying, tier aboon tier, like the contents of a candlemaker's box!"

"Look, here is the first, my leddy. This is the first year's anes. Then, below that sheet o' silver paper is the second year's, and on sae to the third and the fourth."

I didna think there had been as muckle wickedness in human nature, thought I; but if thae twa escape out o' this world without some veesible judgment, I'm unco sair mistaen!

"Come now, Leddy July, and let us gae through them a' regularly, and gie ower greeting. See, as I said, this contains the first year's suits of a' kinds, and here, among others, is the frock he was bapteezed in, far, far, frae here. Ay, weel I mind that day, and sae may ye, Leddy July, when the bishop flung the water on your boy's face, how the little chub looked at him! Ech—ech—ech—I'll never forget it! He didna whimper and whine, like ither bairns, but his little arms gae a quiver wi' anger, and sic a look as he gae the priest! Ay, it was as plain as he had said it in gude Scots, 'Billy, I'll be about wi' you for this yet!' He—he—he—my brave boy! Ay, there needed nae confessions, nor parish registers, to declare wha was his father! 'Faith, billy, I'll be about wi' you for this insult!' He—he—he! That was what he thought plainly enough, and he looked *very* angry at the bishop the haill night. O fie, Leddy July, dinna stain the bonny frock wi' your tears. Troth, they'll [illegible] sae warm and sae saut, that they will never [illegible] again. There now, there now. We will hing them a' out to the sun ane by ane."

Shame fa' my stupidity! thought I to mysel. Is the haill terrible affair ended in a bichel o' baby-clouts? I then heard that they were moving farther away from me, and ventured to peep through the boughs, and saw the coffin standing open, about three feet from my nose. It was a small low trunk, covered with green velvet, lined with white satin, and filled with clothes that had belonged to a princely boy, who, it appeared from what I overheard, had either been privately murdered, or stolen away, or had somehow unaccountably disappeared. This I gathered from the parts of the dialogue that reached me, for always when they came near to the trunk, they were close beside me, and I heard every word, but as they went farther away, hanging out the bairn's claes to air, I lost the parts between. Auld Eppie spake without intermission, but Lady Julia did little else save cry, and weet the different parts

of the dress with tears. It was excessively affecting to see the bonny young lady, wha was the flower o' the haill country, bending ower a wheen claes, pressing them to her bosom, and greeting till the very heart within her was like to melt, and aye crying, between every fit o' sobbing, "O my boy, my dear boy! my noble, my beautiful boy! How my soul yearns after thee! O Eppie, may you never know what it is to have but one only son, and to be bereaved of him in such a way as I have been."

At one time I heard the old wife say, "See, here is the silk corslet that he wore next his breast that very day," on which the Lady Julia seized the little tucker, and kissed it an hundred times, and then said, "Since it once was warmed in his dear little bosom, it shall never cool again as long as his mother's is warm." So saying, she placed the relic in her breast, weeping bitterly.

Eppie's anecdotes of the boy were without end; the bereaved and beautiful mother often rebuking her, but all the while manifestly indulging in a painful pleasure. She showed her a pair of trews that were discoloured, and added, "Ah, I ken brawly what made them sae dim. His foster-brother Ranald and he were after a fine painted butterfly one day. The creature took across a mire, a perfect stank. Ranald stopped short, but Lewie made a bauld spring to clear it. He hardly wan by the middle, where he stuck up to the waist in mire. Afore my goodman reached him, there was naething aboon but the blue bonnet and the feather. 'You little imp, how gat you in there?' said my husband. 'That's not your concern, sir, but how I shall get out again,' said the little pestilence. Ah, he was the bairn that had the kind heart when kindness was shown to him, but no ae thing in this 'versal world wad he do by compulsion. We could never make him comprehend the power of death; he always bit his lip, and scowled wi' his eebrows, as if determined to resist it. At first he held him at defiance, threatening to shoot or run him through the body; but when checked so that he durst not openly defy him, his resolution was evidently unchanged. Ha! he was the gallant boy, and if he lives to be a man, he winna have his match in the three kingdoms."

"Alack, alack, my dear boy," exclaimed Lady Julia; his beauty is long ago defaced, his princely form decayed, and his little unripe bones lie mouldering in some pit or concealed grave. Perhaps he was flung from these rocks, and his fair and mangled form became the prey of the raven or the eagle."

The lady's vehemence some way affected my heart, and raised siccan a disposition in me to join her in crying, that, in spite o' my heart, I fell a-fuffing like a goose as I was, in below the burn-brae. I was overheard, and then all was silence and consternation for about the space of a minute, till I hears Eppie say, "Did you hear that, Leddy July? What say ye? What in the world was that? I wish there may be nae concealed spies. I hope nae unhallowed ee has seen our wark the day, or unblest ear heard our words! Eh?

> "Seek butt, seek ben,
> I find the smell o' quick men;
> But be he living or be he dead,
> I'll grind his bones to mix my bread."

So saying, the old hag in one moment rushed through the thin part of the brake, by a retrograde motion, and drapping down from the hanging bank, she lighted precisely with a foot on each side of my neck. I tried to withdraw my head quietly and peaceably, but she held me as if my head had been in a vice, and with the most unearthly yells, called out for a knife! a knife! I had now no other resource left but to make a tremendous bolt forward, by which I easily overturned the old dame, and off I ran plash for plash down the burn, till I came to an opening, by which I reached the only path down the glen. I had lost my bonnet, but got off with my head, which was more than the roudess intended.

Such screaming and howling as the two carried on behind me I never heard. Their grand secret was now out, and I suppose they looked upon the discovery as utter ruin, for both of them knew me perfectly well, and guessed by whom I had been sent. I made the best of my way home, where I arrived before dark, and gave my master, the earl, a full and faithful account of all that I had seen and all that I had heard. He said not a word until I had ended, but his face grew dark, and his eyes as red as a coal, and I easily perceived that he repented having sent me. When I had concluded my narrative, he bit his lip for some time, and then said, in a low smothered voice, "I see how it has been; I see how it has been; I understand it all perfectly well." Then, after a short pause, he continued, "I believe, Tom, it will be unsafe for you to stay longer here, for if you do, you will not be alive till to-morrow at midnight. Therefore haste to the south, and never for your life come north of the Tweed again, or you are a dead man, depend on that. If you promise me this, I will make you a present of £10, over and above your wages, but if you refuse, I will take my chance of having your motions watched, and you may take yours."

As I had often heard hints that certain officious people had vanished from my lord's mansion before this time, I was glad to make my escape; and taking him at his offer, I was conveyed on shipboard that same night, and have never again looked towards the north.

"It is a great pity, Thomas," said I, when he had finished this recital, "that you can give me no account of the boy—whose son he was, or what became of him. Was Lady Julia ever married?"

"I couldna say, sir. I never heard it said either that she was married, or that she was not married.

I never had the slightest suspicion that she was married till that day; but I certainly believe sinsyne, that she since *had* been married at ony rate. Last year I met with one John Ferguson from that country, who told me the earl was dead, and that there was some dispute about the heirship, and that some strange secrets had come out; and he added, 'For you know very weel, Thomas, that that family never could do anything like other people.'"

"Think you there is no person in that country to whom I could apply," said I, "for a development of these mysterious circumstances?"

"There is only one person," said Henderson, "and I am sure he knows everything about it, and that is the bishop: for he was almost constantly in the family, was sent for on every emergency, and was often away on long jaunts with Lady Julia alone. I am sure he can inform you of every circumstance; but then it is almost certain either that he will not dare, or that he will not choose, to disclose them."

This story of Henderson's made so strong an impression upon me that I could not refrain from addressing a letter to the bishop, requesting, in as polite terms as I could, an explanation of the events to which it referred. I was not aware that the reverend prelate had been in any way personally connected with the events referred to, nor did his answer expressly admit that he was; but I could gather from it, that he had a very intimate share in them, and was highly offended at the liberty I had taken, upon an acquaintance that was certainly slight, of addressing him on the subject. I was sorry that I should have inadvertently disturbed his reverence's equanimity, for his reply betrayed a good deal of angry feeling; and as in it he took the trouble of entering at some length into a defence of the Roman Catholic religion, against which I had made no insinuation, nor even once referred to it, I suspected that there had been something wrong, and, more and more resolved to get to the bottom of the affair, I next wrote to the Protestant clergyman of the place. His reply informed me that it was altogether out of his power to furnish the information desired, inasmuch as he had come to the pastoral charge of his parish many years subsequently to the period alluded to; and the Earl of ———'s family being Catholic, he had no intercourse with them. It was considered unsafe to meddle with them, he said; they had the reputation of being a dangerous race, and, interfering with no man's affairs, allowed no interference with theirs. In conclusion, however, my reverend correspondent referred me to a Mr. MacTavish, tenant of Innismore, as one who possessed more knowledge concerning the earl's family than any one out of it. This person, he further stated, was seventy years of age, and had lived in the district all his life, though the late earl tried every means to remove him.

Availing myself of this clew, I made it my business to address Mr. MacTavish in such a way as was most likely to insure compliance with my wishes. I was at some pains to procure introductions, and establish a sort of acquaintance with him, and at last succeeded in gaining a detail of the circumstances, in so far as he knew them, connected with the adventure of Henderson at the shieling of Aberduchra. This detail was given me in a series of letters of different dates, and many of them at long intervals from each other, which I shall take the liberty of throwing into a continuous narrative, retaining, however, the old gentleman's own way of telling the story.

About the time when the French were all to be killed in Lochaber (Mr. MacTavish's narrative commences), I was employed in raising the militia soldiers, and so had often to make excursions through the country, both by night and day. One morning, before dawn, as I was riding up the Clunie side of the river, I was alarmed by perceiving a huge black body moving along the road before me. I knew very well that it was the Bogle of Glastulochan, and kept at a respectful distance behind it. After I had ridden a considerable way in great terror, but yet not daring to turn and fly, the light became more and more clear, and the size of the apparition decreased, and, from a huge undefined mass, assumed sundry shapes, which made it evident that it meditated an attack on me, or, as I had some faint hopes, to evanish altogether. To attempt to fly from a spirit I knew to be needless, so I held on my way, in great perturbation. At last, as the apparition mounted an eminence over which the road winded, and so came more distinctly between me and the light, I discovered that it was two persons on horseback travelling the same way as myself. On coming up, I recognized the popish bishop accompanied by the most beautiful young lady I had ever seen.

"Good morrow to you, pretty lady, and to you, reverend sir," said I; but not one of them answered a word. The lady, however, gazed intently at me, as if she expected I had been some other, while the bishop seemed greatly incensed, and never once turned round his head. I cannot tell how it was, but I became all at once greatly in love with the lady, and resolved not to part till I discovered who she was. So when we came to the house of Robert Macnab, I said, "Madam, do you cross the corrie to-day?"

"No," said she.

"Then I shall stay on this side too," said I.

"Young soldier, we desire to be alone," said the bishop (and this was the first time he had spoken), "therefore be pleased to take your own way, and to free us of your company."

"By no means," said I; "neither the lady nor your reverence can be the worse of my protection."

When I said "your reverence," the bishop started, and stared me in the face; and after a long pause, once more desired me to leave them. I would not do so, however, although I must acknowledge my behaviour was exceedingly improper; but I was under the influence of a strange fascination at the time, which I am the more convinced of now that I know the events that have followed upon that encounter.

"We travel by the Spean," said he.

"It is the nearest way," I replied, "and I shall go that way too." The bishop then became very angry, and I, I must confess, more and more impertinent. "I know better," said I, "than to trust a popish priest with such a lovely, and beautiful, and amiable dear lady in such a wild and lonely place. I bear his majesty's commission, and it is my duty to protect all the ladies that are his true subjects." This was taking a good deal upon me, but I thought I perceived that the bishop had an abashed look, as if detected in an affair he was ashamed of; and so I determined to see the end of it. We travelled together till we arrived at Fort William, where we were met by a gallant gentleman, who took the lady from her horse, and kissed her, and made many fine speeches; and she wept, and suffered herself to be led away towards the beach. I went with them, and there being a great stir at the shore, and fearing that they were going to take the lady on board by force, I drew my sword, and advancing to the gentleman, commanded him not to take the lady on board against her will, adding, that she was under my protection.

"Is she indeed, sir?" said he. "And pray may I ask to whom she is indebted for this kind and gratuitous protection?"

"That is to myself, sir," said I.

He pushed me aside in high disdain, and as I continued to show a disposition to oppose by force his purpose of taking the lady on board, I was surrounded by nine or ten fellows who were in readiness to act upon his orders; they disarmed me, and persuading the spectators that I was insane or intoxicated, bound me, as the only means of preventing me from annoying their master. The whole party then went on board, and sailed down the frith; and I saw no more of them, nor discovered any more concerning the lady at that time.

Soon after this adventure, the bishop returned home, but whenever he saw my face, he looked as if he had seen a serpent ready to spring on him. Many a sore and heavy heart I had about the lady that I saw fallen among the Papists, and carried away by them; but for a long while I remained in ignorance who she was, being only able to conjecture that she was some young woman about to be made a nun, contrary to her own inclination.

At length a fearful report began to spread through the country of the loss of Lady Julia, and of her having been last seen in the company of her confessor; but the bishop frequented the castle the same as before, and therefore people shook their heads whenever the subject was mentioned, as if much were suspected, though little durst be said. I wondered greatly if that lady with whom I fell so much in love in our passage through the Highlands, could have been this Lady Julia. My father died that year, so I left the regiment in which I had been an officer, and being in Glasgow about the end of September, I went from thence in a vessel to Fort William. As we passed the island of Illismore, a lady came on board rather in a secret manner. She had a maid-servant with her, who carried a child. The moment the lady stepped up the ship's side, I perceived it to be the identical beautiful creature with whom I had fallen in the year before, when the bishop was carrying her away. But what a change had taken place in her appearance! her countenance was pale and emaciated, her looks dejected, and she seemed to be heart-broken. At our first rencounter, she looked me full in the face, and I saw that she recognized me, for she hurried past me into the cabin followed by her maid.

When we came to the fortress, and were paying our fares, I observed some dispute between the lady and the mate or master of the boat and a West-Islander, the one charging her for boat-fare, and the other for board and lodging. "I give you my word of honour," she said, "that you shall be paid double your demands in two weeks; but at present I have no means of satisfying you."

"Words of honour won't pass current here, mistress," said the sailor; "money or value I must have, for I am but a servant."

The West-Islander was less uncivil, and expressing his reluctance to press a gentlewoman in a strait, said, if she would tell him who she was, he would ask no more security.

"You are very good," said she, as she wiped away the tears that were streaming down her cheeks; but she would not tell her name. Her confusion and despair became extreme, so much so, that I could no longer endure to see one who appeared so ingenuous, yet compelled to shroud herself in mystery, suffer so much from so paltry a cause; and interfering, I satisfied the demands of the two men. The look of gratitude which she cast upon me was most expressive; but she said nothing. We travelled in company to Inverness, I supplying her with what money was necessary to meet the expenses of the road, which she took without offering a word of explanation. Before we parted, she called me into an apartment, and assuring me that I should soon hear from her, she thanked me briefly for the assistance I had afforded her. "And this little fellow," continued she, "if he live to be a man, shall thank you too for your kindness to his mother." She then asked if I could know the child again, and I answered that I could not, all infants were so much alike. She said there was a good reason why she wished

that I should be able to recognize the child at any future period, and she would show me a private mark by which I should know him as long as I lived. Baring his little bosom accordingly, she displayed the mark of a gold ring, with a ruby, immediately below his left breast. I said it was a very curious mark indeed, and one that I could not mistake. She next asked me if I was a Roman Catholic; but I shook my head, and said, God forbid! and so we parted.

I had learned from the West-Islander that his name was Malcolm M'Leod, a poor and honest Roman Catholic, and that the child was born at his house, one of the most remote places in the world, being on a sequestered and inaccessible peninsula in one of the Western Isles. The infant had been baptized privately by the Bishop of Illismore, by the name of Lewis William. But farther the man either could not or would not give me any information.

Before I left Inverness I learned that the lady was no other than the noble and fair Lady Julia, and shortly after I got home to Innismore, I received a blank letter, inclosing the sum I had expended on her behalf. Not long after, a message came, desiring me to come express to the bishop's house. This was the whole amount of the message, and although no definite object was held out to me, I undertook the journey. Indeed, throughout the whole transactions connected with this affair, I cannot understand what motives they were on which I acted. It seems as if I was influenced by a sort of fatality throughout, as well as the other persons with whom I had to deal. What human probability was there, for instance, that I would obey a summons of this nature? and yet I was summoned. There was no inducement held out to procure my compliance with the request; and yet I did comply with it. Upon what pretext was I to gain admittance to the bishop's house? I could think of none. And if I am called upon to tell how I did gain admittance, if it were not that subsequent events demonstrate that my proceedings were in accordance with the decrees of a superior destiny, I should say that it was by the mere force of impudence. As I approached the house, I heard there such a loud weeping, and screaming, and lamentation, that I almost thought murder was going on within it. There were many voices, all speaking at once; but the cries were heard above all, and grew more woeful and bitter. When I entered the house, which I did without much ceremony, and flung open the door of the apartment from which the noise proceeded, there was Lady Julia screaming in an agony of despair, and holding her child to her bosom, who was crying as bitterly as herself. She was surrounded by the bishop and three other gentlemen, one of them on his knees, as if imploring her to consent to something, and the other three using gentle force to take the child from her. My entrance seemed to strike them with equal terror and astonishment; they commanded me loudly to retire; but I forced myself forward, while Lady Julia called out and named me, saying I was her friend and protector. She was quite in a state of derangement through agony and despair, and I was much moved when I saw how she pressed her babe to her bosom, bathed him with tears, and kissed him and blessed him a thousand times.

"O Mr. MacTavish," cried she, "they are going to take my child from me—my dear, dear boy! and I would rather part with my life. But they cannot take my child from me if you will protect me. They cannot—they cannot!" And in that way did she rave on, regardless of all their entreaties.

"My dear Lady Julia, what madness has seized you?" said a reverend-looking gentleman. "Are you going to bring ruin on yourself and your whole family, and to disgrace the holy religion which you profess? Did you not promise that you would give up the child? did you not come here for that special purpose? and do not we all engage, in the most solemn manner, to see him bred and educated as becomes his birth?"

"No, no, no, no!" cried she; "I cannot, I cannot! I will not part with him! I will go with him to the farthest ends of the world, where our names were never heard of; but, oh! do not separate me from my dear boy!"

The men stared at one another, and held their peace.

"Madam," said I, "I will willingly protect your baby and you, if there is occasion for it, as long as there is a drop of blood in my body; but it strikes me that these gentlemen are in the right, and that you are in the wrong. It is true, I speak in ignorance of circumstances; but from all that I can guess, you cannot doubt of your baby's safety, when all these honourable men stand security to you for him. But if it is necessary that you should part with him, and if you will not intrust him to them, give him to me. I will have him nursed and educated in my own house, and under mine own eye."

"You are very good—you are very good!" said she, rather calmly. "Well, let this worthy gentleman take the charge of him, and I yield to give him up."

"No, no!" exclaimed they all at once, "no heretic can have the charge of the boy; he must be brought up under our own auspices; therefore, dearest Lady Julia, bethink you what you are doing, before you work your own ruin, and his ruin, and the ruin of us all."

Lady Julia then burst into a long fit of weeping, and I saw she was going to yield; she, however, requested permission to speak a few words with me in private. This was readily granted, and all of them retired. When we were alone, she said to me softly, "They are going to take my child from me, and I cannot and dare not resist them any longer, for fear a worse fate befall him. But I sent for you

to be a witness of our separation. You will know my poor hapless child as long as he lives, from the mark that I showed you; and when they force him from me, oh watch where they take him, and to whatever quarter that may be, follow, and bring me word, and high shall be your reward. Now, farewell; remember I trust in you—and God be with you! I do not wish any one to see my last extremity, save those who cause it, for I know my heart must break. Desire them to come in, and say that you have persuaded me to yield to their will."

I did so; but I could see that they only regarded me with looks of suspicion.

I lingered in the narrow lobby, and it was not two minutes, till two persons, one of whom I had previously ascertained by his accent to be an Irish gentleman, hurried by me with the child. I should have followed, but, as, in their haste, they left open the door of the apartment where Julia was, my attention was riveted on the lady; she was paralyzed with affliction, and clasped the air, as if trying to embrace something; but finding her child was no longer in her bosom, she sprung up to an amazing height, uttered a terrible shriek, and fell down strongly convulsed. Shortly after, she uttered a tremulous moan, and died quite away. I had no doubt that her heart was broken, and that she had expired; and indeed the bishop, and the other gentleman, who remained with her, seemed to be of the same opinion, and were benumbed with astonishment. I called aloud for assistance, when two women came bustling in with water; but the bishop ordered one of them, in an angry tone, to retire. He gave the command in Gaelic, and the poor creature cowered like a spaniel under the lash, and made all haste out of his sight. This circumstance caused me to take a look at the woman, and I perceived at once that I knew her, but the hurry and confusion of the moment prevented me from thinking of the incident, less or more, until long afterwards.

Lady Julia at length gave symptoms of returning animation, and then I recollected the neglect of the charge she had committed to me. I hurried out; but all trace of the child was lost. The two gentlemen who took him from his mother were walking and conversing deliberately in the garden, as if nothing had happened, and all my inquiries of them and of others were unavailing.

After the loss of Lady Julia's child, I searched the whole country, but no child could I either see or hear of; and at length my only hope rested on being able to remember who the old woman was whom the bishop ordered so abruptly out of his presence that day the child was disposed of. I was sure, from the manner in which she skulked away, as if afraid of being discovered, that she had taken him away, either dead or alive. Of all the sensations ever experienced I was now subjected to the most teasing: I was sensible that I knew the woman perfectly well—so well, that at first I believed I could call her to my recollection whenever I chose; but, though I put my memory to the rack a thousand and a thousand times, the name, residence, and connections of the woman went further and further from my grasp, till at last they vanished like clouds that mock us with forms of the long-departed.

And now I am going to tell a very marvellous story. One day, when I was hunting in Correi-beg of Glen-Anam, I shot so well that I wondered at myself. Before my unerring aim, whole coveys of moor game fluttered to the earth; and as for the ptarmigans, they fell like showers of hailstones. At length I began to observe that the wounded birds eyed me with strange, unearthly looks, and recollecting the traditions of the glen, and its name, suspected there was some enchantment in the case. What, thought I, if I am shooting good fairies, or little harmless hill spirits, or mayhap whole flocks of Papists trying feats of witchcraft!—and to think that I am carrying all these on my back! While standing in this perplexity, I heard a voice behind me, which said, "O Sandy MacTavish, Sandy MacTavish, how will you answer for this day's work? What will become of me! what will become of me!"

I turned round in great consternation, my hairs all standing on end—but nothing could I see, save a wounded ptarmigan, hopping among the gray stones. It looked at its feathery legs and its snow-white breast all covered with blood, and at length the creature said, in Gaelic, as before, for it could not be expected that a ptarmigan should have spoken English, "How would you like to find all your family and friends shot and mangled in this way when you gang hame? Ay, if you do not catch me, you will rue this morning's work as long as you live, and long, long afterwards. But if you catch me, your fortune is made, and you will gain both great riches and respect."

"Then have with you, creature!" exclaimed I, "for it strikes me that I can never make a fortune so easily;" and I ran at it, with my bonnet in both hands, to catch it.

"Hee-hee-hee!" laughed the creature; and away it bounded among the gray stones, jumping like a jackdaw with a clipped wing. I ran and ran, and every time that I tried to clap my bonnet above it, down I came with a rattle among the stones—"Hee-hee-hee!" shouted the bird at every tumble. So provoking was this, and so eager did I become in the pursuit, that I flung away my gun and my load of game, and ran after the bird like a madman, floundering over rugged stones, laying on with my bonnet, and sometimes throwing myself above the little creature, which always eluded me.

I knew all this while that the creature was a witch, or a fairy, or something worse, but natheless I could not resist chasing it, being resolved to catch it, cost what it would; and on I ran, by cliff and

corrie, till I came to a cottage which I remembered having seen once before. The creature, having involved me in the linns of the glen, had got considerably ahead of me, and took shelter in the cottage. I was all covered with blood as well as the bird, and in that state I ran into the bothy after my prey.

On entering, I heard a great bustle, as if all the inmates were employed in effecting the concealment of something. I took it for a concern of smuggling, and went boldly forward, with a "Hilloa! who bides here?"

At the question there appeared one I had good reason to recollect, at sight of whom my heart thrilled. This was no other than the old woman I had seen at the bishop's house. I knew her perfectly well, for I had been in the same bothy once before, when out hunting, to get some refreshment. I now wondered much that I should never have been able to recollect who the beldam was, till that moment, when I saw her again in her own house. Her looks betrayed the utmost confusion and dismay, as she addressed me in these words, "Hee-hee, good Mr. MacTavish, what will you be seeking so far from home to day?"

"I am only seeking a wounded ptarmigan, mistress," said I; "and if it be not a witch and yourself that I have wounded, I must have it, for a great deal depends upon my getting hold of the creature."

"Ha, ha! you are coming pursuing after your fortune the day, Mr. MacTavish," said she, "and mayhap you may seize her; but we have a small piece of an operation to go through before that can take place."

"And pray, what is that, Mrs. Elspeth?" said I; "for if it be any of your witchcraft doings, I will have no hand in it. Give me my bird; that is all I ask of you."

"And so you really and positively believe it was a bird you chased in here to-day, Mr. MacTavish?"

"Why, what could I think, mistress? It had the appearance of a bird."

"Margati Cousland! come hither," said the old witch; "what is ordained must be done; lay hold of him, Margati."

The two women then laid hold of me, and being under some spell, I had no power to resist; so they bound my hands and feet, and laid me on a table, laughing immoderately at my terrors. They then begged I would excuse them, for they were under the necessity of going on with the operation, though it might not be quite agreeable to me in the first instance.

"And pray, Mrs. Elspeth, what is this same operation?" said I.

"Why," said she, "you have come here chasing after a great fortune, and there is no other way of attaining it save by one—and that is, YOUR HEART'S BLOOD MUST BE LET OUT."

"That is a very uncommon way of attaining a fortune, Mrs. Elspeth," said I, as good-humouredly as I could, although my heart was quaking within me.

"It is nevertheless a very excellent plan," said the witch, "and it is very rarely that a fortune can be made without it." So saying, the beldam plunged a skeinochil into my breast, with a loud and a fiendish laugh. "There goes the heart's blood of black Sandy MacTavish!" cried she; and that instant I heard the sound of it rushing to the floor. It was not like the sound of a cataract of blood, however, but rather like the tinkling of a stream of gold guineas. I forced up my head, and behold, there was a stream of pure and shining gold pieces issuing from my bosom; while a number of demons, some in black gowns, and others in white petticoats, were running off with them, and flinging them about in every direction! I could stand this no longer; to have parted with a little blood I found would have been nothing, but to see my vitals drained of a precious treasure, which I knew not had been there, was more than human nature could bear; so I roared out in a voice that made all the house and all the hills to yell, "Murder! thieves! thieves! robbers!—Murder! Ho! ho! ho!" Thus did I continue loudly to shout, till one of the witches, or infernals, as I thought, dashed a pail of water on my face, a portion of which going into my mouth and windpipe, choked my utterance; but nathless the remorseless wretch continued to dash water upon me with an unsparing hand, till at last the spell was broken, and the whole illusion vanished.

In order to establish the credibility of the above relation, I must tell another story, which shall be a very short one.

"Our mhaster alheeps fery lhang this tay, Mrs. Roy MacCallum," said my man, Donald, to my old housekeeper.

"Huh aye, and that she does, Tonald; and Cot pe plessing her slheep to her, honest sheatlemans! Donald MacIntosh."

"Huh aye, Mrs. Roy MacCallum. But herse looked just pen te house to see if mhaster was waking and quite coot in health; and, would you pelieve it, Mrs. MacCallum? her is lying staring and struggling as if her were quite mhad."

"Cot forpit, Tonald MacIntosh!"

"Huh aye, to be sure, Mrs. MacCallum, Cot forpit, to be sure; but her pe mhad for all tat; and tere pe one creat trial, Mrs. Roy MacCallum, and we mhust mhake it, and tat is py water."

"It be te creat and lhast trial; let us ply te water," rejoined the sage housekeeper.

With that Mrs. Roy MacCallum and Donald MacIntosh came into my sleeping-room with pails of water, and began to fling it upon me in such copious showers, that I was well-nigh choked; and to prevent myself from being drowned, I sprung up; but still they continued to dash water upon me. At length I knew my own man Donald's voice as I

heard him calling out, "Clash on, Mrs. MacCallum! it pe for life or teath."

"Huh aye, ply on te water, Tonald!" cried the other.

"Hold, hold, my good friends," cried I, skipping round the room all dripping wet—"Hold, hold, I am wide awake now, and better."

"Huh! plessit pe Cot, and plessit pe te creat MacTavish!" cried they both at once.

"But where is the witch of the glen?" cried I. "And where is the wounded ptarmigan?—and where is all the gold that came out with my heart's blood?"

"Clash on te water, Mrs. MacCallum!" exclaimed Donald; and the indefatigable pails of Donald and the housekeeper were again put in requisition to some purpose. Having skipped about for some time, I at last escaped into a closet, and locked the door. I had then leisure to remonstrate with them through the keyhole; but still there were many things about which we could not come to a right understanding, and I began to dread a tremendous shower-bath from above, as I heard them carrying water up stairs; and that dread brought me first to my proper and right senses.

It will now be perceived that the whole of my adventure in the glen with the ptarmigan and the witches was nothing more than a dream. But yet in my opinion it was more than a dream, for it was the same as reality to me. I had all the feelings and sensations of a rational being, and every circumstance was impressed on my mind the same as if I had transacted it awake. Besides, there was a most singular and important revelation imparted to me by the vision: I had discovered who the old woman was whose identity had before perplexed me so much, and who I was sure either had Lady Julia's boy, or knew where he was. About five years previous to this I had come into the same woman's house, weary and hungry, and laden with game, and was very kindly treated. Of course, her face was quite familiar to me; but till I had this singular dream, all the efforts of my memory could not recall the woman's name and habitation, nor in what country or circumstances I had before seen her. From that morning forth I thought of nothing else save another visit to the forester's cottage in the glen; and, though my heart foreboded some evil, I rested not till I had accomplished it.

It was not long till I made a journey to Aberduchra, in search of the old witch whom I had seen in my dream. I found her; and apparently she had recently suffered much from distress of mind; her eyes were red with weeping, her hairs were hanging in elf-switches, and her dress in much disorder. She knew me and said, "God bless you Mr. MacTavish, where are you travelling this way?"

"In truth, Mrs. Cowan," I replied, "I am just come to see after Lady Julia's little boy, poor Lewis William, you know, who was put under your care by the bishop on the 1st of November last year."

She held up her hands and stared, and then fell a crying most bitterly, striking her breast and wringing her hands like one distracted, but still without answering me one word.

"Ochon, ochon!" said I; "then it is all as I suspected, and the dear child is indeed murdered!"

On this she sprung to her feet, and uttered an appalling scream, and then yelled out, "Murdered! murdered! Is the dear boy murdered? Is he—is he murdered?"

This vehemence of feeling on her part at the idea of the boy's being cut off, convinced me that she had not murdered the child herself; and being greatly relieved in my heart, I sat still as in astonishment, until she again put the question if her dear foster-child was murdered.

"Why, Mrs. Cowan, not to my knowledge," I replied. "I did not see him murdered; but if he has not been foully dealt with, what has become of him?—for well I know he was put under your charge; and before the world, and before the judges of the land, I shall make you render an account of him."

"Was the boy yours, Mr. MacTavish," said she, "that you are so deeply interested in him? For the love of heaven tell me who was his father, and then I shall confess to you everything that I know concerning him."

I then told the woman the whole story as I have here related it, and requested her to inform me what had become of the boy.

"He was delivered to me after the most solemn injunctions of concealment," said she; "and these were accompanied with threatenings, in case of disobedience, of no ordinary nature. He was to be brought up in this inaccessible wild with us as our grandson; and farther than that, no being was to know. Our reward was to be very high—too high, I am afraid—which may have caused his abstraction. But oh he was a dear delightful boy! and I loved him better than my own grandson. He was so playful, so bold, and at the same time so forgiving and generous!

"Well, he lived on with us, and grew, and no one acknowledged or noticed him until a little while ago, that one Bill Nicol came into the forest as fox-hunter, and came here to board, to be near the foxes, having, as he pretended, the factor's orders for doing so; and every day he would sport with the two boys, who were both alike fond of him, and every day would he be giving them rides on his pony, which put them half crazy about the man. And then one day, when he was giving them a ride time about, the knave mounted behind little Lewie, and rode off with him altogether into the forest, and there was an end of him. Ranald ran crying after them till he could run no farther, and then, losing sight of them, he sat down and wept. I was busy at work, and thought always that my two little fellows were playing not far off, until I began to wonder where they could be, and ran out to the top

of the little birky knowehead there, and called, and louder called them; but nothing answered me, save the echoes of my own voice from the rocks and trees; so I grew very greatly distracted, and ran up Glen Caolas, shouting as I went, and always praying between whiles to the holy Virgin and to the good saints to restore me my boys. But they did not do it—Oh no, they never did! I then began to suspect that this pretended foxhunter might have been the wicked one come in disguise to take away my children; and the more so as I knew not if Lewie had been blessed in holy church. But what could I do but run on, calling and crying, and raving all the way, until I came to the pass of Ballykeurach, and then I saw that no pony's foot had passed on that path, and turned and ran home; but it was growing dark, and there was nobody there, so I took to the woods again. How I spent that night I do not know, but I think I had fallen into a trance through sorrow and fatigue.

"Next morning, when I came to my senses, the first thing I saw was a man who came by me, chasing a wounded bird, like a white moorfowl, and he was always trying to catch it with his bonnet, and many a hard fall he got among the stones. I called after him, for I was glad to see a human being in that place, and I made all the speed I could to follow; but he regarded me not, but ran after the wounded bird. He went down the linns, which retarded him a good deal, and I got quite near him. Then from that he went into a small hollow straight before me, to which I ran, for I wanted to tell him my tale, and beg his assistance in raising the country in the strath below. When I came into the little hollow, he had vanished, although a hare could not have left it without my seeing it. I was greatly astonished, assured that I had seen a vision. But how much more was I astonished to find, on the very spot where he had disappeared, my grandson Ranald lying sound asleep, and quite motionless through hunger and fatigue! At first I thought he was dead, and lost all recollection of the wonderful way in which I had been led to him; but when I found he was alive and breathing, I took him up in my arms and carried him home, and there found the same man, or rather the same apparition, busily employed hunting the wounded bird within this same cottage, and he declared that have it he must. I was terrified almost out of my wits, but tried to thank the mysterious being for leading me to my perishing child. His answer, which I shall never forget—was, 'Yes, I have found one, and I will find the other too, if the Almighty spare me in life.' And when the apparition said so, it gave me such a look in the face—Oh! ah! What is this! what is this!"

Here the old woman began to shriek like one distracted, and appeared in an agony of terror; and, to tell the truth, I was not much better myself, when I heard the story of the wounded ptarmigan. But I tried to support the old woman, and asked what ailed her.

"Well you may ask what ails me!" said she. "O Mr. MacTavish, what did I see just now but the very same look that the apparition gave that morning! The same look, and from the very same features; for indeed it was the apparition of yourself, in every lineament, and in every article of dress—your very self. And it is the most strange vision that ever happened to me in all my visionary life!"

"I will tell you what it is, Mrs. Elspeth Cowan," said I, "you do not know one half of its strangeness yet; but tell me the day of the week and the day of the month when you beheld this same vision of myself."

"Ay, that day I never shall forget," answered Elspeth; "for of all the days of the year it was the one after I lost my dear foster-son, and that was the seventh of Averile. I have always thought my boy was stolen to be murdered, or put out of the way most unfairly, till this very day; but now, when I see the same man in flesh and blood, whom I saw that day chasing the wounded bird, I am sure poor Lewie will be found; for with that very look which you gave me but a minute ago, and in that very place where you stand, your apparition of yourself said to me 'Yes, I have found the one, and I will find the other, if the Almighty spare me in life.'"

"I do not recollect of saying these words, Mrs. Cowan," said I.

"Recollect!" said she; "what is it you mean! Sure you were not here your ownself that morning!"

"Why, to tell you the solemn truth," replied I, "I was in the glen that very morning chasing a wounded ptarmigan, and I now have some faint recollection of seeing a red-haired boy lying asleep in a little green hollow beside a gray stone—and I think I did say these words to some one too. But was not there something more? Was not there something about letting out somebody's heart's blood!"

"Yes; but then that was only a dream I had," said she, "while the other was no dream, but a sad reality. But how, in the name of the blessed saints, do you happen to know of that dream?"

"It is not easy, now-a-days," answered I, "to say what is a dream and what is a reality. For my part, from this moment I renounce all certainty of the distinction. It is a fact, that on that very morning, and at that hour, I was in this glen and in this cottage—and yet I was neither in this glen nor in this cottage. So, if you can unriddle that, you are welcome."

"I knew you were not here in flesh and blood. I knew it was your wraith, or *anam*, as we call it; for, first, you vanished in the hollow before my eyes; then you appeared here again, and when you went away in haste, I followed you to beg your assistance; and all that I could hear was your spirit howling under a waterfall of the linn."

This confounded me more than ever, and it was

some time before I recovered my self-possession so far as to inquire if what she had related to me was all she knew about the boy.

"Nothing more," she said, "save that you are destined to discover him again, either dead or alive—for I can assure you, from the words that I heard out of your own spirit's mouth, that if you do not find him, and restore him to his birthright, he never will be discovered by mortal man. I went, poor, sachless, and helpless being as I was, to the bishop, and told him my woeful story; for I durst do nothing till I asked counsel of him. He was, or rather pretended to be, very angry, and said I deserved to be burned for my negligence, for there was no doubt the boy had fallen over some precipice. It was in vain that I told him how my own grandson had seen him carried off on the pony by the pretended fox-hunter; he persisted in his own belief, and would not suffer me to mention the circumstances to a single individual. So, knowing that the counsel of the Lord was with his servant, I could do nothing but weep in secret, and hold my peace."

Thus ended my interview with Elspeth of the glen.

After my visit to the old sybil, my mind ran much on the extraordinary vision I had had, and on the old witch's having actually seen a being in my shape at the very instant of time that I myself weened and felt that I was there.

I have forgot whether I went to Lady Julia that very night or some time after, but I did carry her the tidings, which threw her into an agony of the deepest distress. She continued for a long space to repeat that her child was murdered—her dear, her innocent child. But before I left her, she said her situation was a very peculiar one, and therefore she entreated me to be secret, and to tell no one of the circumstance, yet by all means to lose no time in endeavouring to trace the fox-hunter, and to find out, if possible, whether the boy was dead or alive. She concluded by saying, "Exert yourself like a man and a true friend, as you have always been to me. Spare no expense in attaining your object, and my whole fortune is at your disposal." I was so completely involved in the business, that I saw no alternative but that of proceeding—and not to proceed with vigour was contrary to my nature.

Lady Julia had all this time been kept in profound ignorance where the child had been concealed, and the very next day after our interview, she paid a visit to old Elspeth Cowan at the remote cottage of Aberduchra, and there I again met with her as I set out on the pursuit. Long and serious was our consultation, and I wrote down all the marks of the man and the horse from Elspeth's mouth; and the child Ranald also gave me some very nice marks of the pony.

The only new thing that had come out, was that the boy Ranald had persisted in saying, that the fox-hunter took his brother Lewie *down* the glen, in place of up, which every other circumstance seemed to indicate. Elspeth had seen them go all three up the glen, the two boys riding on the pony, and the fox-hunter leading it, and Ranald himself was found far up the glen; but yet when we took him to the spot, and pointed up the glen; he said, No, they did not go that way, but the other. Elspeth said it was not possible, but I thought otherwise, for when I asked at Ranald where he thought Nicol the fox-hunter was going with his brother, he said he thought he was taking him home, and that he would come back for him. Elspeth wanted me to take the route through the hills towards the south; but as soon as I heard the boy's tale, I suspected the bishop had had some share in the abstraction of the missing child, and set out on my search in the direction of his mansion. I asked at every house and at every person, for such a man and such a pony as I described, making no mention of a boy; but no such man had been seen. At length I chanced to be asking at a shieling, within a mile of the bishop's house, if, on such a day, they had seen such a man ride by on a black pony. They had not seen him; but there was a poor vagrant boy chanced to be present, who heard my inquiry, and he said he saw a man like that ride by on a black pony one day, but it could not be the man I wanted, for he had a bonny boy on the horse before him.

"Indeed?" said I. "O, then, it could not be the man I want. Had the pony any mark by which you could remember it?"

"*Cheas gear*," said the boy. This was the very mark that little Ranald had given me of the pony. Oho! I have my man now, thought I! so I said no more, but shook my head and went away. Everything was kept so close about the bishop's house, I could get no intelligence there, nor even entrance—and in truth, I durst hardly be seen about the premises.

In this dilemma, I recollected the words of the sibyl of the glen, as I had heard them in my strange vision, namely, that my only sure way of making a fortune was by letting out my heart's blood; and also, that when my heart's blood was let out, it proved to be a flood of guineas. Now, thought I to myself, what does making a fortune mean but carrying out successfully any enterprise one may have in hand? and though to part with money is a very hard matter, especially in an affair in which I have no concern, yet I will try the efficacy of it here, and so learn whether the experiment is worth making in other cases where I am more closely interested. The truth is, I found that I *was* deeply interested in the affair, although, not being able to satisfy my own mind with reasons why I should be so, I affected to consider myself mightily indifferent about it. In pursuance, therefore, of the plan suggested in my dream, and on a proper opportunity, by means of a present administered to one of the bishop's servants, I learned, that about the time when the boy had been carried off by the fox-hunter, a priest of the name of

O'Callaghan had made his appearance at the bishop's house; that he was dressed in a dark gray jacket and trousers, and rode a black pony with cropped ears; that he was believed to have some secret business with the bishop, and had frequent consultations with him; and my informant, becoming more and more free in his communications, as the facts, one after another, were drawn from him, confessed to me that he had one night overheard quarrelling between O'Callaghan and his master, and having stolen to the door of the apartment, listened for some time, but was unable to make out more of the angry whisperings within than a threat from O'Callaghan, that if the bishop would not give him more, "he (O'Callaghan) would throw him overboard into the first salt dub he came to." On interrogating my informant if he knew whom O'Callaghan meant, when he said he would "throw him overboard," he replied that he could not guess. I had, however, no doubt, that it was the boy I was in search of, and I had as little doubt that the fellow knew to whom the threat referred; but I have often known people have no scruple in telling all about a secret, so as to give any one a key to the complete knowledge of it, who would yet, upon no consideration, give utterance to the secret itself; and judging this to be the case in the present instance, I contented myself with learning further, that when the priest left the bishop's, he went directly to Ireland, of which country he was a native, and would, in all probability, ere long revisit Scotland.

Possessed of this clew, I was nevertheless much at a loss to determine what was the most advisable way of following it out. My inclination led me to wait the fellow's return, and to have him seized and examined. But then I bethought me, if I could be instrumental in saving the boy's life, or of discovering where he was placed, or how circumstanced, it would avail me more, and give Lady Julia more satisfaction than any punishment that might be inflicted on the perpetrators of this deed afterwards. So after a troubled night and day, which I spent in preparation, I armed myself with a pair of pistols and a pair of Highland dirks, a long and a short one, and set out in my arduous undertaking, either to recover the boy or perish in the attempt. And it is needless for me to deny to you, sir, that the vision, and the weird wife of the glen's prophecy, had no small part in urging me to this adventure.

I got no trace of the priest till I went to Abertarf, where I found out that he had lodged in the house of a Catholic, and that he had shown a good deal of kindness and attention to the boy, while the boy seemed also attached to him, but still more to the pony. I went to the house of this man, whose name was Angus Roy MacDonald; but he was close as death, suspicious, and sullen, and would tell me nothing of O'Callaghan's motions. I succeeded, however, in tracing him till he went on board of a Liverpool sloop at Arisaig. I was much at a loss how to proceed, when, in the evening, perceiving a vessel in the offing, bearing against the tide, and hoping that the persons I sought might be aboard of her, I hired a boat to take me out; but we lost sight of her in the dusk of the evening, and I was obliged to bribe the boatmen to take me all the way to Tobermory, having been assured that the Liverpool vessel would be obliged to put in there, in order to clear at the custom-house. We did not reach Tobermory till the next day at noon; and as we entered the narrow passage that leads into the harbour, a sloop came full sail by us right before the wind, and I saw a pretty boy standing on the poop. I called out "Lewis" to him, but he only looked over his shoulder as for some one else, and did not answer me. The ship going on, as she turned her stern right towards us, I saw "The Blake of Boston" in golden letters, and thought no more of the encounter till I went on shore, and there I learned on the quay that she was the identical Liverpool vessel of which I was in pursuit, and the boy I had seen the very one I was in search of. I learned that he was crying much when ashore, and refused to go on shipboard again till taken by force; and that he told the people boldly, that that man, Nicol the fox-hunter, had taken him from his mother and father, and his brother Ranald, having enticed him out to give him a ride, and never taken him home again. But the fellow telling them a plausible story, they durst not meddle in the matter. It was known, however, that the vessel had to go round by the Shannon, as she had some valuable lading on board for Limerick.

This was heavy news, as how to get a passage thither I wist not. But the thoughts of the poor boy crying for his home hung about my heart, and so, going to Greenock I took a passage for Belfast, and travelled on foot or on horseback as I could, all the way to Limerick. When I got there, matters looked still worse. The Blake had not come up to Limerick, but discharged her bales at the mouth of the river, and again sailed; and here was I in a strange country with no one perhaps to believe my tale. The Irish, however, showed no signs of apathy or indifference to my case, as my own countrymen did. They manifested the utmost sympathy for me, and the utmost indignation against O'Callaghan, and the man being known in the country, he was soon found out by the natives. Yet, strange to say, though found out by twenty men all eagerly bent on the discovery, as soon as he gave them a hint respecting the person by whom he was employed, off they went, and never so much as came back to tell either the mayor or myself whether their search had been successful or not.

But two or three officers, who were Protestants, being despatched in search of him, they soon brought him to Limerick, where he and I were both examined, and he was committed to jail till the next court day. He denied all knowledge of the boy, and all concern whatever in the crime he was charged with;

and the ship being gone I could procure no evidence against him. There was nothing but the allegations of parties, upon which no judgment could be given; I had to pay the expenses of process, and he gave securities for his appearance at the court of Inverness, if he should be cited. I spent nine days more in searching for the boy on the Clare side of the river; but all my efforts were fruitless. I found that my accusation of their vagrant priest rendered me very unpopular among the natives, and was obliged to relinquish the investigation.

O'Callaghan was in Scotland before me, and on my arrival I caused him to be instantly seized, secure now of enough of witnesses to prove the fact of his having taken off the boy. Old Elspeth of the glen and her husband were summoned, as were Lady Julia and Angus Roy MacDonald. When the day of trial came, O'Callaghan's indictment was read in court, charging him with having abstracted a boy from the shieling of Aberduchra. The bishop being present, and a great number of adherents, the panel boldly denied every circumstance; and what was my astonishment to find, on the witnesses' names being called, not one of them was there! The officers were called and examined, who declared that they could not find one of the witnesses in the whole country. The forester and his wife, they said, had left Aberduchra, and gone nobody knew whither; Lady Julia had gone to France, and Angus MacDonald to the Lowlands, it was supposed, with cows. The court remarked it was a singular and rather suspicious circumstance, that the witnesses should all be absent. O'Callaghan said something in his own defence, and having made a reference to the bishop for his character, his reverence made a long speech in his praise. The consequence was, that as not one witness was produced in support of the accusation, O'Callaghan was once more liberated.

I would never have learned what became of the boy, had not a young soldier, a cousin's son of mine, come to Innismore the other year. He was a fine lad, and I soon became a good deal attached to him; and he being one of a company stationed in the neighbourhood to guard the passes for the prevention of smuggling, he lived a good deal at my house, while his officer remained nightly at the old mansion-house, the guest of Lady Julia and the young lord.

It is perhaps proper here to mention that Lady Julia was now the only remaining member of the late earl's family, and the heir of entail, being the son of a distant relation, had been sent from Ireland to be brought up by Lady Julia. He was a perverse and wicked boy, and grieved her heart every day.

The young man, my relation, was one day called out to follow his captain on a private expedition against some smugglers. The next day one of his comrades came and told me that they had had a set battle with a great band of smugglers, in which several were killed and wounded. "Among the rest," said he, "our gallant commander, Captain MacKenzie, is killed, and your nephew is lying mortally wounded at the still-house."

I lost no time in getting ready, and mounting one horse, and causing the soldier to take another, I bade him lead the way, and I followed. It may well be supposed that I was much astonished on finding that the lad was leading me straight to the cottage of Aberduchra! Ever since the old forester and his wife had been removed, the cottage had stood uninhabited; and it seems that, from its inaccessible situation, it had been pitched upon as a still-house, and occupied as such, for several years, by a strong band of smugglers from the Deveron. They were all bold, resolute fellows, and when surprised by MacKenzie and his party, and commanded to yield, they soon showed that there was nothing further from their intention. In one moment every one had a weapon in his hand; they rushed upon the military with such fury that in a few minutes they beat them back, after having run their captain and another man through the body, and wounded several besides. Captain MacKenzie had slain one of the smugglers at the first onset; but the next instant he fell, and his party retired. The smugglers then staved their casks, and fled, leaving the military in possession of the field of battle, and of the shieling, in which nothing was found save a great rubbish of smashed utensils, and the killed and wounded of both sides.

In this state I found the cottage of Aberduchra. There were a smuggler and a soldier quite dead, and a number badly wounded; and among the latter was the young man, my relative, who was sorely wounded in the left shoulder. My whole attention was instantly turned towards him. He was very faint, but the bleeding was stanched, and I had hopes of his recovery. I gave him some brandy and water, which revived him a great deal; and as soon as he could speak, he said, in a low voice, "For God's sake, attend to our gallant captain's wound. Mine is nothing, but, if he is still living, his, I fear, is dangerous; and a nobler youth never breathed."

I found him lying on a bed of rushes, one soldier supporting his head, and another sitting beside him with a dish of cold water. I asked the captain how he did; but he only shook his head, and pointed to the wound in his side. I mixed a good strong cup of brandy and water, and gave it him. He swallowed it greedily, and I had then no doubt that the young man was near his last. "I am a great deal the better of that," said he. I requested him not to speak, and then asked the soldiers if the wound had bled freely, but they said no, it had scarcely bled any. I was quite ignorant of surgery, but it struck me that if possible the wound should be made to bleed, to prevent it from bleeding inwardly. Accordingly, the men having kindled a good fire in the cottage, I got some warm water, and began to

foment the wound. As the stripes of crusted blood began to disappear, judge of my astonishment when I perceived the mark of a ruby ring below his left breast! There was no mistaking the token. I knew that moment that I was administering to Lady Julia's son, for whom I had travelled so far in vain, and over whom my soul had yearned as over a lost child of my own. The basin fell from my hands, my hair stood on end, and my whole frame grew rigid, so that the soldiers stared at me, thinking I was bewitched, or seized with some strange malady. The captain, however, made signs for them to proceed with the fomentation, which they did, until the wound bled considerably; and I began to have some hopes that there might be a possibility of saving his life. I then sent off a soldier on one of my horses for the nearest surgeon, and I myself rode straight to the castle to Lady Julia, and informed her of the captain's wound, and the miserable state in which he was lying at the shieling of Aberduchra. She held up her hands, and had nearly fainted, and made a lamentation so grievous, that I was convinced she already knew who the young man was. She instantly ordered the carriage to be got ready, and a bed put into it, in order to have the captain conveyed straight to the castle. I expected she would have gone in the carriage herself, but when she only gave charges to the servants and me, I then knew that the quality and propinquity of her guest were not known to her.

My reflections on the scenes that had happened at that cottage, made a deep impression on me that night, as well they might, considering how singular they were. At that cottage, I had once been in spirit, though certainly not in the body, yet there my bodily form was seen speaking and acting as I would have done, and as at the same moment I believed I was doing. By that vision I discovered where the lost boy was to be found, and there I found him; and when he was lost again, on that very same spot was I told that I should find him, else he never would be discovered by man. And now, after a lapse of fifteen years, and a thousand wanderings on his part overgone, on that very same spot did I again discover him.

Captain MacKenzie was removed to the Castle, and his recovery watched by Lady Julia and myself with the utmost solicitude—a solicitude on her part which seemed to arise from some mysterious impulse of the tie that connected her with the sufferer; for had she known that she was his mother, her care and anxiety about him could scarcely have been greater. When his wound was so far recovered, that no danger was to be apprehended from the agitating discovery, the secret of his birth was communicated to himself and Lady Julia. It is needless for me to trace further the details of their eventful history. That history, the evidence adduced before the courts of law for the rights of heritage, and before the peers for the titles, have now been divulged and laid quite open, so that the deeds done in darkness have been brought to light, and that which was meant to have been concealed from the knowledge of all mankind, has been published to the whole world, even in its most minute and intricate windings. It is therefore needless for me to recapitulate all the events that preceded the time when this narrative begins. Let it suffice, that Lady Julia's son has been fully proved legitimate, and we have now a Protestant earl, in spite of all that the bishop did to prevent it. And it having been, in a great measure, owing to my evidence that the identity of the heir was established, I have now the prospect of being, if not the richest, at least, the most independent man of either Buchan or Mar.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MARVELLOUS DOCTOR.

When my parents lived in the old Manse of Ettrick, which they did for a number of years, an old gray-headed man came one summer and lived with them nearly a whole half year, paying my mother at the rate of ten shillings a month for bed, board, and washing. He was a mysterious being, and no one knew who he was or what he was, but all the neighbourhood reckoned him "uncanny," which in that part of the country means a warlock, or one some way conversant with beings of another nature.

I remember him well; he was a tall ungainly figure, dressed in a long black coat, the longest and the narrowest coat I ever saw; his vest was something like blue velvet, and his breeches of leather, buckled with silver knee-buckles. He wore always white thread stockings, and as his breeches came exactly to the knap of the knee, his legs appeared so long and thin that it was a marvel to me how they carried him. Take in black spats and a very narrow-brimmed hat, and you have the figure complete; any painter might take his likeness, provided he did not make him too straight in the back, which would never answer, as his formed the segment of a great circle. He was a doctor, but whether of law, medicine, or divinity, I never learned, perhaps of them all, for a doctor he certainly was; we called him so, and never knew him by any other name: some indeed called him the Lying Doctor, some the Herb Doctor, and some the Warlock Doctor, but my mother behind his back called him always the MARVELLOUS DOCTOR, which I have chosen to retain as the one about whose accuracy there can be no dispute.

His whole occupation was in gathering flowers and herbs and arranging them; and, as he picked a number of these out of the churchyard, the old wives in the vicinity grew terribly jealous of him. He

seemed, by his own account, to have been over the whole world, on what business or in what capacity he never mentioned; but from his stories of himself and of his wonderful feats, one might have concluded that he had been everything. I remember a number of these stories quite distinctly, for at that time I believed them all for perfect truth, though I have been since led to suspect that it was scarcely consistent with nature or reason they could be so. One or two of these tales I shall here relate, but with this great disadvantage, that I have in many instances forgot the names of the places where they happened. I knew nothing about geography then, or where the places were, and the faint recollection I have of them will only, I fear, tend to confuse my narrative the more.

One day while he was very busy arranging his flowers and herbs, and constantly speaking to himself, my mother said to him, "Doctor, you that kens sae weel about the nature of a' kinds o' plants and yirbs, will ye tell me gin there be sic a yirb existing as that, if ye pit it either on beast or body, it will gar that beast or body follow you?"

"No, Margaret, there is not an herb existing which has that power by itself; but there is a decoction from certain rare herbs, of which I have had the honour, or rather the misfortune, to be the sole discoverer, which has that effect infallibly."

"Dear doctor, there was sic a kind of charm i' the warld hunders o' years afore ye were born."

"So it has been said, Margaret, so it has been said, but falsely I assure you. It cost me seven years' hard study and hard labour both by night and by day, and some thousands of miles' travelling; but at last I effected it, and then I thought my fortune was made. But—would you believe it, Margaret?—my fortune was lost, my time was lost, and I myself was twenty times on the point of being lost too."

"Dear doctor, tell us some o' your ploys wi' that drog, for they surely must be very curious, especially if you used it as a love-charm to gar the lasses follow you." The doctor, be it observed, was one of the most unlikely persons in the world to be the object of a tender passion.

"I did use it as a love-charm," replied the sage, smiling grimly, "and sometimes got those to follow me that I did not want, as you shall hear by and by. But before I proceed, I may inform you that I was offered a hundred thousand pounds by the College of Physicians in Spain, and twice the sum by the queen of that country, if I would impart my discovery to them in full, and I refused it! Yes, for the sake of human nature I refused it. I durst not take the offer for my life."

"What for, doctor?"

"What for, woman? Do you say, what for? Don't you see that it would have turned the world upside down, and inverted the whole order of nature? The lowest miscreant in the country might have taken away the first lady—might have taken her from her parents or her husband, and kept her a slave to him for life, and no opiate in nature to counteract the power of the charm. The secret shall go to the grave with me, for were it once to be made public in any country, that country would be ruined; and for the sake of good order among mankind I have slighted all the grandeur that this world could have bestowed. The first great trial of my skill was a public one." And the doctor went on to relate that it occurred as follows:—

THE SPANISH PROFESSOR.

Having brought my valued charm to full perfection abroad, I returned to Britain to enjoy the fruit of my labours, convinced that I would insure a patent, and carry all the world before me. But on my arrival in London, I was told that a great Spanish professor had made the discovery five years before, and had arrived at great riches and preferment on that account, under the patronage of the queen. Convinced that no man alive was thoroughly master of the charm but myself, I went straight to Spain, and waited on this eminent professor, whose name was Don Felix de Valdez. This man lived in a style superior to that of the great nobility and grandees of his country. He had a palace that was not exceeded in splendour by any in the city, and a suite of lacqueys, young gentlemen, and physicians attending him, as if he had been the greatest man in the world. It cost me much trouble and three days' attendance before I could be admitted to his presence, and even then he received me so cavalierly that my British blood boiled with indignation.

"What is it you want with me, fellow?" said he.

"Sir, I would have you know," said I, "that I am an English doctor, and master of arts, and *your* fellow in any respect. So far good. I was told in my own country, sir, that you are a pretender to the profound art of attachment; or, in other words, that you have made a discovery of that divine elixir which attaches every living creature touched with it to your person. Do you pretend to such a discovery? Or do you not, sir?"

"And what if I do, most sublime doctor and master of arts? In what way does that concern your great sapience?"

"Only thus far, Professor Don Felix de Valdez," says I, "that the discovery is my own, wholly my own, and solely my own; and after travelling over half the world in my researches for the proper ingredients, and making myself master of the all-powerful nostrum, is it reasonable, do you think, that I should be deprived of my honour and emolument without an effort? I am come from Britain, sir, for the sole purpose of challenging you to a trial of skill before your sovereign and all his people, as well as the learned world in general. I throw down the gauntlet, sir. Dare you enter the lists with me?"

"Desire my lacqueys to take away this mad foreigner," said he to an attendant. "Beat him well with staves for his impertinence, and give him up to the officers of police, to be put in the house of correction; and say to Signior Philippo that I ordered it."

"You ordered it!" said I. "And who are you, to order such a thing? I am a free-born British subject, a doctor, and master of arts and sciences, and I have a pass from your government to come to Madrid to exercise my calling; and I dare any of you to touch a hair of my head."

"Let him be taken away," said he, nodding disdainfully, "and see that you deal with him as I have commanded."

The students then conducted me gently forth, pretending to pay me great deference; but when I was put into the hands of the vulgar lacqueys, they made sport of me, and having their master's orders, used me with great rudeness, beating me, and pricking me with needle-pointed stilettos, till I was in great fear for my life, and was glad when put into the hands of the police.

Being liberated immediately on making known my country and erudition, I set myself with all my might to bring this haughty and insolent professor to the test. A number of his students having heard the challenge, it soon made a great noise in Madrid; for the young king, Charles the Third, and particularly his queen, were half mad about the possession of such a nostrum at that period. In order, therefore, to add fuel to the flame now kindled, I published challenges in every one of the Spanish journals, and causing three thousand copies to be printed, I posted them up in every corner of the city, distributing them to all the colleges of the kingdom, and to the college of Toledo in particular, of which Don Felix was the principal—I sent a sealed copy to every one of its twenty-four professors, and caused some hundreds to be distributed amongst the students.

This challenge made a great noise in the city, and soon reached the ears of the queen, who became quite impatient to witness a trial of our skill in this her favourite art. She harassed his majesty with such effect, that he was obliged to join her in a request to Professor Don Felix de Valdez, that he would vouchsafe a public trial of skill with this ostentatious foreigner.

The professor besought that he might be spared the indignity of a public exhibition along with the crazy half-witted foreigner, especially as his was a secret art, and ought only to be practised in secret. But the voices of the court and the colleges were loud for the trial, and the professor was compelled to consent and name a day. We both waited on their majesties to settle the order and manner of trial; and on drawing lots who was to exhibit first, the professor got the preference. The Prado was the place appointed for the exhibition, and Good Friday the day. The professor engaged to enter the lists precisely at half past twelve o'clock; but he begged that he might be suffered to come in disguise, in order to do away all suspicions of a private understanding with others; and assured their majesties that he would soon be known to them by his works.

When the appointed day arrived, I verily believed that all Spain had assembled to witness the trial. I was placed next to the royal stage, in company with many learned doctors, the queen being anxious to witness the effect which the display of her wonderful professor's skill produced on me, and to hear my remarks. The anxiety that prevailed for almost a whole hour was wonderful; for no one knew in what guise the professor would appear, or how attended, or who were the persons on whom the effect of the unguent was to be tried. Whenever a throng or bustle was perceived in any part of the parade, then the buzz began, "Yonder he is now! Yon must be he, our great professor, Don Felix de Valdez, the wonder of Spain and of the world!"

The queen was the first to perceive him, perhaps from some private hint given her in what disguise he would appear; on which she motioned to me, pointing out a mendicant friar as my opponent, and added, that she thought it but just and right that I should witness all his motions, his feats, and the power of his art. I did so, and thought very meanly of the whole exhibition, it being, in fact, nothing else than a farce got up among a great number of associates, all of whom were combined to carry on the deception, and share in the profits accruing therefrom. The friar did nothing till he came opposite to the royal stage, when, beckoning slightly to her majesty, he began to look out for his game, and perceiving an elegant lady sitting on a stage with her back towards him, he took a phial from his bosom, and letting the liquid touch the top of his finger, he reached up that finger and touched the hem of the lady's robe. She uttered a scream, as if pierced to the heart, sprang to her feet, and held her breast as if wounded; then, after looking round and round, as if in great agitation, she descended from the stage, followed the friar, kneeled at his feet, and entreated to be allowed to follow and serve him. He requested her to depart, as he could not be served by woman; but she wept and followed on. He came to a thick-lipped African, who was standing grinning at the scene. The professor touched him with his unguent, and immediately blackie fell a striving with the lady who should walk next the wonderful sage, and the two actually went to blows, to the great amusement of the spectators, who applauded these two feats prodigiously, and hailed their professor as the greatest man in the world. He walked twice the length of the promenade, and certainly every one whom he touched with his ointment followed him, so that if he had been a stranger in the community as I was, there could scarcely

have been a doubt of the efficacy of his unguent of attraction. When he came last before the royal stage, and ours, he was encumbered by a crowd of persons following and kneeling to him; apparently they were of all ranks, from the highest to the lowest. He then caused proclamation to be made from a stage, that if any doubted the power of his elixir, he might have it proved on himself without danger or disgrace; a dowager lady defied him, but he soon brought her to her knee with the rest, and no one of the whole begged to be released.

The king and queen, and all the judges, then declaring themselves satisfied, the professor withdrew, with his motley followers, to undo the charm in secret; after that, he returned in most brilliant and gorgeous array, and was received on the royal stage, amid deafening shouts of applause. The king then asked me, if I deemed myself still able to compete with his liege kinsman, Professor Don Felix de Valdez? or if I joined the rest in approval, and yielded the palm to his merits in good fellowship.

I addressed his majesty with all humility, acknowledged the extent of the professor's powers as very wonderful, provided they were all real; but of that there was no proof to me. "If he had been a foreigner, and a stranger as I am, in this place, and if prejudices had been excited against him," added I, "then I would have viewed this exhibition of his art as highly wonderful; but, as it is, I only look on it as a well-contrived farce."

The professor reddened, and bit his lip in the height of scorn and indignation; and indeed their majesties and all the nobility seemed offended at my freedom; on which I added, "My exhibition, my liege, shall be a very short one; and I shall at least convince your majesty, that there is no deceit nor collusion in it." And with that I took a small syringe from my bosom, which I had concealed there for the purpose, as the liquor, to have due effect, must be always warm with the heat of the body of him that sprinkles it; and with that small instrument, I squirted a spray of my elixir on Professor Don Felix's fine head of hair, that hung in wavy locks almost to his waist.

At that moment there were thousands all standing agape, eager to witness the effect of this bold appeal. The professor stood up, and looked at me, while the tears stood in his eyes. That was the proudest moment of my life! For about the space of three minutes, his pride seemed warring with his feelings; but the energy and impulse of the latter prevailed, and he came and kneeled at my feet.

"Felix, you dog! what is the meaning of this?" cried I. "How dare you go and dress yourself like a grandee of the kingdom, and then come forth and mount the stage in the presence of royalty, knowing, as you do, that you were born to be my slave? Go this instant, doff that gorgeous apparel, and put on my livery, and come and wait here at my heel. And, do you hear, bring my horse properly caparisoned, and one to yourself; for I ride into the country to dinner. Take note of what I order, and attend to it, else I'll beat you to a jelly, and have you distilled into the elixir of attraction. Presumption indeed, to come into my presence in a dress like that!"

He ran to obey my orders, and then the admiration so lately expressed was turned into contempt. All the people were struck with awe and astonishment. They could not applaud, for they were struck dumb, and eyed me with terror, as if I had been a divinity. "This exceeds all comprehension," said the judges. "If he had told me that he could have upheaved the Pyrenean Mountains from their foundations, I could as well have believed it," said the king. But the queen was the most perverse of all, for she would not believe it, though she witnessed it; and she declared she never would believe it to be a reality, for I had only thrown glamour in their eyes. "Is it possible," said she, "that the most famous man in Spain, or perhaps in the world, who has hundreds to serve him, and run at his bidding, should all at once, by his own choice, submit to become a slave to an opponent whom he despised, and be buffeted like a dog, without resenting it? No; I'll never believe it is anything but an illusion."

"There is no denying of your victory," said King Charles to me; "for you have humbled your opponent in the dust. You must dine with me to-night, as we have a great entertainment to the learned of our kingdom, over all of whom you shall be preferred to the highest place. But as Don Felix de Valdez is likewise an invited guest, let me intreat you to disenchant him, that he may be again restored to his place in society."

"I shall do myself the distinguished honour of dining with your exalted and most Catholic majesty," I replied. "But will it be no degradation to your high dignity, for the man who has worn my livery in public, to appear the same day at the table of royalty?"

"This is no common occurrence," answered the king. "Although by one great effort of art nature has been overpowered, it would be hard that a great man should remain degraded for ever."

"Well, then, I shall not only permit him to leave my service, but I shall order him from it, and beat him from it. I can do no more to oblige your majesty at present."

"What! can you not then remove the charm?" said he. "You saw the professor could do that at once."

"A mere trick," said I. "If the Professor Don Felix had been in the least conscious of the power of his liquor, he would at once have attacked and degraded me. It is quite evident. I expected a trial at least, as I am sure all the company did; but I stood secure, and held him and his art at defiance. He is a sheer impostor, and his boasted discovery a cheat."

"Nay, but I have tried the power of his unguent again and again, and proved it," said the queen. "But indeed, its effect is of very short duration; therefore, all I request is, that you will give the professor his liberty; and, take my word for it, it will soon be accepted."

I again promised that I would; but at the same time I shook my head, as much as to signify to the queen, she was not aware of the power of my elixir; and I determined to punish the professor for his insolence to me, and the sound beating I got in the court of his hotel. While we were speaking, Don Felix approached us, dressed in my plain yellow livery, leading my horse, and mounted on a grand one of his own, that cost two hundred gold ducats, while mine was only a hack, and no very fine animal either.

"How dare you have the impudence to mount my horse, sir?" exclaimed I, taking his gold-headed whip from him, and lashing him with it. "Get off instantly, you blundering booby, take your own spavined jade, and ride off where I may never see your face again."

"I beg your pardon, honoured master," said he, humbly; "I will take any horse you please; but I thought this had been mine."

"You thought, sirrah! What right have you to think?" I demanded. "I desire no more of your attendance," I continued. "Here, before their majesties, and all their court and people, I discharge you my service, and dare you, on the penalty of your life, ever to approach my presence."

"Pardon me this time," said he; "I'll sooner die than leave you."

"But you shall leave me or do worse," said I, "and therefore disappear instantly; and I pushed him through the throng away from me, and lashed him with the whip till he screamed and wept like a lubberly boy.

"You must have some one to ride with you and be your guide," he said; "and why will you not suffer me to do so? You know I cannot leave you."

His majesty, taking pity on the helpless professor, sent a liveryman to take his place, and attend me on my little jaunt, at the same time entreating him to desist, and remember who he was. It was all in vain. He fought with the king's servant for the privilege, mounted my hack, and followed me to the villa, about six miles from the city, where I had been engaged to dine. The news had not arrived of my victory when I got there. The lord of the manor was at the exhibition, and he not having returned, the ladies were all impatience to learn the result.

"It becomes not me, noble ladies," said I, "to bring the news of my own triumph, which you might very reasonably expect to be untrue or overcharged; but you shall witness my power yourselves."

Then they set up eldritch screams in frolic, and begged, for the sake of the Virgin, that I would not put my skill to the test on any of them, for they had no desire to follow to England even a master of the arts and sciences; and every one assured me personally that she would be a horrid plague to me, and that I had better pause before I made the experiment.

"My dear and noble dames," said I, 'there is nothing farther from my intention than to make any of you the objects of fascination. But come all hither," and I threw up the sash of the window—"Come all hither, and behold a proof; and if more is required, it shall not be lacking. See; do you all know that gentleman there?"

"What gentleman? Where is he? I see no gentleman," was the general rejoinder.

"That gentleman who is holding my horse—he on the sorry hack there, with yellow livery. You all know him assuredly. That is your great professor, Don Felix de Valdez, accounted the most wonderful man in Spain, and by many of you the greatest in the world."

They would not believe it, until I called him close up to the door of the chateau, and showed him to them like any wild beast or natural curiosity, and called him by his name. Then they grew frightened, or pretended to be so, at being in the presence of a man of so much power, for they all knew the professor personally; and if one could have believed them, they were like to go into hysterics for fear of fascination. Yet, for all that, I perceived they were dying for a specimen of my art, and that any of them would rather the experiment should be made on herself than not witness it.

Accordingly, there was a very handsome and engaging brunette of the party, named Donna Rashelli, on whom I could not help sometimes casting an eye, being a little fascinated myself. This was soon perceived by the lively group, and they all gathered round me, and teased me to try the power of my philtre on Rashelli. I asked the lady's consent, on which she answered rather disdainfully, that "she *would* be fascinated *indeed* if she followed *me!* and therefore she held me at defiance, provided I did not *touch* her, which she would *not* allow."

Without more ado, I took my tube from my bosom, and squirted a little of the philtre on her left-foot shoe—at least I meant it so, though I afterwards perceived that some of it had touched her stocking.

"And now, Donna Rashelli," said I, "you are in for your part in this drama, and you little know what you have authorized." She turned from me in disdain; but it was not long till I beheld the tears gathering in her eyes; she retired hastily to a recess in a window, covered her face with her hands, and wept bitterly. The others tried to comfort her, and laugh her out of her frenzy, but that was of no avail; she broke from them, and, drowned in tears, embraced my knees, requesting in the most fervent terms to be allowed the liberty of following me over the world.

The ladies were all thrown by this into the utmost consternation, and besought me to undo the charm, both for the sake of the young lady herself and her honourable kin; but I had taken my measures, and paid no regard to their entreaties. On the contrary, I made my apology for not being able to dine there, owing to the king's commanding my attendance at the palace, took a hasty leave, mounted my horse, and, with Don Felix at my back, rode away.

I knew all their power could not detain Donna Rashelli, and, riding slowly, I heard the screams of madness and despair as they tried to hold her. She tore their head-dresses and robes in pieces, and fought like a fury, till they were glad to suffer her to go; but they all followed in a group, to overtake and entreat me to restore their friend to liberty.

I forded the stream that swept round the grounds, and waited on the other bank, well knowing what would occur, as a Spanish maiden never crosses even a rivulet without taking off her shoes and stockings. Accordingly she came running to the side of the stream, followed by all the ladies of the chateau, calling to me, and adjuring me to have pity on them. I laughed aloud at their tribulation, saying, I had done nothing but at their joint request, and they must now abide by the consequences. Rashelli threw off her shoes and stockings in a moment, and rushed into the stream, for fear of being detained; but before taking two steps, the charm being removed with her left-foot shoe, she stood still, abashed; and so fine a model of blushing and repentant beauty I never beheld, with her raven hair hanging dishevelled far over her waist, her feet and half her limbs of alabaster bathing in the stream, and her cheek overspread with the blush of shame.

"What am I about?" cried she. "Am I mad? or bewitched? or possessed of a demon, to run after a mountebank, that I would order the menials to drive from my door!"

"So you are gone, then, dear Donna Rashelli?" cried I. "Farewell, then, and peace be with you. Shall I not see you again before leaving this country?" but she looked not up, nor deigned to reply. Away she tripped, led by one lady on each hand, barefooted as she was, till they came to the gravel walk, and then she slipped on her morocco shoes. The moment her left-foot shoe was on, she sprung towards me again, and all the dames after her full cry. It was precisely like a hare-hunt, and so comic, that even the degraded Don Felix laughed amain at the scene. Again she plunged into the stream, and again she returned, weeping for shame; and this self-same scene was acted seven times over. At length I took compassion on the humbled beauty, and called to her aunt to seize her left-foot shoe, and wash it in the river. She did so; and I, thinking all was then over and safe, rode on my way. But I had not gone three furlongs till the chase again commenced as loud and as violently as ever, and in a short time the lady was again in the stream. I was vexed at this, not knowing what was the matter, and terrified that I might have attached her to me for life; but I besought her friends to keep her from putting on her stocking likewise, till it was washed and fomented as well as her shoe. This they went about with great eagerness, an old dame seizing the stocking and hiding it in her bosom; and when I saw this I rode quickly away, afraid I should be too late for my engagement with the king.

We had turned the corner of a wood, when again the screams and yells of females reached our ears.

"What, in the name of St. Nicholas, is this now?" said I.

"I suppose the hunt is up again, sir; but surely our best plan is to ride off and leave them," replied Don Felix.

"That will never do," returned I; "I cannot have a lady of rank attending me at the palace; and no power on earth, save iron and chains, can detain her, if one-thousandth part of a drop of my elixir remain about her person."

We turned back, and behold there was the old dowager coming waddling along, with a haste and agitation not to be described, and all her daughters, nieces, and maidens, after her. She had taken the river at the broadest, shoes and all, and had got so far ahead of her pursuers that she reached me first, and seizing me by the leg, embraced and kissed it, begging and praying all the while for my favour, in the most breathless and grotesque manner imaginable. I knew not what to do; not in the least aware how she became affected, till Donna Rashelli called out, "O, the stocking, sir, the stocking!" on which I caused them to take it from her altogether, and give it to me, and then they went home in peace.

I dined that night with their majesties, not indeed at the same table, but at the head of the table in the ante-room, from whence I had a full view of them. I was a great and proud man that night, and neither threats nor persuasions could drive the great professor from waiting at the back of my chair, and frequently serving me kneeling. After dinner I had an audience of the queen, who offered me a galleon laden with gold for the receipt of my divine elixir of love. But I withstood it, representing to her majesty the great danger of imparting such a secret, because, after it had escaped from my lips, I could no more recall it, and knew not what use might be made of it: I accounted myself answerable, I said, to my Maker for the abuse of talents bestowed on me, and therefore was determined that the secret should go to the grave with me. I was, however, reduced to the necessity of giving her majesty a part of the pure and sublime elixir ready prepared, taking her solemn promise, however, not to communicate any portion of it to another. She had found a ready use for it, for in a few days she requested more, and more, and more, till I began to think it was high time for me to leave the country.

Having now got as much money as I wanted, and

a great deal more than I knew what to do with, I prepared for leaving Spain; for I was afraid that I should be made accountable for the effects produced by the charm in the hands of a capricious woman. Had I yielded to the requests of the young nobles for supplies, I might almost have exhausted the riches of Spain; but as it was, I had got more than my own weight in gold, part of which I forwarded to London, and put the remainder out to interest in Spain, and left Madrid not without fear of being seized and sent to the Inquisition as a necromancer. In place of that, however, the highest honours were bestowed on me, and I was accompanied to the port by numbers of the first people of the realm, and by all the friends of the Professor Don Felix de Valdez. These people had laid a plot to assassinate me, which they would have executed but for the fear that the charm would never leave their friend; and as Felix himself discovered it to me, I kept him in bondage till the very day I was about to sail; then I caused his head to be shaved, and washed with a preparation of vinegar, alum, and cinnamon; and he returned to his senses and right feelings once more. But he never could show his face again in the land wherein he had been so much caressed and admired, but changed his name and retired to Peru, where he acquired both fame and respectability.

THE COUNTESS.

When a man gains great wealth too suddenly and with much ease, it is not unusual for him to throw it away with as little concern as he had anxiety in the gathering of it. This I was aware of, and determined to avoid. I began therefore, without loss of time, to look about me for a respectable settlement in life; and having, after much inquiry, obtained a list of the unmarried ladies possessing the greatest fortunes in England, I fixed on a young countess, who was a widow, had a large fortune, and suited my wishes in every respect. Possessing as I did the divine cordial of love, I had no fears of her ready compliance; so, after providing myself with a suitable equipage, I set off to her residence to court and win her without any loss of time.

On arriving at her mansion about noon, I was rather coldly received, which was not surprising, for I had no introduction, but trusted to my own powers alone. Though shy and reserved at first, she, however, at length invited me to an early dinner, letting me know at the same time that no visitor remained there overnight when her brother was not present. This was so much gained; so I made my acknowledgments, and accepted the invitation—thinking to myself, My pretty countess, before you and I part, your haughtiness shall be wonderfully abated!—I waited my opportunity, and as she was leaving the apartment, aimed a small sprinkling of my cordial at her bushy locks; but owing to a sudden cast of her head, as ladies will affect pretty airs of disdain, the spray of my powerful elixir of love fell on an embroidered scarf that hung gracefully on her shoulder.

I was now sure of the effect, provided she did not throw the scarf aside before I got her properly sprinkled anew, but I had hopes its operation would be too instant and potent to permit that. I judged right; in three minutes she returned to the drawing-room, and proposed that we two should take a walk in her park before dinner, as she had some curiosities to show me. I acquiesced with pleasure, as may well be supposed. I have you now, my pretty countess, thought I; if it be in your power to escape me, I shall account you more than woman.

This park of hers was an immense field inclosed with a high wall, with a rail on the top. She had some roes in it, one couple of fallow deer, and a herd of kine. This last was what she pretended that she wished to show me; they were all milk-white, my, as white as snow. They were not of the wild Highland breed, but as gentle and tame as lambs—came to her when called by their names, and seemed so fond of being caressed, that several were following and teasing her at the same time. One favourite in particular was so fond that she became troublesome: and the lady wished to be quit of her. But the beast would not go away. She followed on humming; and rubbing on her mistress with her cheek, till at last the latter, to rid herself of the annoyance, took her scarf, and struck the cow sharply across the face with it! The tassels of the scarf fastened on the far horn of the cow, and the animal being a little hurt by the stroke, as well as blinded, it sprang away; and in one moment the lady lost hold of her scarf. This was death and destruction to me: for the lady was thus bereaved of all her attachment to me in an instant, and what the countess had lost was transferred to the cow. I therefore pursued the animal with my whole speed, calling her many kind and affectionate names, to make her stop. These she did not seem to understand, for stop she would not; but perceiving that she was a little blindfolded with the scarf, I slid quietly forward, and making a great spring, seized the embroidered scarf by the corner. The cow galloped, and I ran and held, determined to have the scarf, though I should tear it all to pieces—for I knew well that my divine elixir had the effect of rousing animals into boundless rage and madness—and held with a desperate grasp. I could not obtain it! All that I effected was to fasten the other horn in it likewise, and away went the cow flaunting through the park, like a fine madam in her gold embroidery.

I fled to the countess as fast as my feet could carry me, and begged her, for Heaven's sake, to fly with me, for that our lives were at stake. She could not understand this; and moreover, she, that a minute or two before had been clinging to me with as much confidence as if our acquaintance had been of many years' standing, and of the most intimate kind, appeared to have conceived a sort of

horror of me, and would not allow me to approach her. There was no leisure to parley; so I left her to shift for herself, and fled with all my might towards the gate at which we entered, knowing of no other point of egress. Time it was; for the creature instantly became furious, and came after me at full speed, bellowing like some agonized fiend escaped from the infernal regions. The herd was roused by the outrageous sounds, and followed in the same direction, every one galloping faster and roaring louder than another, apparently for company's sake; but, far ahead of them all, the cow came with the embroidered scarf flying over her shoulders, hanging out her tongue and bellowing, and gaining every minute on me. Next her in order came a stately milk-white bull, tall as a hunting steed, and shapely as a deer. My heart became chill with horror; for of all things on this earth, I stood in the most mortal terror of a bull. I saw, however, that I would gain the wicket before I was overtaken; and, in the brightness of hope, I looked back to see what had become of the countess. She had fallen down on a rising ground in a convulsion of laughter! This nettled me exceedingly; however, I gained the gate; but, oh misery and despair! it was fast locked, and the countess herself had the pass-key. To clear the wall was out of my power in such a dilemma, so I had nothing left for it but swiftness of foot. Often had I valued myself on that qualification, but little expected ever to have so much need of it. So I ran and ran, pursued by twenty milk-white kine and a bull, all bellowing like as many infernal creatures. Never was there such another chase! I tried to reach the place where the countess was, thinking she might be able by her voice to stay them, or at all events that she would tell me how I could escape from their fury. But the drove having all got between her and me, I could not effect it, and was obliged to run at random, which I continued to do, straining with all my might, but now found that my breath was nearly gone, and the terrible race drawing to a crisis.

What was to be done? Life was sweet, but expedients there were none. There were no trees in the park save young ones, dropped down, as it were, here and there, with palings round them, to prevent the cattle from destroying them. The only one that I could perceive was a tall fir, I suppose of the larch species, which seemed calculated to afford a little shelter in a desperate case; so I made towards it with a last effort. There was a triangular paling around it, setting my foot on which, I darted among the branches, clomb like a cat, and soon vanished among the foliage.

Then did I call aloud to the countess for assistance, imploring her to raise the country for my rescue; but all that she did was to come towards me herself, slowly and with lagging pace, for she was feeble with laughing; and when she did come, the cattle were all so infuriated that they would not once regard her.

"What is the matter with my cattle, sir?" cried she. "They are surely bewitched."

"I think they are bedevilled, and that is worse, madam," returned I. "But, for Heaven's sake, try to regain the scarf. It is the scarf which is the cause of all this uproar."

"What is in the scarf?" said she. "It can have no effect in raising this deadly enmity against you, if all is as it should be, which I now begin to suspect, from some strange diversity of feelings I have experienced."

"It is merely on account of the gold that is on it, madam," said I. "You cannot imagine how mad the sight of gold, that pest of the earth, makes some animals; and it was the effort I made to get it from the animal that has excited in her so much fury against me."

"That is most strange indeed!" exclaimed the lady. "Then the animal shall keep it for me, for I would not for half my fortune that these favourites should be driven to become my persecutors."

She now called the cattle by their names, and some of them left me; for it was evident that, save the charmed animal, the rest of the herd were only running for company or diversion's sake. Still their looks were exceedingly wild and unstable, and the one that wore the anointed shawl, named Fair Margaret, continued foaming mad, and would do nothing but stand and bellow, toss her adorned head, and look up to the tree. I would have given ten thousand pounds to have got hold of that vile embroidered scarf, but to effect it and retain my life at that time was impracticable.

And now a scene ensued, which for horror to me could not be equalled, although to any unconcerned beholder it must have appeared ludicrous in the extreme. The bull, perceiving one of his favourite mates thus distempered, showed a great deal of anxiety; he went round her, and round her, and perceiving the flaunting thing on her head and shoulders, he seemed to entertain some kind of idea that it was the cause of this unwonted and obstreperous noise. He tried to fling it off with his horns I know not how oft; but so awkward were his efforts that they all failed. Enraged at being thus baffled, he then had recourse to a most unexpected expedient—he actually seized the scarf with his great mouth, tore it off, and in a few seconds swallowed it every thread!

What was I to do now? Here was a new enemy, and one ten times more formidable than the other, who had swallowed up the elixir, and whom, therefore, it was impossible ever to discharm; who, I knew, would pursue me to the death, even though at the distance of fifty miles. I was in the most dreadful agony of terror imaginable, as well I might, for the cow went away shaking her ears, as if happily quit of a tormenter, and the bull instantly began to tear

up the earth with hoof and horn, while the late bellowings of the cow were, to his, like the howl of a beagle to the roar of a lion. They made the ground to quake; while distant woods, and walls, and the very skies, returned the astounding echoes. He went round and round the tree, digging graves on each side of it; and his fury still increasing, he broke through the paling as if it had been a spider's web, and setting his head to the trunk, pushed with all his mighty force, doubled by supernatural rage. The tree yielded like a bulrush, until I hung dangling from it as if suspended from a cross-beam; still I durst not quit my hold, having no other resource. While in this situation I observed the countess speeding away. It seemed to me as if she were Hope flying from me and abandoning me to my fate, and I uttered some piercing cries of desperation. The tree, however, was young and elastic, and always as the infuriated animal withdrew his force for a new attack, it sprung up to its original slender and stately form, and then down it went again; so that there was I swinging between heaven and earth, expecting every moment to be my last; and if the bull had not, in his mad efforts, wheeled round to the contrary side, I might have been swinging to this day. When he changed sides, the fibres of the tree weakened, and at last I came down to the earth, and he made at me with full force; it was in vain that I called to him to keep off, and bullied him, and pretended to hunt dogs on him; on he came, and plunged his horns into the foliage; the cows did the same for company's sake, and, I'm sure, never was there a poor soul so completely mobbed by a vulgar herd. Still the tree had as much strength left as to heave me gently above their reach, and no more, and I now began to lose all power through terror and despair, and merely kept my hold instinctively, as a drowning man would hold by a rush. The next push the tree got it was again laid prostrate, and again the bull dashed his horns into the foliage, and through that into the earth. I now saw there was no longer any hope of safety if I remained where I was, and therefore quitted hold of the tree. How I escaped I scarce can tell, but I did escape through amongst the feet of the cows.

At first I stole away like a hare from a cover, and could not help admiring the absurdity of the cows, that continued tossing and tearing the tree with their horns, as if determined not to leave a stiver of it; whilst the bull continued grovelling with his horns down through the branches and into the ground. Heavens! with what velocity I clove the wind! I have fled from battle—I have fled from the face of the lions of Asia, the dragons of Africa, and the snakes of America—I have fled before the Indians with their scalping-knives; but never in my life was I enabled to run with such speed as I did from this infuriated monster.

He was now coming full speed after me, as I knew he would the moment he disengaged himself; but I had got a good way ahead, and, I assure you, was losing no time; and as I was following a small beaten track, I came to a stile over the wall. I never was so thankful for anything since I was born! It was a crooked stone stair, with angles to hinder animals from passing, and a locked door on the top, about the height of an ordinary man. I easily surmounted this, by getting hold of the iron spikes on the top; and now, being clear of my adversary, I set my head over the door and looked him in the face, mocking and provoking him all that I could, for I had no other means of retaliation, and felt exceedingly indignant at having been put in danger of my life by so ignoble an enemy. I never beheld a more hideous picture of rage! He was foaming at the mouth, and rather belching than bellowing; his tail was writhing in the air like a serpent, and his eyes burning like small globes of bright flame. He grew so enraged at length, that he rushed up the stone stair, and the frame-work at the angles began to crash before him. Thinks I to myself, Friend, I do not covet such a close vicinity with you: so, with your leave, I'll keep a due distance; and then descending to the high road, I again began to speed away, though rather leisurely, knowing that he could not possibly get over the iron-railed wall.

There was now a close hedge on every side of me about eight or ten feet high, and as a man who has been in great jeopardy naturally looks about him for some safe retreat in case of an emergency, so I continued jogging on and looking for such, but perceived none; when, hearing a great noise far behind me, I looked back, and saw the irresistible monster coming tumbling from the wall, bringing gates, bars, and railing, all before him. He fell with a tremendous crash, and I had great hopes his neck was broken, for at first he tried to rise, and, stumbling, fell down again; but, to my dismay, he was soon again on the chase, and making ground on me faster than ever. He came close on me at last, and I had no other shift than to throw off my fine coat, turn round to await him, and fling it over his horns and eyes.

This not only marred him, but detained him long wreaking his vengeance on the coat, which he tore all to pieces with his feet and horns, taking it for a part of me. By this time I had reached a willow-tree in the hedge, the twigs of which hung down within reach. I seized on two or three of these, wrung them together like a rope, and by the assistance of that, swung myself over the hedge. Still I slackened not my pace, knowing that the devil was in the beast, and that nothing but blood would allay his fury. Accordingly, it was not long till I saw him plunging in the hedge; and through it he came.

I now perceived a fine sheet of water on my left, about a mile broad, I knew not whether a lake or river, never having been in those bounds before. I made towards it with all my remaining energy, which was not great. I cleared many commo-

stone-walls in my course, but these proved no obstacles to my pursuer, and before I reached the lake, he came so close upon me, that I was obliged to fling my hat in his face, and as he fortunately took that for my head, it served him a good while to crush it in pieces, so that I made to the lake and plunged in. At the very first, I dived and swam under water as long as I could keep my breath, assured that my enemy would lose all traces of me then; but, when I came to the surface, I found him puffing within two yards of me. I was in such horror, that I knew not what to do, for I found he could swim twice as fast as I could; so I dived again, but my breath being gone, I could not remain below, and whenever I came to the surface, there was he.

If I had had the smallest reasoning faculty left, or had once entertained a thought of resistance, I might easily have known that I was now perfectly safe. The beast could not harm me. Whenever he made a push at me, his head went below the water, which confounded him. My perturbation was so extreme, that I was on the point of perishing from exhaustion, before I perceived this to be the case. When, however, I did observe it, I took courage, seized him by the tail, clomb upon his back, and then rode in perfect safety.

I never got a more complete and satisfactory revenge of an enemy, not even over the Spanish professor, and that was complete enough; but here I had nothing to do but to sit exulting on the monster's back, while he kept wallowing and struggling in the waves. I then took my penknife, and stabbed him deliberately over the whole body, letting out his heart's blood. He took this very much amiss, but he had now got enough of blood around him, and began to calm himself. I kept my seat nevertheless, to make all sure, till his head sunk below the water, while his huge hinder parts turned straight uppermost, and I left him floating away like a huge buoy that had lost its anchor.

"Now, doctor, gin a' tales be true, yours is nae lee, that is certain," said my mother, at the conclusion of this narration; "but I want some explanations—it's a grand story, but I want to tak the consequences alang wi' me. What did the queen o' Spain wi' a' the ointment you left wi' her? I'm thinking there wad be some strange scenes about that court for a while."

"Why, Margaret, to say the truth, the elixir was not used in such a way as might have been expected. The truth appeared afterwards to have been this: The king had at that time resolved on that ruinous, and then very unpopular war, about what was called the Family Compact; and finding that the clergy, and a part of the principal nobility, were in opposition to it, and that, without their concurrence, the war could not be prosecuted with any effect, the queen took this very politic method of purchasing plenty of my divine elixir of attachment, and giving them all a touch of it every one. The effect was, of course, instant, potent, and notorious; and it is a curious and incontestable fact, that the effects of that sprinkling have continued the mania of attachment among that class of Spain to this day."

"And how came you on wi' your grand countess? Ye wad be a bonny figure gaun hame again to her place, half-naked, and like a droukit craw, wi' the life of her favourite animal to answer for!"

"That is rather a painful subject, Margaret—rather a painful subject. I never saw her again! I had lost my coat and hat. I had lost all my money, which was in notes, in swimming and diving. I had lost my carriage and horses, and I had lost my good name, which was worst of all; for from that day forth, I was branded and shunned as a necromancer. The abrupt and extraordinary changes in the lady's sentiments had not escaped her own notice, while the distraction of the animals on the transference of the enchanted scarf to them, confirmed her worst suspicions that I was a dealer in unlawful arts, and come to gain possession of herself and fortune by the most infamous measures; and as I did not choose to come to an explanation with her on that subject, I escaped as quietly from the district as possible.

"It surely can be no sin to dive into the hidden mysteries of nature, particularly those of plants and flowers. Why, then, have I been punished as never pharmacopolist was punished before; can you tell me that, Margaret?"

"Indeed, can I—weel enough—doctor. Other men have studied the qualities o' yirbs to assist nature; but ye have done it only to pervert nature—and I hope you hae read your sin in your punishment."

"The very sentiment that my heart has whispered to me a thousand times! It indeed occurred to me, whilst skulking about on my escape after the adventure with the countess; but it was not until further and still more bitter experience of the dangerous effects of my secret, that I could bring myself to destroy the maddening liquid. It had taken years of anxiety and labour to perfect a mixture, from which I anticipated the most beneficial results. The consequences which it drew upon me, although, at first, they promised to be all I could wish, proved in the end every way annoying, and often well nigh fatal, and I carefully consumed with fire every drop of the potion, and every scrap of writing in which the progress of the discovery had been noted. I cannot myself forget the painful and tedious steps by which it was obtained. And even after all the disasters to which it has subjected me—after the miserable wreck of all my high-pitched ambition, I cannot but feel a pride in the consciousness that I carry with me the knowledge of a secret never before possessed by mortal man, which no one shall learn from me, and which it is all but certain that none after me will have perseverance enough, or genius, to arrive at."

The learned doctor usually wound up the history of an adventure with a sonorous conclusion like the above, the high-wrought theatrical tone of which, as it was incomprehensible to his hearers, for the most part produced a wonderful effect. Looking upon the gaunt form of the sage, I was penetrated with immeasureable reverence, and though the fascination of his marvellous stories kept me listening with eager curiosity while they lasted, I always retired shortly after he ceased speaking, not being able to endure the august presence of so wise a personage as he appeared to me to be.

Many of his narratives were still more marvellous than those I have preserved; but these are sufficient for a specimen, and it would be idle to pursue the doctor's hallucinations further. All I can say about these adventures of his is, that when I heard them first, I received them as strictly true; my mother believed them most implicitly, and the doctor related them as if he had believed in the truth of them himself. But there were disputes every day between my mother and him about the invention of the charm, the former always maintaining that it was known to the chiefs of the gipsy tribes for centuries bygone; and as proofs of her position, she cited Johnie Faa's seduction of the Earl of Cassillis's lady, so well known in Lowland song, and Hector Kennedy's seduction of three brides, all of high quality, by merely touching the palms of their hands, after which no power could prevent any of them from following him. She likewise told a very affecting story of an exceedingly beautiful girl, named Sophy Sloan, who left Kirkhope, and eloped after the gipsies, though she had never exchanged a word with one of them. Her father and uncle followed, and found her with them in an old kiln on the water of Milk. Her head was wounded, bloody, and tied up with a napkin. They had pawned all her good clothes, and covered her with rags, and though weeping with grief and despair, yet she refused to leave them. The man to whom she was attached had never asked her to go with him; he even threatened her with death if she would not return with her father, but she continued obstinate, and was not suffered long to outlive her infatuation and disgrace. This story *was* a fact: yet the doctor held all these instances in utter contempt, and maintained his prerogative as the sole and original inventor of THE ELIXIR OF LOVE.

There was not a doubt that the doctor was skulking, and in terror of being apprehended for some misdemeanour, all the time he was at Ettrick Manse; and never one of us had a doubt that it was on account of some enchantment. But I had reason to conclude, long afterwards, that his seclusion then, and all the latter part of his life, was owing to an unfortunate and fatal experiment in pharmacy, which deprived society of a number of valuable lives. The circumstances are related in a note to the third volume of Eustace's *Pharmacopœia*, and it will there be seen that the description of the delinquent suits exactly with that of THE MARVELLOUS DOCTOR.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WITCHES OF TRAQUAIR.

There was once a young man, a native of Traquair, in the county of Peebles, whose name was Colin Hyslop, and who suffered more by witchcraft and the intervention of supernatural beings than any man I ever heard of.

Traquair was a terrible place then. There was a witch almost in every hamlet, and a warlock here and there besides. There were no fewer than twelve witches in one straggling hamlet, called Taniel Burn, and five in Kirk Row. What a desperate place Traquair had been in those days! But there is no person who is so apt to overshoot his mark as the devil. He must be a great fool in the main; for, with all his supposed acuteness, he often runs himself into the most egregious blunders that ever the leader of an opposition got into the midst of. Throughout all the annals of the human race, it is manifest, that whenever he was aiming to do the most evil, he was uniformly employed in such a way as to bring about the most good; and it seems to have been so, in a particular manner, in the case with which my tale shall make the reader acquainted.

The truth is that Popery was then on its last legs, and the devil, finding it (as then exercised) a very convenient and profitable sort of religion, exerted himself beyond measure to give its motley hues a little more variety; and the making witches and warlocks, and holding nocturnal revels with them, where every sort of devilry was exercised, was at that time a favourite plan with him. It was also favourably received by the meaner sort of the populace. Witches gloried in their power, and warlocks in their foreknowledge of events, and the energies of their master. Women beyond a certain age, when the pleasures and hopes of youth delighted no more, flew to an intercourse with the unseen powers, as affording an excitement of a higher and more terrible nature; and men, whose tempers had been soured by disappointment and ill usage, betook themselves to the prince of the power of the air, enlisting under his banner, in hopes of obtaining revenge on their oppressors, or those against whom they had conceived displeasure. However extravagant this may appear, there is no doubt of the fact, that, in those days, the hopes of attaining some energies beyond the reach of mere human capability, inflamed the ignorant and wicked to attempts and acts of the most diabolical nature; for hundreds acknowledged their principles, and gloried in them, before the tribunals that adjudged them to the stake.

"I am now fairly under the power of witchcraft," said Colin Hyslop, as he sat on the side of the Feathen Hill, with his plaid drawn over his head, the tears running down his brown manly cheek, and a paper marked with uncouth lines and figures in his hand,—"I am now fairly under the power of witchcraft, and must submit to my fate; I am entangled, enchained, enslaved, and the fault is all my own, for I have committed that degree of sin which my sainted and dying father assured me would subject me to the snares of my hellish neighbours and sworn adversaries. My pickle sheep have a' been bewitched, and a great part o' them have died dancing hornpipes and French curtilions. I have been changed, and ower again changed, into shapes and forms that I darena think of, far less name; and a' through account of my ain sin. Hech! but it is a queer thing that sin! It has sae mony inroads to the heart, and outlets by the senses, that we seem to live and breathe in it. And I canna trow that the deil is the wyte of a' our sins neither. Na, na; black as he is, he canna be the cause and the mover of a' our transgressions, for I find them often engendering and breeding in my heart as fast as maggots on tainted carrion; and then it is out o' the power of man to keep them down. My father tauld me, that if aince I let the deil get his little finger into *ane* o' my transactions, he would soon hae his haill hand into them a'. Now I hae found it in effect, but not in belief; for, from all that I can borrow frae Rob Kirkwood, the warlock, and my aunty Nans, the wickedest witch in Christendye, the deil appears to me to be a geyan obliging chap. That he is wayward and fond o' sin, I hae nae doubt; but in that he has mony neighbours. And then his great power over the senses and conditions of men, over the winds, the waters, and the element of flame, is to me incomprehensible, and would make him appear rather a sort of vicegerent over the outskirts and unruly parts of nature, than an opponent to its lawful lord. What then shall I do with this?" looking at the scroll; "shall I subscribe to the conditions, and enlist under his banner, or shall I not? O love, love! were it not for thee, all the torments that old Mahoun and his followers could inflict, should not induce me to quit the plain path of Christianity. But that disdainful, cruel, and lovely Barbara! I must and will have her, though my repentance should be without measure and without end. So then it is settled! Here I will draw blood from my arm—blot out the sign of the cross with it and form that of the crescent, and these other things, the meaning of which I do not know. Halloo! What's that? Two beautiful deer, as I am a sinner, and one of them lame. What a prey for poor ruined Colin! and fairly off the royal bounds, too. Now for it, Bawty, my fine dog! now for a clean chase! A' the links o' the Feathen Wood winna hide them from your infallible nose, billy Bawty. Halloo! off you go; and now for the bow and the broad arrow at the head slap! What! ye winna hunt a foot-length after them, will ye no? Then, Bawty, there's some mair mischief in the wind for me! I see what your frighted looks tell me. That they dinna leave the scent of other deer in their track, but ane that terrifies you, and makes your blood creep. It is hardly possible, ane wad think, that witches could assume the shapes of these bonny harmless creatures; but their power has come to sic a height hereabouts, that nae man alive can tell what they cannot do. There's my aunt Nans has already turned me into a gait, then to a gainder, and last of a' into a three-legged stool!

"I am a ruined man, Bawty! your master is a ruined man, and a lost man, that's far waur. He has sold himself for love to one beautiful creature, the comeliest of all the human race. And yet that beautiful creature must be a witch, else how could a' the witches o' Traquair gie me possession o' her?

"Let me consider and calculate. Now, supposing they are deceiving me—for that's their character; and supposing they can never put me in possession of her, then I hae brought myself into a fine scrape. How terrible a thought this is! Let me see; is all over? Is this scroll signed and sealed; and am I wholly given up to this unknown and untried destiny? (Opens his scroll with trembling agitation, and looks over it.) No, thanks to the Lord of the universe, I am yet a Christian. The cross stands uncancelled, and there is neither sign nor superscription in my blood. How did this happen? I had the blood drawn—the pen filled—and the scroll laid out. Let me consider what was it that prevented me? The deer? It was, indeed, the two comely deer. What a strange intervention this is! Ah! these were no witches! but some good angels, or happy fays, or guardian spirits of the wild, sent to snatch an abused youth from destruction. Now, thanks be to Heaven, though poor and reduced to the last extremity, I am yet a free man, and in my Maker's hand. My resolution is changed—my promise is broken, and here I give this mystic scroll to the winds of the glen.

"Alas, alas! to what a state sin has reduced me! Now shall I be tortured by night, and persecuted by day; changed into monstrous shapes, torn by cats, pricked by invisible bodkins, my heart racked by insufferable pangs of love, until I either lose my reason, and yield to the dreadful conditions held out to me, or abandon all hope of earthly happiness, and yield up my life. Oh, that I were as free of sin as that day my father gave me his last blessing! then might I withstand all their charms and enchantments. But that I will never be. As I have brewed so must I drink. These were his last words to me, which I may weel remember:—'You will have many enemies of your soul to contend with, my son; for your nearest relations are in compact with the devil; and as they have hated and persecuted me, so will they hate and persecute you; and

it will only be by repeating your prayers evening and morning, and keeping a conscience void of all offence towards God and towards man, that you can hope to escape the snares that will be laid for you. But the good angels from the presence of the Almighty will, perhaps, guard my poor orphan boy, and protect him from the counsels of the wicked.'

"Now, in the first place, I have never prayed at all; and, in the second place, I have sinned so much, that I have long ago subjected myself to their snares, and given myself up for lost. What will become of me? flight is in vain, for they can fly through the air, and follow me wherever I go. And then, Barbara—O that lovely and bewitching creature! in leaving her I would leave life and saul behind!"

After this long and troubled soliloquy, poor Colin burst into tears, and wished himself a dove or a sparrow-hawk, or an eagle, to fly away and be seen no more; but, in either case, to have bonny Barbara for his mate. At this instant Bawty began to cock up his ears, and turn his head first to the one side and then to the other; and, when Colin looked up, he beheld two hares cowering away from a bush behind him. There was nothing that Colin was so fond of as a chase. He sprang up, pursued the hares, and shouted to his dog, halloo, halloo! No; Bawty would not pursue them a foot; but whenever he came to the place where he had seen them, and put his nose to the ground, he ran back, hanging his tail, and uttering short barks, as he was wont to do when attacked by witches in the night. Colin's hair rose up on his head, for he instantly suspected that the two hares were Robin Kirkwood and his aunt Nans, watching his motions, and the fulfilment of his promise to them. Colin was horrified, and knew not what to do. He did not try to pray, for he could not; but he wished in his heart that his father's dying prayer for him had been heard.

He rose, and hastened away in the direction contrary to that the hares had taken, as may well be supposed; and as he jogged along, in melancholy mood, he was aware of two damsels who approached him slowly and cautiously. They were clothed in white, with garlands on their heads; and, on their near approach, Colin perceived that one of them was lame, and the other supported her by the hand. The two comely hinds that had come upon him so suddenly and unexpectedly, and had prevented him, at the very decisive moment, from selling his salvation for sensual enjoyment, instantly came over Colin's awakened recollection, and he was struck with indescribable awe. Bawty was affected somewhat in the same manner with his master. The dismay he manifested was different from that inspired by the attacks of witches and warlocks; he crept close to the ground, and turning his face half away from the radiant objects, uttered a sort of stifled murmur, as if moved both by respect and fear. Colin perceived, from these infallible symptoms, that the beings with whom he was now coming in contact were not the subjects of the power of darkness.

He therefore threw his plaid over his shoulder in the true shepherd style, took his staff below his left arm, so that his right hand might be at liberty to lift his bonnet when the fair damsels accosted him, and, not choosing to advance direct upon them, he paused at a respectful distance, straight in their path. When they came within a few paces of him, they turned gently from the path, as if to pass him on the left side, but all the while kept their bright eyes fixed on him, and whispered to each other. Colin was grieved that so much comeliness should pass by without saluting them, and kept his regretful eyes steadily on them. At length they paused, and one of them called in a sweet but solemn voice, "Ah, Colin Hyslop, Colin Hyslop! you are on the braid way to destruction."

"How do you ken that, madam?" returned Colin. "Do you ca' the road up the Kirk Rigg the braid way to destruction."

"Ay, up the rigg or down the rigg, cross the rigg or round the rigg, all is the same for you, Colin. You are a lost man; and it is a great pity. One single step farther on the path you are now treading, and all is over."

"What wad ye hae me to do, sweet madam! Wad you hae me to stand still and starve here on the crown o' the Kirk Rigg?"

"Better starve in a dungeon than take the steps you are about to take. You were at a witch and warlock meeting yestreen."

"It looks like as gin you had been there too, madam, that you ken sae weel."

"Yes, I *was* there, but under concealment, and not for the purpose of making any such vows and promises as you made. O wretched Colin Hyslop, what is to become of you!"

"I did naething, madam, but what I couldna help; and my heart is sair for it the day."

"Can you lay your hand on that heart and say so?"

"Yes, I can, dear madam, and swear to it too."

"Then follow us down to this little green knowe, and account to us the circumstances of your life, and I will inform you of a secret I heard yestreen."

"Aha, madam, but yon is a fairy ring, and I hae gotten sae mony cheats wi' changelings, that I hae muckle need to be on my guard. However, things can hardly be waur wi' me. Lead on, and I shall e'en follow."

The two female figures walked before him to a fairy knowe on the top of the Feathen Hill, and sat down, with their faces towards him, till he recounted the incidents of his life, the outline of which was this:—His father was a sincere adherent of the reformers, and a good Christian; but poor Colin was born at Taniel-Burn, in the midst of Papists and witches; and the nearest relation he had, a maternal aunt, was the leading witch of the neighbour-

hood. Consequently, Colin was nurtured in sin, and inured to iniquity, until all the kindly and humane principles of his nature were erased, or so much distorted, as to appear like their very opposites; and when this was accomplished, his wicked aunt and her associate hags judging him fairly gained, and without the pale of redemption, began to exercise cantrips the most comical, and at the same time the most refined in cruelty, at his expense; and at length, on being assured of every earthly enjoyment, he engaged to join their hellish community, only craving three days to study their mysteries, before he should bleed himself, and, with the blood extracted from his veins, extinguish the sign of the cross, and thereby renounce his hope in mercy, and likewise make some hieroglyphics of strange shapes and mysterious efficacy, and finally subscribe his name to the whole.

When the relation was finished, one of the lovely auditors said—"You are a wicked and abandoned person, Colin Hyslop. But you were reared up in iniquity, and know no better; and the mercy of Heaven is most readily extended to such. You have, besides, some good points in your character still; for you have told us the truth, however much to your own disadvantage."

"Aha, madam! How do you ken sae weel that I hae been telling you a' the truth?"

"I know all concerning you better than you do yourself. There is little, very little of a redeeming nature in your own history; but you had an upright and devout father, and the seed of the just may not perish for ever. I have been young, and now am old, yet have I never seen the good man forsaken, nor his children cast out as vagabonds in the land of their fathers."

"Ah, na, na, madam! ye canna be auld. It is impossible! But goodness kens! there are sad changelings now-a-days. I have seen an auld wrinkled wife blooming o'ernight like a cherub."

"Colin, you are a fool! And folly in youth leads to misery in old age. But I am your friend, and you have not another on earth this night but myself and my sister here, and one more. Pray, will you keep this little phial, and drink it for my sake?"

"Will it no change me, madam?"

"Yes, it will."

"Then I thank you; but will have nothing to do with it. I have had enow of these kind o' drinks in my life."

"But suppose it change you for the better? Suppose it change you to a new creature?"

"Weel, suppose it should, what will that creature be? Tell me that first. Will it no be a fox, nor a gainder, nor a bearded gait, nor—nor—a three-legged stool, which is no a creature ava?"

"Ah, Colin, Colin!" exclaimed she, smiling through tears, "your own wickedness and unbelief gave the agents of perdition power over you. It is that power which I wish to counteract. But I will tell you nothing more. If you will not take this little phial, and drink it, for my sake—why, then, let it alone, and follow your own course."

"O dear madam! ye ken little thing about me. I was only joking wi' you, for the sake o' hearing your sweet answers. For were that bit glass fu' o' rank poison, and were it to turn me intil a taed or a worm, I wad drink it aff at your behest. I hae been sae little accustomed to hear aught serious or friendly, that my very heart clings to you as it wad do to an angel coming down frae heaven to save me. Ay, and ye said something kind and respectfu' about my auld father too. That's what I hae been as little used to. Ah, but he was a douce man! Wasna he, mem?—Drink that bit bottle o' liquor for your sake! Od, I wish it were fu' to the brim, and that's no what it is by twa-thirds."

"Ay, but it has this property, Colin, that drinking will never exhaust it; and the langer you drink it, the sweeter it will become."

"Say you sae? Then here's till ye. We'll see whether drinking winna exhaust it or no."

Colin set the phial to his lips, with intent of draining it; but the first portion that he swallowed made him change his countenance, and shudder from head to heel.

"Ah! sweeter did you say, madam? by the faith of my heart, it has muckle need; for siccan a potion for bitterness never entered the mouth of mortal man. Oh, I am ruined, poisoned, and undone!"

With that poor Colin drew his plaid over his head, fell flat on his face, and wept bitterly, while his two comely visitants withdrew, smiling at the success of their mission. As they went down by the side of the Feathen Wood, the one said to the other, "Did you not perceive two of that infatuated community haunting this poor hapless youth to destruction? Let us go and hear their schemes, that we may the better counteract them."

They skimmed over the lea fields, and, in a thicket of brambles, briers, and nettles, they found—not two hares, but the identical Rob Kirkwood, the warlock, and Colin's aunt Nans, in close and unholy consultation. This bush has often been pointed out to me as the scene of that memorable meeting. It perhaps still remains at the side of a little hollow, nigh to the east corner of the Feathen arable fields; and the spots occupied by the witch and warlock, without a green shrub on them, are still as visible as on the day they left them. The two sisters having chosen a disguise that, like Jack the Giant-killer's coat of darkness, completely concealed them, heard the following dialogue, from beginning to end.

"Kimmer, I trow the prize is won. I saw his arm bared; the red blood streaming; the scroll in the one hand and the pen in the other."

"He's our's! he's ours!"

"He's nae mair yours."

"We'll ower the kirkstyle, and away wi' him!"

"I liked not the appearance of yon two pale hinds at such a moment. I wish the fruit of all our pains be not stolen from us when ready for our lord and master's board. How he will storm and misuse us if this has befallen!"

"What of the two hinds? What of them, I say? I like to see blood. It is a beautiful thing blood."

"Thou art as gross as flesh and blood itself, and hast nothing in thee of the true sublimity of a supernatural being. I love to scale the thunder-cloud; to ride on the topmost billow of the storm; to roost by the cataract, or croon the anthem of hell at the gate of heaven. But *thou* delightest to see blood—rank, reeking, and baleful Christian blood. What pleasure is in that, dotard?"

"Humph! I like to see Christian blood, howsomever. It bodes luck, kimmer—it bodes luck."

"It bodes that thou art a mere block, Rob Kirkwood! but it is needless to upbraid thee, senseless as thou art. Listen then to me:—It has been our master's charge to us these seven years to gain that goodly stripling, my nephew; and you know that you and I engaged to accomplish it. If we break that engagement, woe unto us! Our master bore a grudge at his father; but he particularly desires the son, because he knows that, could we gain him, all the pretty girls of the parish would flock to our standard. But Robin Kirkwood, I say, Robin Kirkwood, what two white birds are these always hopping around us? I dinna like their looks unco weel. See, the one of them is lame too; and they seem to have a language of their own to one another. Let us leave this place, Robin; my heart is quaking like an aspen."

"Let them hap on. What ill can wee bits o' birdies do till us? Come, let us try some o' yon cantrips our master learned us. Grand sport yon, Nans!"

"Robin, did not you see that the birds hopped three times round us! I am afraid we are charmed to the spot."

"Never mind, auld fool, it's a very good spot. Some of our cantrips! some of our cantrips!

What cantrips they performed is not known; but on that day fortnight, the pair were found still sitting in the middle of the bush, the two most miserable and disgusting figures that ever shocked humanity. Their cronies came with a hurdle to take them home; but Nans expired by the way, uttering wild gibberish and blasphemy, and Rob Kirkwood died soon after he got home. The last words he uttered were, "Plenty o' Christian blood soon! It will be running in streams! in streams! in streams!"

We now return to Colin, who, freed of his two greatest adversaries, now spent his time in a state bordering on happiness, compared with the life he had formerly led. He wept much, staid on the hill by himself, and pondered deeply on something—nobody knew what, and it was believed he did not know well himself. He was in love—over head and ears in love; which may account for anything in man, however ridiculous. He was in love with Barbara Stewart, an angel in loveliness as well as virtue; but she had hitherto shunned a young man so dissolute and unfortunate in his connections. To her rejection of his suit were attributed Colin's melancholy and retirement from society; and it might be partly the cause, but there were other matters that troubled his inmost soul.

Ever since he had been visited by the two mysterious dames, he had kept the phial close in his bosom, and had drunk of the bitter potion again and again. He felt a change within him, a certain renovation of his nature, and a new train of thoughts, to which he was an utter stranger; yet he cherished them, tasting oftener and oftener his phial of bitterness, and always, as he drank, the liquor increased in quantity.

While in this half-resigned, half-desponding state, he ventured once more to visit Barbara. He thought to himself that he would go and see her, if but to take farewell of her; for he resolved not to harass so dear a creature with a suit which was displeasing to her. But, to his utter surprise, Barbara received him kindly. His humbled look made a deep impression on her; and, on taking leave, he found that she had treated him with as much favour as any virtuous maiden could display.

He therefore went home rather too much uplifted in spirit, which his old adversaries, the witches, perceived, and having laid all their snares open to entrap him, they in part prevailed, and he returned in the moment of temptation to his old courses. The day after, as he went out to the hill, he whistled and sung—for he durst not think—till, behold, at a distance he saw his two lovely monitors approaching. He was confounded and afraid, for he found his heart was not right for the encounter; so he ran away with all his might, and hid himself in the Feathen Wood.

As soon as he was alone, he took the phial from his bosom, and, wondering, beheld that the bitter liquid was dried up all to a few drops, although the glass was nearly full when he last deposited it in his bosom. He set it eagerly to his lips, lest the last remnant should have escaped him; but never was it so bitter as now; his very heart and spirit failed him, and, trembling, he lay down and wept. He tried again to drain out the dregs of his cup of bitterness; but still, as he drank, it increased in quantity, and became more and more palatable; and he now continued the task so eagerly, that in a few days it was once more nearly full.

The two lovely strangers coming now often in his mind, he regretted running from them, and longed to see them again. So, going out, he sat down within the fairy ring, on the top of the Feathen Hill, with a sort of presentiment that they would appear to him. Accordingly, it was not long till they made their appearance, but still at a distance.

as if travelling along the kirk-road. Colin, perceiving that they were going to pass, without looking his way, thought it his duty to wait on them. He hasted across the moor, and met them; nor did they now shun him. The one that was lame now addressed him, while she who had formerly accosted him, and presented him with the phial, looked shy, and kept a marked distance, which Colin was exceedingly sorry for, as he loved her best. The other examined him sharply concerning all his transactions since they last met. He acknowledged everything candidly—the great folly of which he had been guilty, and likewise the great terror he was in of being changed into some horrible bestial creature by the bitter drug they had given him. "For d'ye ken, madam," said he, "I fand the change beginning within, at the very core o' the heart, and spreading aye outward and outward, and I lookit aye every minute when my hands and my feet wad change into clutes; for I expeckit nae less than to have another turn o' the gait, or some waur thing, kenning how weel I deserved it. And when I saw that I keepit my right proportions, I grat for my ain wickedness, that had before subjected me to such unhallowed influence."

The two sisters now looked to each other, and a heavenly benevolence shone through the smiles with which that look was accompanied. The lame one said, "Did I not say, sister, that there was some hope?" She then asked a sight of his phial, which he took from his bosom and put into her hands; and when she had viewed it carefully, she returned it, without any injunction; but taking from her own bosom a medal of pure gold, which seemed to have been dipped in blood, she fastened it round his neck with a chain of steel. "As long as you keep that phial, and use it," said she, "the other will never be taken from you, and with these two you may defy all the powers of darkness."

"As soon as Colin was alone, he surveyed his purple medal with great earnestness, but could make nothing of it; there was a mystery in the characters and figures which he could not in the least comprehend; yet he kept all that had happened closely concealed, and walked softly.

The witches now found that he was lost to their community, and, enraged beyond measure at being deprived of such a prize, which they had judged fairly their own, and of which their master was so desirous, they now laid a plan to destroy him.

Colin went down to the castle one night to see Barbara Stewart, who talked to him much of religion and of the Bible; but of these things Colin knew very little. He engaged, however, to go with her to the house of prayer—not the popish chapel, where he had once been a most irreverent auditor, but to the reformed church, which then began to divide the parish, and the pastor of which was a devout man.

On taking leave of Barbara, and promising to attend her on the following Sabbath, a burst of eldritch laughter arose close by, and a voice, with a hoarse and giggling sound, exclaimed, "No sae fast, canny lad—no sae fast. There will maybe be a whipping o' cripples afore that play be played."

Barbara consigned them both to the care of the Almighty with great fervency, wondering how they could have been watched and overheard in such a place. Colin trembled from head to foot, for he knew the laugh too well to be that of Maude Stott, the leading witch of the Traquair gang, now that his aunt was removed. He had no sooner crossed the Quair, than, at the junction of a little streamlet, called to this day the Satyr Sike, he was set upon by a countless number of cats, which surrounded him, making the most infernal noises, and putting themselves into the most threatening attitudes. For a good while they did not touch him, but leaped around him, often as high as his throat, screaming most furiously; but at length his faith failed him, and he cried out in utter despair. At that moment, they all closed upon him, some round his neck, some round his legs, and some endeavouring to tear out his heart and bowels. At length one or two that came in contact with the medal in his bosom fled away, howling most fearfully, and did not return. Still he was in great jeopardy of being instantly torn to pieces; on which he flung himself flat on his face in the midst of his devouring enemies, and invoked a sacred name. That moment he felt partial relief, as if some one were driving them off, one by one, and on raising his head, he beheld his lovely lame visitant of the mountains, driving these infernals off with a white wand, and mocking their threatening looks and vain attempts to return. "Off with you, poor infatuated wretches," cried she: "Minions of perdition, off to your abodes of misery and despair! Where now is your boasted whipping of cripples? See if one poor cripple cannot whip you all!"

By this time the monsters had all taken their flight, save one, that had fastened its talons in Colin's left side, and was making a last and desperate effort to reach his vitals; but he, being now freed from the rest, lent it a blow with such goodwill, as made it speedily desist, and fly tumbling and mewing down the brae. He shrewdly guessed who this inveterate assailant was. Nor was he mistaken: for next day Maude Stott was lying powerless on account of a broken limb, and several of her cronies were in great torment, having been struck by the white rod of the Lady of the Moor.

But the great master fiend, seeing now that his emissaries were all baffled and outdone, was enraged beyond bounds, and set himself with all his wit, and with all his power, to be revenged on poor Colin. As to his power, no one disputed it; but his wit and ingenuity always appear to me to be very equivocal. He tried to assault Colin's humble dwelling that same night, in sundry terrific shapes; but

many of the villagers perceived a slender form, clothed in white, that kept watch at his door until the morning twilight. The next day, he haunted him on the hill in the form of a great shaggy blood-hound, infected with madness; but finding his utter inability to touch him, he uttered a howl that made all the hills quake, and, like a flash of lightning, darted into Glendean Banks.

He next set himself to procure Colin's punishment by other means, namely, by the hands of Christian men, the only way now left for him. He accordingly engaged his emissaries to inform against him to holy mother church, as a warlock and necromancer. The crown and the church had at that time joined in appointing judges of these difficult and interesting questions. The quorum amounted to seven, consisting of the king's advocate, and an equal number of priests and laymen, all of them in opposition to the principles of the Reformation, which was at that time obnoxious at court. Colin was seized, arraigned, and lodged in prison at Peebles; and never was there such clamour and discontent in Strathquair. The young women wept, and tore their hair, for the goodliest lad in the valley; their mothers scolded; and the old men scratched their gray polls, bit their lips, and remained quiescent, but were at length compelled to join the combination.

Colin's trial came on; and his accusers being summoned as witnesses against him, it may well be supposed how little chance he had of escaping, especially as the noted David Beatoun sat that day as judge, a severe and bigoted Papist. There were many things proven against poor Colin—as much as would have been at one time sufficient to bring all the youth of Traquair to the stake.

For instance, three sportsmen swore, that they had started a large he-fox in the Feathen Wood, and, after pursuing him all the way to Glenrath Hope, with horses and hounds, on coming up, they found Colin Hyslop lying panting in the midst of the hounds, and caressing and endeavouring to pacify them. It was further deponed, that he had been discovered in the shape of a huge gander sitting on eggs; and in the shape of a three-legged stool, which, on being tossed about and overturned, as three-legged stools are apt to be, had groaned, and given other symptoms of animation, by which its identity with Colin Hyslop was discovered.

But when they came to the story of a he-goat, which had proceeded to attend the service in the chapel of St. John the Evangelist, and which said he-goat proved to be the unhappy delinquent, Beatoun growled with rage and indignation, and said that such a dog deserved to suffer death by a thousand tortures, and to be excluded from the power of repentance by the instant infliction of them. The most of the judges were not, however, satisfied of the authenticity of this monstrous story, and insisted on examining a great number of witnesses, both young and old, many of whom happened to be quite unconnected with the horrid community of the Traquair witches. Among the rest, a girl named Tibby Frater was examined about that, as well as the three-legged stool; and her examination may here be copied verbatim. The querist, who was a cunning man, began as follows:—

"Were you in St. John's Chapel, Isabel, on the Sunday after Easter?"

"Yes."

"Did you there see a man changed into a he-goat?"

"I saw a gait in the chapel that day."

"Did he, as has been declared, seem intent on disturbing divine worship?"

"He was playing some pranks. But what else could you expect of a gait?"

"Please to describe what you saw."

"Oo, he was just rampauging about, and dinging folk ower. The clerk and the sacristan ran to attack him, but he soon laid them baith prostrate. Mess John prayed against him, in Latin, they said, and tried to lay him, as if he had been a deil; but he never heedit that, and just rampit on."

"Did he ever come near or molest you in the chapel?"

"Ay, he did that."

"What did he do to you?—describe it all."

"Oo, he didna do that muckle ill, after a'; but if it was the poor young man that was changed, I'll warrant he had nae hand in it, for dearly he paid the kain. Ere long there were fifty staves raised against him, and he was beaten till there was hardly life left in him."

"And what were the people's reasons for believing that this he-goat and the prisoner were the same?"

"He was found a' wounded and bruised the next day. But, in truth, I believe he never denied these changes wrought on him, to his intimate friends; but we a' ken weel wha it was that effected them. Od help you! ye little ken how we are plaguit and harassed down yonder-abouts, and what scathe the country suffers, by the emissaries o' Satan! If there be any amang you that ken the true marks o' the beast, you will discern plenty o' them here-about, amang some that hae been witnessing against this poor abused and unfortunate young man."

The members of the community of Satan were now greatly astounded. Their eyes gleamed with the desire of vengeance, and they gnashed their teeth on the maiden. But the buzz ran through the assembly against them, and execrations were poured from every corner of the crowded court. Cries of—"Plenty o' proof o' what Tibby has said."—"Let the saddle be laid on the right horse!"—"Down wi' the plagues o' the land!" and many such exclamations, were sent forth by the good people of Traquair. They durst not meddle with the witches at home, because, when anything was done to disoblige them, the sheep and cattle were seized with new and frightful distempers, the corn and barley were shaken, and the honest people them-

selves quaked under agues, sweatings, and great horrors of mind. But now that they had them all collected in a court of justice, and were all assembled themselves, and holy men present, they hoped to bring the delinquents to due punishment at last. Beatoun, however, seemed absolutely bent on the destruction of Colin, alleging that the depravity of his heart was manifest in every one of his actions during the periods of his metamorphoses, even although he himself had no share in effecting these metamorphoses; he therefore sought a verdict against the prisoner, as did also the king's advocate. Sir James Stuart of Traquair, however, rose up, and spoke with great eloquence and energy in favour of his vassal, and insisted on having his accusers tried face to face with him, when, he had no doubt, it would be seen on which side the sorcery had been exercised. "For I appeal to your honourable judgments," continued he, "if any man would transform himself into a fox, for the sake of being hunted to death and torn into pieces by hounds? Neither, I think, would any one person choose to translate himself into a gander, for the purpose of bringing out a few worthless goslings! But, above all, I am morally certain, that no living man would turn himself into a three-legged stool, for no other purpose but to be kicked into the mire, as the evidence shows this stool to have been. And as for a very handsome youth turning himself into a he-goat, in order to exhibit his prowess in outbraving and beating the men of a whole congregation, that would be a supposition equally absurd. But as we have a thousand instances of honest men being affected and injured by spells and enchantments, I give it as my firm opinion, that this young man has been abused grievously in this manner, and that these his accusers, afraid of exposure through his agency, are trying in this way to put him down."

Sir James's speech was received with murmurs of applause through the whole crowded court; but the principal judge continued obstinate, and made a speech in reply. Being a man of a most austere temperament, and as bloody-minded as obstinate, he made no objections to the seizing of the youth's accusers, and called to the officers to guard the door; on which the old sacristan of Traquair remarked aloud, "By my faith in the holy apostle John, my lord governor, you must be quick in your seizures; for an ye gie but the witches o' Traquair ten minutes, ye will hae naething o' them but moorfowls and paitricks blattering about the rigging o' the kirk; and a' the offishers ye hae will neither catch nor keep them."

They were, however, seized and incarcerated. The trials lasted for three days, at which immense crowds attended; for the evidence was of the most extraordinary nature ever elicited, displaying such a system of diablerie, malevolence, and unheard-of wickedness, as never came to light in a Christian land. Seven women and two men were found guilty, and condemned to be burned at the stake; and several more would have shared the same fate, had the private marks, which were then thoroughly and perfectly known, coincided with the evidence produced. This not having been the case, they were banished out of the Scottish dominions, any man being at liberty to shoot them, if found there under any shape whatever, after sixty-one hours from that date.

There being wise men who attended the courts in those days, called searchers or triers, they were ordered to take Colin into the vestry (the trials having taken place in a church), and examine him strictly for the diabolical marks. They could find none; but in the course of their investigation they found the phial in his bosom, as well as the medal that wore the hue of blood, and which was locked to his neck, so that the hands of man could not remove it. They returned to the judge, bearing the phial in triumph, and saying they had found no private mark as proof of the master he served, but that here was an unguent, which they had no doubt was proof sufficient, and would, if they judged aright, when accompanied by proper incantations, transform a human being into any beast or monster intended. It was handed to the judge, who shook his head, and acquiesced with the searchers. It was then handed around, and Mr. Wiseheart, or Wishart, a learned man, deciphered these words on it, in a sacred language: "The phial of repentance."

The judges looked at one another when they heard these ominous words so unlooked for; and Wishart remarked, with a solemn assurance, that neither the term, nor the cup of bitterness, was likely to be in use among the slaves of Satan, and the bounden drudges of the land of perdition.

The searchers now begged the court to suspend their judgment for a space, as the prisoner wore a charm of a bloody hue, which was locked to his body with steel, so that no hands could loose it, and which they judged of far more ominous import than all the other proofs put together. Colin was then brought into court once more, and the medal examined carefully; and lo! on the one side were engraved, in the same character, two words, the meanings of which were decided to be, "Forgiveness," above, and "Acceptance," below. On the other side was a representation of the crucifixion, and these words in another language, *Cruci, dum spiro, fido;* which words struck the judges with great amazement. They forthwith ordered the bonds to be taken off the prisoner, and commanded him to speak for himself, and tell, without fear and dread, how he came by these precious and holy bequests.

Colin, who was noted for sincerity and simplicity, began and related the circumstances of his life, his temptations, his follies, and his disregard of all the duties of religion, which had subjected him in no common degree to the charms and enchantments of his hellish neighbours, whose principal efforts and energies seemed to be aimed at his destruction.

But when he came to the vision of the fair virgins on the hill, and of their gracious bequests, that had preserved him thenceforward, both from the devil in person, and from the vengeance of all his emissaries combined, so well did this suit the strenuous efforts then making to obtain popularity for a falling system of faith, that the judges instantly claimed the miracle to their own side, and were clamorous with approbation of his modesty and cravings of forgiveness for the insults and contumely which they had heaped upon this favourite of heaven. Barbara Stewart was at this time sitting on the bench close behind Colin, weeping for joy at this favourable turn of affairs, having, for several days previous to that, given up all hopes of his life, when Mr. David Beatoun, pointing to the image of the holy Virgin, asked if the fair dame who bestowed these invaluable and heavenly relics bore any resemblance to that divine figure. Colin, with his accustomed blunt honesty, was just about to answer in the negative, when Barbara exclaimed in a whisper behind him, "Ah! how like!"

"How do you ken, dearest Barbara?" said he, softly, over his shoulder.

"Because I saw her watching your door once when surrounded by fiends—Ah! how like!"

"Ah, how like!" exclaimed Colin, by way of response to one whose opinion was to him as a thing sacred, and not to be disputed. How much hung on that moment! A denial might perhaps have still subjected him to obloquy, bonds, and death, but an anxious maiden's ready expedient saved him; and now it was with difficulty that Mr. Wishart could prevent the Catholic part of the throng from falling down and worshipping him whom they had so lately reviled and accused of the blackest crimes.

Times were now altered with Colin Hyslop. David Beatoun took him to Edinburgh in his chariot, and presented him to the queen regent, who put a ring on his right hand, a chain of gold about his neck, and loaded him with her bounty. All the Catholic nobles of the court presented him with valuable gifts, and then he was caused to make the tour of all the rich abbeys of Fife and the Border; so that, without ever having one more question asked him about his tenets, he returned home the richest man of all Traquair, even richer, as men supposed, than Sir James Stuart himself. He married Barbara Stewart, and purchased the Flora from the female heirs of Alexander Murray, where he built a mansion, and lived in retirement and happiness till the day of his death.

I have thus recorded the leading events of this tale, although many of the incidents, as handed down by tradition, are of so heinous a nature as not to bear recital. It has always appeared to me to have been moulded on the bones of some ancient religious allegory, and by being thus transformed into a nursery tale, rendered unintelligible. It would be in vain now to endeavour to restore its original structure, in the same way that Mr. Blore can delineate an ancient abbey from the smallest remnant; but I should like exceedingly to understand properly what was represented by the two lovely and mysterious sisters, one of whom was lame. It is most probable that they were supposed apparitions of renowned female saints; or perhaps Faith and Charity. This, however, is manifest, that it is a reformer's tale, founded on a Catholic allegory.

Of the witches of Traquair there are many other traditions extant, as well as many authentic records; and so far the tale accords with the history of the times. That they were tried and suffered there is no doubt; and the devil lost all his popularity in that district ever after, being despised by his friends for his shallow and rash politics, and hooted and held up to ridicule by his enemies. I still maintain, that there has been no great personage since the world was framed, so apt to commit a manifest blunder, and to overshoot his mark, as he is.

CHAPTER XVI.

SHEEP.

The sheep has scarcely any marked character, save that of natural affection, of which it possesses a very great share. It is otherwise a stupid, indifferent animal, having few wants, and fewer expedients. The old black-faced, or forest breed, have far more powerful capabilities than any of the finer breeds that have been introduced into Scotland: and therefore the few anecdotes that I have to relate, shall be confined to them.

So strong is the attachment of sheep to the place where they have been bred, that I have heard of their returning from Yorkshire to the Highlands. I was always somewhat inclined to suspect that they might have been lost by the way. But it is certain, however, that when once one, or a few sheep, get away from the rest of their acquaintances, they return homeward with great eagerness and perseverance. I have lived beside a drove-road the better part of my life, and many stragglers have I seen bending their steps northward in the spring of the year. A shepherd rarely sees these journeyers twice; if he sees them, and stops them in the morning, they are gone long before night; and if he sees them at night, they will be gone many miles before morning. This strong attachment to the place of their nativity, is much more predominant in our old aboriginal breed than in any of the other kinds with which I am acquainted.

The most singular instance that I know of, to be quite well authenticated, is that of a black ewe, that returned with her lamb from a farm in the head of Glen-Lyon to the farm of Harehope, in Tweeddale, and accomplished the journey in nine

days. She was soon missed by her owner, and a shepherd was despatched in pursuit of her, who followed her all the way to Crieff, where he turned, and gave her up. He got intelligence of her all the way, and every one told him that she absolutely persisted in travelling on. She would not be turned, regarding neither sheep nor shepherd by the way. Her lamb was often far behind, and she had constantly to urge it on, by impatient bleating. She unluckily came to Stirling on the morning of a great annual fair, about the end of May, and judging it imprudent to venture through the crowd with her lamb, she halted on the north side of the town the whole day, where she was seen by hundreds, lying close by the road-side. But next morning, when all became quiet, a little after the break of day, she was observed stealing quietly through the town, in apparent terror of the dogs that were prowling about the streets. The last time she was seen on the road, was at a toll-bar near St. Ninian's; the man stopped her, thinking she was a strayed animal, and that some one would claim her. She tried several times to break through by force when he opened the gate, but he always prevented her, and at length she turned patiently back. She had found some means of eluding him, however, for home she came on a Sabbath morning, the 4th of June; and she left the farm of Lochs, in Glen-Lyon, either on the Thursday afternoon, or Friday morning, a week and two days before. The farmer of Harehope paid the Highland farmer the price of her, and she remained on her native farm till she died of old age, in her seventeenth year.

There is another peculiarity in the nature of sheep, of which I have witnessed innumerable examples. But as they are all alike, and show how much the sheep is a creature of habit, I shall only relate one.

A shepherd in Blackhouse bought a few sheep from another in Crawmel, about ten miles distant. In the spring following, one of the ewes went back to her native place, and yeaned on a wild hill, called Crawmel Craig. One day, about the beginning of July following, the shepherd went and brought home his ewe and lamb—took the fleece from the ewe, and kept the lamb for one of his stock. The lamb lived and throve, became a hogg and a gimmer, and never offered to leave home; but when three years of age, and about to have her first lamb, she vanished; and the morning after, the Crawmel shepherd, in going his rounds, found her with a new-yeaned lamb on the very gair of the Crawmel Craig where she was lambed herself. She remained there till the first week of July, the time when she was brought a lamb herself, and then she came home with hers of her own accord; and this custom she continued annually with the greatest punctuality as long as she lived. At length her lambs, when they came of age, began the same practice, and the shepherd was obliged to dispose of the whole breed.

With regard to the natural affection of this animal, stupid and actionless as it is, the instances that might be mentioned are without number. When one loses its sight in a flock of short sheep, it is rarely abandoned to itself in that hapless and helpless state. Some one always attaches itself to it, and by bleating calls it back from the precipice, the lake, the pool, and all dangers whatever. There is a disease among sheep, called by shepherds the *breakshugh*, a deadly sort of dysentery, which is as infectious as fire, in a flock. Whenever a sheep feels itself seized by this, it instantly withdraws from all the rest, shunning their society with the greatest care; it even hides itself, and is often very hard to be found. Though this propensity can hardly be attributed to natural instinct, it is, at all events, a provision of nature of the greatest kindness and beneficence.

Another manifest provision of nature with regard to these animals is, that the more inhospitable the land is on which they feed, the greater their kindness and attention to their young. I once herded two years on a wild and bare farm called Willenslee, on the border of Mid-Lothian, and of all the sheep I ever saw, these were the kindest and most affectionate to their young. I was often deeply affected at scenes which I witnessed. We had one very hard winter, so that our sheep grew lean in the spring, and the thwarter-ill (a sort of paralytic affection) came among them, and carried off a number. Often have I seen these poor victims, when fallen down to rise no more, even when unable to lift their heads from the ground, holding up the leg, to invite the starving lamb to the miserable pittance that the udder still could supply. I had never seen aught more painfully affecting.

It is well known that it is a custom with shepherds, when a lamb dies, if the mother have a sufficiency of milk, to bring her from the hill, and put another lamb to her. This is done by putting the skin of the dead lamb upon the living one; the ewe immediately acknowledges the relationship, and after the skin has warmed on it, so as to give it something of the smell of her own progeny, and it has sucked her two or three times, she accepts and nourishes it as her own ever after. Whether it is from joy at this apparent reanimation of her young one, or because a little doubt remains on her mind which she would fain dispel, I cannot decide; but, for a number of days, she shows far more fondness, by bleating and caressing over this one, than she did formerly over the one that was really her own.

But this is not what I wanted to explain; it was, that such sheep as thus lose their lambs, must be driven to a house with dogs, so that the lamb may be put to them; for they will only take it in a dark confined place. But at Willenslee, I never needed to drive home a sheep by force, with dogs, or in any other way than the following: I found every ewe, of course, standing hanging her head over her dead

lamb, and having a piece of twine with me for the purpose, I tied that to the lamb's neck, or foot, and trailing it along, the ewe followed me into any house or fold that I chose to lead her. Any of them would have followed me in that way for miles, with her nose close on the lamb, which she never quitted for a moment, except to chase my dog, which she would not suffer to walk near me. I often, out of curiosity, led them into the side of the kitchen fire by this means, into the midst of servants and dogs; but the more that dangers multiplied around the ewe, she clung the closer to her dead offspring, and thought of nothing whatever but protecting it.

One of the two years while I remained on this farm, a severe blast of snow came on by night about the latter end of April, which destroyed several scores of our lambs; and as we had not enow of twins and odd lambs for the mothers that had lost theirs, of course we selected the best ewes, and put lambs to them. As we were making the distribution, I requested of my master to spare me a lamb for a hawked ewe which he knew, and which was standing over a dead lamb in the head of the Hope, about four miles from the house. He would not do it, but bid me let her stand over her lamb for a day or two, and perhaps a twin would be forthcoming. I did so, and faithfully she did stand to her charge; so faithfully, that I think the like never was equalled by any of the woolly race. I visited her every morning and evening, and for the first eight days never found her above two or three yards from the lamb; and always, as I went my rounds, she eyed me long ere I came near her, and kept tramping with her foot, and whistling through her nose, to frighten away the dog; he got a regular chase twice a-day as I passed by: but, however excited and fierce a ewe may be, she never offers any resistance to mankind, being perfectly and meekly passive to them. The weather grew fine and warm, and the dead lamb soon decayed, which the body of a dead lamb does particularly soon; but still this affectionate and desolate creature kept hanging over the poor remains with an attachment that seemed to be nourished by hopelessness. It often drew the tears from my eyes to see her hanging with such fondness over a few bones, mixed with a small portion of wool. For the first fortnight she never quitted the spot, and for another week she visited it every morning and evening, uttering a few kindly and heart-piercing bleats each time; till at length every remnant of her offspring vanished, mixing with the soil, or wafted away by the winds.

CHAPTER XVII.

PRAYERS.

There is, I believe, no class of men professing the Protestant faith, so truly devout as the shepherds of Scotland. They get all the learning that the parish schools afford; are thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures; deeply read in theological works, and really, I am sorry to say it, generally much better informed on these topics than their masters. Every shepherd is a man of respectability—he must be so, else he must cease to be a shepherd. His master's flock is entirely committed to his care, and if he does not manage it with constant attention, caution, and decision, he cannot be employed. A part of the stock is his own, however, so that his interest in it is the same with that of his master; and being thus the most independent of men if he cherishes a good behaviour, and the most insignificant if he loses the esteem of his employers, he has every motive for maintaining an unimpeachable character.

It is almost impossible, also, that he can be other than a religious character, being so much conversant with the Almighty in his works, in all the goings-on of nature, and in his control of the otherwise resistless elements. He feels himself a dependent being, morning and evening, on the great Ruler of the universe; he holds converse with him in the cloud and the storm—on the misty mountain and the darksome waste—in the whirling drift and the overwhelming thaw—and even in voices and sounds that are only heard by the howling cliff or solitary dell. How can such a man fail to be impressed with the presence of an eternal God, of an omniscient eye, and an almighty arm?

The position generally holds good; for, as I have said, the shepherds are a religious and devout set of men, and among them the antiquated but delightful exercise of family worship is never neglected. It is always gone about with decency and decorum; but formality being a thing despised, there is no composition that I ever heard so truly original as these prayers occasionally are, sometimes for rude eloquence and pathos, at other times for a nondescript sort of pomp, and not unfrequently for a plain and somewhat unbecoming familiarity.

One of the most notable men for this sort of family eloquence was Adam Scott, in Upper Dalgliesh. I had an uncle who herded with him, from whom I heard many quotations from Scott's prayers, a few of which are as follows:—

"We particularly thank thee for thy great goodness to Meg, and that ever it came into your head to take any thought of sic an useless baw-waw as her." (This was a little girl that had been somewhat miraculously saved from drowning.)

"For thy mercy's sake—for the sake of thy poor sinfu' servants that are now addressing thee in their ain shilly-shally way, and for the sake o' mair than we dare weel name to thee, hae mercy on Rob. Ye ken yoursel he is a wild mischievous callant, and thinks nae mair o' committing sin than a dog does o' licking a dish; but put thy hook in his nose, and thy bridle in his gab, and gar him come back to

thee wi' a jerk that he'll no forget the langest day he has to leeve."

"Dinna forget poor Jamie, wha's far away frae amang us the night. Keep thy arm o' power about him, and oh, I wish ye wad endow him wi' a like spunk and smeddum to act for himsel. For if ye dinna, he'll be but a bauchle in this world, and a backsitter in the neist."

"We're a' like hawks, we're a' like snails, we're a' like slogie riddles; like hawks to do evil, like snails to do good, and like slogie riddles, that let through a' the good, and keep the bad."

"Bring down the tyrant and his lang neb, for he has done muckle ill the year, and gie him a cup o' thy wrath, and gin he winna tak that, gie him kelty." (*Kelty* signifies double, or two cups. This was an occasional petition for one season only, and my uncle never could comprehend what it meant.)

The general character of Scott was one of decision and activity; constant in the duties of religion, but not over strict with regard to some of its moral precepts.

I have heard the following petitions sundry times in the family prayers of an old relation of my own, long since gone to his rest:—

"And mairower and aboon, do thou bless us a' wi' thy best warldly blessings—wi' bread for the belly and theeking for the back, a lang stride and a clear ee-sight. Keep us from a' proud prossing and upsetting—from foul flaips, and stray steps, and from all unnecessary trouble."

But, in generalities, these prayers are never half so original as when they come to particular incidents that affect only the petitioners; for some things happen daily, which they deem it their bounden duty to remember before their Maker, either by way of petition, confession, or thanksgiving. The following was told to me as a part of the same worthy old man's prayer occasionally, for some weeks before he left a master, in whose father's service and his own the decayed shepherd had spent the whole of his life:—

"Bless my master and his family with thy best blessings in Christ Jesus. Prosper all his worldly concerns, especially that valuable part which is committed to my care. I have worn out my life in the service of him and his fathers, and thou knowest that I have never bowed a knee before thee without remembering them. Thou knowest, also, that I have never studied night's rest, nor day's comfort, when put in competition with their interest. The foulest days and the stormiest nights were to me as the brightest of summer; and if he has not done weel in casting out his auld servant, do thou forgive him. I forgive him with all my heart, and will never cease to pray for him; but when the hard storms o' winter come, may he miss the braid bonnet and the gray head, and say to himsel, 'I wish to God that my old herd had been here yet!' I ken o' neither house nor habitation this night, but for the sake o' them amang us that canna do for themsels, I ken thou wilt provide ane; for though thou hast tried me with hard and sair adversaries, I have had more than my share of thy mercies, and thou kens better than I can tell thee that thou hast never bestowed them on an unthankful heart."

This is the sentence exactly as it was related to me, but I am sure it is not correct; for, though very like his manner, I never heard him come so near the English language in one sentence in my life. I once heard him say, in allusion to a chapter he had been reading about David and Goliath, and just at the close of his prayer: "And when our besetting sins come bragging and blowstering upon us, like Gully o' Gath, O enable us to fling off the airmer and hairnishin o' the law, whilk we haena proved, and whup up the simple sling o' the gospel, and nail the smooth stanes o' redeeming grace into their foreheads."

Of all the compositions, for simple pathos, that I ever saw or heard, his prayer, on the evening of that day on which he buried his only son, excelled; but at this distance of time, it is impossible for me to do it justice; and I dare not take it on me to garble it. He began the subject of his sorrows thus:—

"Thou hast seen meet, in thy wise providence, to remove the staff out of my right hand, at the very time when, to us poor sand-blind mortals, it appeared that I stood maist in need o't. But oh it was a sicker ane, and a sure ane, and a dear ane to my heart! and how I'll climb the steep hill o' auld age and sorrow without it, thou mayst ken, but I dinna."

His singing of the psalms surpassed all exhibitions that ever were witnessed of a sacred nature. He had not the least air of sacred music; there was no attempt at it; it was a sort of recitative of the most grotesque kind; and yet he delighted in it, and sung far more verses every night than is customary. The first time I heard him, I was very young; but I could not stand it, and leaned myself back into a bed, and laughed till my strength could serve me no longer. He had likewise an out-of-the-way custom, in reading a portion of Scripture every night, of always making remarks as he went on. And such remarks! One evening I heard him reading a chapter—I have forgot where it was—but he came to words like these: "And other nations, whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over" —John stopped short, and, considering for a little, says: "Asnapper! whaten a king was he that? I dinna mind o' ever hearing tell o' him afore." "I dinna ken," said one of the girls; "but he has a queer name." "It is something like a goolly knife," said a younger one. "Whisht, dame," said John, and then went on with the chapter. I believe it was about the fourth or fifth chapter of Ezra. He seldom, for a single night, missed a few observations of the same sort.

Another night, not long after the time above noticed, he was reading of the feats of one Sanballat, who set himself against the building of the second temple. On closing the Bible John uttered a long hemh! and then I knew there was something forthcoming. "He has been anither nor a gude ane that," added he; "I hae nae brow o' their Sandy-ballet."

Upon another occasion he stopped in the middle of a chapter and uttered his "hemh!" of disapproval, and then added, "If it had been the Lord's will, I think they might hae left out that verse." "It hasna been his will though," said one of the girls. "It seems sae," said John. I have entirely forgot what he was reading about, and am often vexed at having forgot the verse that John wanted expunged from the Bible. It was in some of the minor prophets.

There was another time he came to his brother-in-law's house, where I was then living, and John being the oldest man, the Bible was laid down before him to make family worship. He made no objections, but began, as was always his custom, by asking a blessing on their devotions; and when he had done, it being customary for those who make family worship to sing straight through the Psalms from beginning to end, John says, "We'll sing in your ordinary. Where is it?" "We do not always sing in one place," said the goodman of the house. "Na, I daresay no, or else ye'll make that place threadbare," said John, in a short crabbed style, manifestly suspecting that his friend was not regular in his family devotions. This piece of sharp wit after the worship was begun had to me an effect highly ludicrous.

When he came to give out the chapter, he remarked, that there would be no ordinary there either, he supposed. "We have been reading in Job for a lang time," said the goodman. "How lang?" said John slyly, as he turned over the leaves, thinking to catch his friend at fault. "Oh, I dinna ken that," said the other; "but there's a mark laid in that will tell you the bit." "If you hae read *verra* lang in Job," says John, "you will hae made him threadbare too, for the mark is only at the ninth chapter." There was no answer, so he read on. In the course of the chapter he came to these words—"Who commandeth the sun, and it riseth not." "I never heard of Him doing that," says John. "But Job, honest man, maybe means the darkness that was in the land o' Egypt. It wad be a fearsome thing an the sun warna till rise." A little farther on he came to these words—"Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south." "I hae often wondered at that verse," says John. "Job has been a grand philosopher! The Pleiades are the Se'en Sterns—I ken them; and Orion, that's the King's Ellwand; but I'm never sae sure about Arcturus. I fancy he's ane o' the plennits, or maybe him that hauds the Gowden Plough."

On reading the last chapter of the book of Job, when he came to the enumeration of the patriarch's live stock, he remarked, "He has had an unco sight o' creatures. Fourteen thousand sheep! How mony was that?" "He has had seven hundred scores," said one. "Ay," said John, "it was an unco swarm o' creatures. There wad be a dreadfu' confusion at his clippings and spainings. Six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. What, in the wide warld, did he do wi' a' thae creatures? Wad it no hae been mair purpose-like if he had had them a' milk kye!" "Wha wad he hae gotten to have milked them!" said one of the girls. "It's verra true," said John.

One time, during a long and severe lying storm of snow, in allusion to some chapter he had been reading, he prayed as follows: (this is from hear-say)—"Is the whiteness of desolation to lie still on the mountains of our land for ever? Is the earthly hope o' thy servants to perish frae the face of the earth? The flocks on a thousand hills are thine, and their lives or deaths wad be naething to thee—thou wad neither be the richer nor the poorer; but it is a great matter to us. Have pity, then, on the lives o' thy creatures, for beast and body are a' thy handywark, and send us the little wee cludd out o' the sea like a man's hand, to spread and darken, and pour and plash, till the green gladsome face o' nature aince mair appear."

During the smearing season one year, it was agreed that each shepherd, young and old, should ask a blessing and return thanks at meal-time, in his turn, beginning at the eldest and going off at the youngest; that, as there was no respect of person with God, so there should be none shown among neighbours. John being the eldest, the graces began with him, and went decently on till they came to the youngest, who obstinately refused. Of course it devolved again on John, who, taking off his broad bonnet, thus addressed his Maker with great fervency:—

"O our gracious Lord and Redeemer, thou hast said, in thy blessed Word, that those who are ashamed of thee and thy service, of them thou wilt be ashamed when thou comest into thy kingdom. Now, all that we humbly beg of thee at this time is, that Geordie may not be reckoned amang that unhappy number. Open the poor chield's heart and his een to a sight o' his lost condition; and though he be that prood that he'll no ask a blessing o' thee, neither for himsel nor us, do thou grant us a' thy blessing ne'ertheless, and him amang the rest, for Christ's sake. Amen."

The young man felt the rebuke very severely, his face grew as red as flame, and it was several days before he could assume his usual hilarity. Had I lived with John a few years, I could have picked up his remarks on the greater part of the Scriptures, for to read and not make remarks was out of his power. The story of Ruth was a great favourite

with him—he often read it to his family of a Sabbath evening, as "a good lesson on naturality;" but he never failed making the remark, that "it was nae mair nor decency in her to creep in beside the douce man i' the night-time when he was sleeping."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ODD CHARACTERS.

Many single anecdotes of country life might be collected—enough, perhaps, to form a volume as amusing as others connected with higher names—but in this place I shall confine myself to a few, of which several relate to the same person, and are thus illustrative of individual character. The first that claim attention are those concerning a man very famous in his own sphere, an ancestor of my own, the redoubted

WILL O' PHAUP.

Will o' Phaup, one of the genuine Laidlaws of Craik, was born at that place in 1691. He was shepherd in Phaup for fifty-five years. For feats of frolic, strength, and agility, he had no equal in his day. In the hall of the laird, at the farmer's ingle, and in the shepherd's cot, Will was alike a welcome guest; and in whatever company he was, he kept the whole in one roar of merriment. In Will's days, brandy was the common drink in this country; as for whisky, it was, like silver in the days of Solomon, nothing accounted of. Good black French brandy was the constant beverage; and a heavy neighbour Will was on it. Many a hard bouse he had about Moffat, and many a race he ran, generally for wagers of so many pints of brandy; and in all his life he never was beaten. He once ran at Moffat for a wager of five guineas, which one of the chiefs of the Johnstons betted on his head. His opponent was a celebrated runner from Crawford Muir, of the name of Blaikley, on whose head, or rather on whose feet, a Captain Douglas had wagered. Will knew nothing of the match till he went to Moffat, and was very averse to it. "No that he was ony fear'd for the chap," he said; "but he had on a' his ilka-day claes, and as mony leddies and gentlemen war to be there to see the race, he didna like to appear afore them like an assie whalp."

However, he was urged, and obliged to go out and strip; and, as he told it, "a poor figure I made beside the chield wi' his grand ruffled sark. I was nae affrontit at thinking that Will o' Phaup should hae made sic a dirty shabby appearance afore sae mony grit folks and bonny leddies, that not a fit I could rin mair nor I had been a diker. The race was down on Annanside, and jimply a mile, out and in; and, at the very first, the man wi' the ruffled sark flew off like a hare, and left poor Will o' Phaup to come waughling up ahint him like a singit cur, wi' his din sark and his cloutit breeks. I had neither heart nor power, till a very queer accident befell me; for, Scots grund! disna the tying o' my cloutit breeks brek loose, and in a moment they were at my heels, and there was I standing like a hapshekel'd staig! 'Off wi' them, Phaup! Off wi' them!' cries ane. Od, sir, I just sprang out o' them; and that instant I fand my spirits rise to the proper pitch. The chield was clean afore me, but I fand that if he were a yeagle I wad o'ertak him, for I scarcely kenn'd whether I was touching the grund or fleeing in the air, and as I came by Mr. Welch, I heard him saying, 'Phaup has him yet;' for he saw Blaikley failing. I got by him, but I had not muckle to brag o', for he keepit the step on me till within a gunshot o' the starting-post.

"Then there was sic a fraze about me by the winning party, and naething wad serve them but that I should dine wi' them in the public room.

"'Na, fiend be there then, Mr. Johnston,' says I, 'for though your leddies only leuch at my accident, if I war to dinner wi' them in this state, I kenna how they might tak it.'"

When Will was a young lad, only sixteen years of age, and the very first year he was in Phaup, his master betted the price of his whole drove of Phaup hoggs on his head, at a race with an Englishman on Stagshawbank. James Anderson, Esq., of Ettrick-hall, was then farmer of Phaup, and he had noted at the shedding, before his young shepherd left home, that whenever a sheep got by wrong, he never did more than run straight after it, lay hold of it by sheer speed, and bring it back in his arms. So the laird having formed high ideas of Will's swiftness, without letting him know of the matter, first got an English gentleman into a heat, by bragging the English runners with Scots ones, and then proffered betting the price of his 300 wedder hoggs, that he had a poor starved barefooted boy who was helping to drive them—whom he believed to be about the worst runner in Scotland—who would yet beat the best Englishman that could be found in Stagshawbank fair.

The Englishman's national pride was touched, as well it might, his countrymen being well known as the superior runners. The bet was taken, and Will won it with the greatest ease for his master, without being made aware of the stake for which he ran. This he never knew till some months afterwards, when his master presented him with a guinea, a pair of new shoes, and a load of oatmeal, for winning him the price of the Phaup hoggs. Will was exceedingly proud of the feat he had performed, as well as of the present, which, he remarked, was as much to him as the price of the hoggs was to his master. From that day forth he was never beat at a fair race.

He never went to Moffat that the farmers did not

get him into their company, and then never did he get home to Phaup sober. The mad feats which he then performed were, for an age, the standing jokes of the country, and many of his sayings settled into regular proverbs or bywords. His great oath was "Scots grund!" And "Scots grund, quo' Will o' Phaup," is a standing exclamation to this day—"One plash more, quo' Will o' Phaup," is another, and there are many similar ones. The last mentioned had its origin in one of those Moffat bouses, from which the farmer of Selcouth and Will were returning by night greatly inebriated, the former riding, and Will running by his side. Moffat water being somewhat flooded, the farmer proposed taking Laidlaw on the horse behind him. Will sprang on, but, as he averred, never got seated right, till the impatient animal plunged into the water, and the two friends came off, and floated down the river, hanging by one another. The farmer got to his feet first, but in pulling out Will, lost his equilibrium a second time, and plunging headlong into the stream, down he went. Will was then in the utmost perplexity, for, with the drink and ducking together, he was quite benumbed, and the night was as dark as pitch; he ran down the side of the stream to succour his friend, and losing all sight of him, he knew not what to do; but hearing a great plunge, he made towards the place, calling out, "One plash more, sir, and I have you—One plash more, quo' Will o' Phaup!" but all was silent! "Scots grund! quo' Will o' Phaup—a man drown'd, and me here!" Will ran to a stream, and took his station in the middle of the water, in hopes of feeling his drowning friend come against his legs; but the farmer got safely out by himself.

There was another time at Moffat that he was taken in, and had to pay a dinner and drink for a whole large party of gentlemen. I have forgot how it happened, but think it was by a wager. He had not only to part with all his money, but to pawn his whole stock of sheep. He then came home with a heavy heart, told his wife what he had done, and that he was a ruined man. She said, that since he had saved the cow, they would do well enough.

The money was repaid afterwards, so that Will did not actually lose his stock; but after that he went seldomer to Moffat. He fell upon a much easier plan of getting sport; for at that period there were constantly bands of smugglers passing from the Solway, through the wild region where he lived, towards the Lothians. From these Will purchased occasionally a stock of brandy, and then the gentlemen and farmers came all and drank with him, paying him at the enormous rate of a shilling per bottle, all lesser measures being despised and out of repute at Phaup. It became a place of constant rendezvous, but a place where they drank too deep to be a safe place for gentlemen to meet. There were two rival houses of Andersons at that time that never ceased quarrelling, and they were wont always to come to Phaup with their swords by their sides. Being all exceedingly stout men and equally good swordsmen, it may easily be supposed they were dangerous neighbours to meet in such a wild remote place. Accordingly, there were many quarrels and bloody bouts there as long as the Andersons possessed Phaup; after which the brandy system was laid aside. Will twice saved his master's life in these affrays—once, when he had drawn on three of the Amoses, tenants of Potburn, and when they had mastered his sword, broken it, and were dragging him to the river by the neckcloth. Will knocked down one, cut his master's neckcloth, and defended him stoutly till he gathered his breath; and then the two jointly did thrash the Amoses to their heart's satisfaction! And another time, from the sword of Michael of Tushielaw; but he could not help the two fighting a duel afterwards, which was the cause of much mischief and many heartburnings among these haughty relatives.

Will and his master once fought a battle themselves two, up in a wild glen called Phaup Coom. They differed about a young horse which the laird had sent there to graze, and which he thought had not been well treated; and so bitter did the recriminations grow between them, that the laird threatened to send Will to hell. Will defied him; on which he attacked him furiously with his cane, while the shepherd defended himself as resolutely with his staff. The combat was exceedingly sharp and severe: but the gentleman was too scientific for the shepherd, and hit him many blows about the head and shoulders, while Will could not hit him once, "all that he could thrash on." The latter was determined, however, not to yield, and fought on, although, as he termed it, "the blood began to blind his een." He tried several times to close with his master, but found him so complete in both his defences and offences, that he never could accomplish it, but always suffered for his temerity. At length he "jouked down his head, took a lounder across the shoulders, and, in the meantime, hit his master across the shins." This ungentlemanly blow quite paralyzed the laird, and the cane dropped out of his hand, on which Will closed with him, mastered him with ease, laying him down and holding him fast; but all that he could do he could not pacify him—he still swore he would have his heart's blood. Will had then no recourse but to spring up and bound away to the hill. The laird pursued for a time, but he might as well have tried to catch a roebuck; so he went back to Phaup, took his horse in silence, and rode away home. Will expected a summons of removal next day, or next term at the furthest; but Mr. Anderson took no notice of the affair, nor ever so much as mentioned it again.

Will had many pitched battles with the bands of smugglers in defence of his master's grass, for they never missed unloading on the lands of Phaup, and turning their horses to the best grass they could find. According to his account, these fellows were exceed-

ingly lawless, and accounted nothing of taking from the country people whatever they needed in emergencies. The gipsies, too, were then accustomed to traverse the country in bands of from twenty to forty, and were no better than freebooters. But to record every one of Will o' Phaup's heroic feats would require a volume. I shall therefore only mention one trait more of his character, which was this—

He was the last man of this wild region, who heard, saw, and conversed with the fairies; and that not once or twice, but at sundry times and seasons. The shieling at which Will lived for the better part of his life, at Old Upper Phaup, was one of the most lonely and dismal situations that ever was the dwelling of human creatures. I have often wondered how such a man could live so long, and rear so numerous and respectable a family, in such a habitation. It is on the very outskirts of Ettrick Forest, quite out of the range of social intercourse, a fit retirement for lawless banditti, and a genial one for the last retreat of the spirits of the glen—before taking their final leave of the land of their love, in which the light of the gospel then grew too bright for their tiny moonlight forms. There has Will beheld them riding in long and beautiful array, by the light of the moon, and even in the summer twilight; and there has he seen them sitting in seven circles, in the bottom of a deep ravine, drinking nectar out of cups of silver and gold, no bigger than the dew-cup flower; and there did he behold their wild unearthly eyes, all of one bright sparkling blue, turned every one upon him at the same moment, and heard their mysterious whisperings, of which he knew no word, save now and then the repetition of his own name, which was always done in a strain of pity. Will was coming from the hill one dark misty evening in winter, and, for a good while, imagined he heard a great gabbling of children's voices, not far from him, which still grew more and more audible; it being before sunset, he had no spark of fear, but set about investigating whence the sounds and laughter proceeded. He at length discovered that they issued from a deep cleugh not far distant, and thinking it was a band of gipsies, or some marauders, he laid down his bonnet and plaid, and creeping softly over the heath, reached the brink of the precipice, peeped over, and to his utter astonishment, beheld the fairies sitting in seven circles, on a green spot in the bottom of the dell, where no green spot ever was before. They were apparently eating and drinking; but all their motions were so quick and momentary, he could not well say what they were doing. Two or three at the queen's back appeared to be baking bread. The party consisted wholly of ladies, and their number quite countless—dressed in green pollonians, and grass-green bonnets on their heads. He perceived at once, by their looks, their giggling, and their peals of laughter, that he was discovered. Still fear took no hold of his heart, for it was daylight, and the blessed sun was in heaven, although obscured by clouds; till at length he heard them pronounce his own name twice; Will then began to think it might not be quite so safe to wait till they pronounced it a third time, and at that moment of hesitation it first came into his mind that it was All Hallow Eve! There was no further occasion to warn Will to rise and run; for he well knew the fairies were privileged, on that day and night, to do what seemed good in their own eyes. "His hair," he said, "stood all up like the birses on a sow's back, and every bit o' his body, outside and in, prinkled as it had been brunt wi' nettles." He ran home as fast as his feet could carry him, and greatly were his children astonished (for he was then a widower) to see their father come running like a madman, without either his bonnet or plaid. He assembled them to prayers, and shut the door, but did not tell them what he had seen for several years.

Another time he followed a whole troop of them up a wild glen called Entertrony, from one end to the other, without ever being able to come up with them, although they never appeared to be more than twenty paces in advance. Neither were they flying from him; for instead of being running at their speed, as he was doing, they seemed to be standing in a large circle. It happened to be the day after a Moffat fair, and he supposed them to be a party of his neighbours returning from it, who wished to lead him a long chase before they suffered themselves to be overtaken. He heard them speaking, singing, and laughing; and being a man so fond of sociality, he exerted himself to come up with them, but to no purpose. Several times did he hail them, and desire them to halt, and tell him the news of the fair; but whenever he shouted, in a moment all was silent, until in a short time he heard the same noise of laughing and conversation at some distance from him. Their talk, although Will could not hear the words of it distinctly, was evidently very animated, and he had no doubt they were recounting their feats at the fair. This always excited his curiosity afresh, and he made every exertion to overtake the party; and when he judged, from the sounds, that he was close upon them, he sent forth his stentorian hollo—"Stop, lads, and tell us the news o' the fair!" which produced the same effect of deep silence for a time. When this had been repeated several times, and after the usual pause, the silence was again broken by a peal of eldritch laughter, that seemed to spread along the skies over his head. Will began to suspect that that unearthly laugh was not altogether unknown to him. He stood still to consider, and that moment the laugh was repeated, and a voice out of the crowd called to him in a shrill laughing tone, "Ha, ha, ha! Will o' Phaup, look to your ain hearth-stane the night." Will again threw off every encumbrance, and fled home to his lonely cot, the most likely spot

in the district for the fairies to congregate; but it is wonderful what an idea of safety is conferred by the sight of a man's own hearth and family circle.

When Will had become a right old man, and was sitting on a little green hillock at the end of his house one evening, resting himself, there came three little boys up to him, all exactly like one another, when the following short dialogue ensued between Will and them:—

"Goode'en t'ye, Will Laidlaw."

"Goode'en t'ye, creatures. Whare ir ye gaun this gate?"

"Can ye gie us up-putting for the night?"

"I think three siccan bits o' shreds o' hurchins winna be ill to put up. Where came ye frae?"

"Frae a place that ye dinna ken. But we are come on a commission to you."

"Come away in, then, and tak sic cheer as we hae."

Will rose and led the way into the house, and the little boys followed; and as he went, he said carelessly without looking back, "What's your commission to me, bairns?" He thought they might be the sons of some gentleman, who was a guest of his master's.

"We are sent to demand a silver key that you have in your possession."

Will was astounded; and standing still to consider of some old transaction, he said, without lifting his eyes from the ground—"A silver key? In God's name, where came ye from?"

There was no answer, on which Will wheeled round, and round, and round; but the tiny beings were all gone, and Will never saw them more. At the name of God, they vanished in the twinkling of an eye. It is curious that I never should have heard the secret of the silver key, or indeed, whether there was such a thing or not.

But Will once saw a vision which was more unaccountable than this still. On his way from Moffat one time, about midnight, he perceived a light very near to the verge of a steep hill, which he knew perfectly well, on the lands of Selcouth. The light appeared exactly like one from a window, and as if a lamp moved frequently within. His path was by the bottom of the hill, and the light being almost close at the top, he had at first no thoughts of visiting it; but as it shone in sight for a full mile, his curiosity to see what it was continued still to increase as he approached nearer. At length, on coming to the bottom of the steep bank, it appeared so bright and near, that he determined to climb the hill and see what it was. There was no moon, but it was a starry night and not very dark, and Will clambered up the precipice, and went straight to the light, which he found to proceed from an opening into a cavern, of about the dimensions of an ordinary barn. The opening was a square one, and just big enough for a man to creep in. Will set in his head, and beheld a row of casks from one end to the other, and two men with long beards, buff-belts about their waists, and torches in their hands, who seemed busy on writing something on each cask. They were not the small casks used by smugglers, but large ones, about one-half bigger than common tar-barrels, and all of a size, save two very huge ones at the farther end. The cavern was all neat and clean, but there was an appearance of mouldiness about the casks, as if they had stood there for ages. The men were both at the farther end when Will looked in, and busily engaged; but at length one of them came towards him, holding his torch above his head, and, as Will thought, having his eyes fixed on him. Will never got such a fright in his life—many a fright he had got with unearthly creatures, but this was the worst of all. The figure that approached him from the cavern was of a gigantic size, with grisly features, and a beard hanging down to his belt. Will did not stop to consider what was best to be done, but, quite forgetting that he was on the face of a hill, almost perpendicular, turned round, and ran with all his might. It was not long till he missed his feet, fell, and hurling down with great celerity, soon reached the bottom of the steep, and getting on his feet, pursued his way home in the utmost haste, terror, and amazement; but the light from the cavern was extinguished on the instant—he saw it no more.

Will apprised all the people within his reach, the next morning, of the wonderful discovery he had made; but the story was so like a phantasy or a dream, that most of them were hard of belief: and some never did believe it, but ascribed all to the Moffat brandy. However, they sallied all out in a body, armed with cudgels and two or three rusty rapiers to reconnoitre; but the entrance into the cave they could not find, nor has it ever been discovered to this day. They observed very plainly the rut in the grass which Will had made in his rapid descent from the cave, and there were also found evident marks of two horses having been fastened that night in a wild cleuch-head, at a short distance from the spot they were searching. But these were the only discoveries to which the investigation led. If the whole of this was an optical delusion, it was the most singular I ever heard or read of. For my part, I do not believe it was; I believe there was such a cavern existing at that day, and that vestiges of it may still be discovered. It was an unfeasible story altogether for a man to invent; and, moreover, though Will was a man whose character had a deep tinge of the superstitions of his own country, he was besides a man of probity, truth, and honour, and never told that for the truth which he did not believe to be so.

DAFT JOCK AMOS.

Daft Jock Amos was another odd character, of whom many droll sayings are handed down. He was a lunatic; but having been a scholar in his

youth, he was possessed of a sort of wicked wit, and wavering uncertain intelligence, that proved right troublesome to those who took on them to reprove his eccentricities. As he lived close by the church, in the time of the far-famed Boston, the minister and he were constantly coming in contact, and many of their little dialogues are preserved.

"The mair fool are ye, quo' Jock Amos to the minister," is a constant byword in Ettrick to this day. It had its origin simply as follows:—Mr. Boston was taking his walk one fine summer evening after sermon, and in his way came upon Jock, very busy cutting some grotesque figures in wood with his knife. Jock looking hastily up, found he was fairly caught, and not knowing what to say, burst into a foolish laugh—"Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Boston, are you there? Will you coss a good whittle wi' me?"

"Nay, nay, John, I will not exchange knives to-day."

"The mair fool are ye," quo' Jock Amos to the minister.

"But, John, can you repeat the fourth commandment?—I hope you can—Which is the fourth commandment?"

"I daresay, Mr. Boston, it'll be the ane after the third."

"Can you not repeat it?"

"I am no sure about it—I ken it has some wheeram by the rest."

Mr. Boston repeated it, and tried to show him his error in working with knives on the Sabbath-day. John wrought away till the divine added,

"But why won't you rather come to church, John?—what is the reason you never come to church?"

"Because you never preach on the text I want you to preach on."

"What text would you have me to preach on."

"On the nine-and-twenty knives that came back from Babylon."

"I never heard of them before."

"It is a sign you have never read your Bible. Ha, ha, ha, Mr. Boston! sic fool sic minister."

Mr. Boston searched long for John's text that evening, and at last finding it recorded in Ezra i. 9, he wondered greatly at the acuteness of the fool, considering the subject on which he had been reproving him.

"John, how auld will you be?" said a sage wife to him one day, when talking of their ages.

"Oh, I dinna ken," said John. "It wad tak a wiser head than mine to tell you that."

"It is unco queer that you dinna ken how auld you are," returned she.

"I ken weel enough how auld I am," said John; "but I dinna ken how auld I'll be."

An old man, named Adam Linton, once met him running from home in the gray of the morning. "Hey, Jock Amos," said he, "where are you bound for so briskly this morning?"

"Aha! He's wise that wats that, and as daft wha speers," said Jock, without taking his eye from some object that it seemed to be following.

"Are you running after anybody?" said Linton.

"I am that, man," returned Jock; "I'm rinning after the deil's messenger. Did you see ought o' him gaun by?"

"What was he like?" said Linton.

"Like a great big black corbie," said Jock, "carrying a bit tow in his gab. And what do you think?—he has tauld me a piece o' news the day! There's to be a wedding ower by here the day, man—ay, a wedding! I maun after him, for he has gien me an invitation."

"A wedding? Dear Jock, you are raving. What wedding can there be to-day?" said Linton.

"It is Eppy Telfer's, man—auld Eppy Telfer's to be wed the day; and I'm to be there; and the minister is to be there, and a' the elders. But Tammie, the Cameronian, he darena come, for fear he should hae to dance wi' the kimmers. There will be braw wark there the day, Aedie Linton—braw wark there the day!" And away ran Jock towards Ettrick-house, hallooing and waving his cap for joy. Old Adam came in, and said to his wife, who was still in bed, that he supposed the moon was at the full, for Jock Amos was gane quite gyte awthegither, and was away shouting to Ettrick-house to Eppy Telfer's wedding."

"Then," said his wife, "if he be ill, she will be waur, for they are always affected at the same time; and though Eppy is better than Jock in her ordinary way, she is waur when the moon-madness comes ower her." (This woman, Eppy Telfer, was likewise subject to lunatic fits of insanity, and Jock had a great ill-will at her; he could not even endure the sight of her.)

The above little dialogue was hardly ended before word came that Eppy Telfer had "put down" herself over night, and was found hanging dead in her own little cottage at daybreak. Mr. Boston was sent for, who, with his servant man and one of his elders, attended, but in a state of such perplexity and grief, that he seemed almost as much dead as alive. The body was tied on a deal, carried to the peak of the Wedder Law, and interred there, and all the while Jock Amos attended, and never in his life met with an entertainment that appeared to please him more. While the men were making the grave, he sat on a stone near by, jabbering and speaking one while, always addressing Eppy, and laughing most heartily at another.

After this high fit Jock lost his spirits entirely, and never more recovered them. He became a complete nonentity, and lay mostly in his bed till the day of his death.

WILLIE CANDLEM.

Another notable man of that day was William Stoddart, nicknamed Candlem, one of the feuars of

Ettrick-house. He was simple, unlettered, and rude, as all his sayings that are preserved testify. Being about to be married to one Meggie Coltard, a great penny-wedding was announced, and the numbers that came to attend it were immense. Candlem and his bride went to Ettrick church to be married, and Mr. Boston, who was minister there, perceiving such a motley crowd following them, repaired into the church; and after admitting a few respectable witnesses, he set his son John, and his servant John Currie, to keep the two doors, and restrain the crowd from entering. Young Boston let in a number at his door, but John Currie stood manfully in the breach, refusing entrance to all. When the minister came to put the question, "Are you willing to take this woman," &c.

"I wat weel I was thinking sae," says Candlem. "Haud to the door, John Currie!"

When the question was put to Meggie, she bowed assent like a dumb woman, but this did not satisfy Willie Candlem. "What for d'ye no answer, Meggie?" says he. "Dinna ye hear what the honest man's speering at ye?"

In due time Willie Candlem and Meggie had a son, and as the custom then was, it was decreed that the first Sabbath after he was born he should be baptized. It was about the Martinmas time, the day was stormy, and the water flooded; however, it was agreed that the baptism could not be put off, for fear of the fairies; so the babe was well rolled up in swaddling clothes, and laid on before his father on the white mare—the stoutest of the kimmers stemming the water on foot. Willie Candlem rede the water slowly and cautiously. When about the middle of the stream, he heard a most unearthly yelling and screaming rise behind him; "What are they squealing at?" said he to himself, but durst not look back for fear of his charge. After he had crossed the river safely, and a sand-bed about as wide, Willie wheeled his white mare's head about, and exclaimed—"Why, the ne'er a haet I hae but the slough!" Willie had dropped the child into the flooded river, without missing it out of the huge bundle of clothes; but luckily, one of the kimmers picked him, and as he showed some signs of life, they hurried into a house at Goosegreen, and got him brought round again. In the afternoon he was so far recovered, that the kimmers thought he might be taken up to church for baptism, but Willie Candlem made this sage remark, "I doubt he's rather unfeiroch to stand it; he has gotten eneugh o' the water for ae day." On going home to his poor wife, his first address to her was—"Ay, ye may take up your handywark, Meggie, in making a slough open at baith ends. What signifies a thing that's open at baith ends?"

Another time, in harvest, a rainy Sunday came on, and the Ettrick began to look very big in the evening. Willie Candlem, perceiving his crop in danger, yoked the white mare in the sledge, and was proceeding to lead his corn out of water-mark; but out came Meggie, and began expostulating with him on the sinfulness of the act—"Put in your beast again, like a good Christian man, Willie," said she, "and dinna be setting an ill example to a' the parish. Ye ken that this verra day the minister bade us lippen to Providence in our straits, and we wad never rue't. He'll take it very ill off your hand, the setting of sic an example on the Lord's day; therefore, Willie, my man, take his advice and mine, and lippen to Providence this time."

Willie Candlem was obliged to comply, for who can withstand the artillery of a woman's tongue! So he put up his white mare; and went to bed with a heavy heart; and the next morning, by break of day, when he arose and looked out, behold the greater part of his crop was gone. "Ye may take up your Providence now, Meggie! Where's your Providence now? A' down the water wi' my corn! Ah! I wad trust mair to my gude white mare than to you and Providence baith!"

Meggie answered him meekly, as her duty and custom was—"O Willie! dinna rail at Providence, but down to the meadow-head and claim first."

Willie Candlem took the hint, galloped on his white mare down to the Ettrick meadows, over which the river spread, and they were covered with floating sheaves; so Willie began and hauled out, and carried out, till he had at least six times as much corn as he had lost. At length one man came, and another, but Willie refused all partition of the spoil. "Ay, ye may take up your corn now where you can find it, lads," said Willie; "I keppit nane but my ain. Yours is gane farther down. Had ye come when I came, ye might have keppit it a'." So Willie drove and drove, till the stackyard was full.

"I think the crop has turned no that ill out after a'," said Meggie. "You've been nae the waur o' trusting to Providence."

"Na," rejoined Willie, "nor o' taking your advice, Meggie, and ganging down to kep and claim at the meadow-head."

CHAPTER XIX.

NANCY CHISHOLM.

John Chisholm, farmer of Moorlaggan, was in the early part of his life a wealthy and highly respectable man, and associated with the best gentlemen of the country; and in those days he was accounted to be not only reasonable, but mild and benevolent in his disposition. A continued train of unfortunate speculations, however, at last reduced his circumstances so much that, though at the time when this tale commences he still continued solvent,

it was well enough known to all the country that he was on the brink of ruin; and, by an unfortunate fatality, too inherent in human nature, still as he descended in circumstances, he advanced in pride and violence of temper, until his conduct grew so intolerable as scarcely to be submitted to even by his own family.

Mr. Chisholm had five daughters, well brought up and well educated; but the second, whose name was Nancy Chisholm, was acknowledged to be the most beautiful and accomplished of them all. She was so buoyant of spirits that she hardly appeared to know whether she was treading on the face of the earth or bounding on the breeze; and before Nancy was eighteen, as was quite natural, she was beloved by the handsomest lad in the parish, whose proper Christian name was Archibald Gillies, but who, by some patronymic or designation, of whose import I am ignorant, was always called Gillespick.

Young Gillies was quite below Nancy in rank, although in circumstances they were by this time much the same. His father being only a small subtenant of Mr. Chisholm's, the latter would have thought his child degraded, had she been discovered even speaking to the young man. He had, moreover, been bred to the profession of a tailor, which, though an honest occupation, and perhaps more lucrative than many others, is viewed in the country places of Scotland with a degree of contempt far exceeding that with which it is regarded in more polished communities. Notwithstanding of all this, Gillespick Gillies, the tailor, had the preference of all others in the heart of pretty Nancy; and, as he durst not pay his addresses to her openly, or appear at Moorlaggan by day, they were driven to an expedient quite in mode with the class to which Gillies belonged, but as entirely inconsistent with that propriety of conduct which ought to be observed by young ladies like those of Moorlaggan—they met by night; that is, about night-fall in summer, and at the same hour in winter, which made it very late in the night.

Now it unluckily had so happened, that Gillies, the young dashing tailor newly arrived from Aberdeen, had, at a great wedding the previous winter. paid all his attentions to Siobla, Nancy's eldest sister. This happened, indeed, by mere accident, owing to Nancy's many engagements; but Siobla did not know that; and Gillies being the best dancer in the barn, led her to the head every time, and behaved so courteously, that he made a greater impression on her heart than she was willing to acknowledge. As all ranks mingle at a country wedding, the thing was noted and talked of, both among the low and high; but neither the high nor the low thought or said that young Gillies had made a very prudent choice. She was not, however, the tailor's choice; for his whole heart was fixed on her sister Nancy.

The two slept in one chamber, and it was impossible for the younger to escape to her lover without confiding the secret to Siobla, which, therefore, she was obliged to do; and from that moment jealousy —for jealousy it was, though Miss Siobla called it by another name—began to rankle in her elder sister's bosom. She called Gillies every degrading name she could invent—a profligate, a libertine—and to sum up all, she called him a *tailor*, thereby finishing the sum of degeneracy, and crowning the climax of her reproaches.

Nancy was, nevertheless, exceedingly happy with her handsome lover, who all but adored her. She enjoyed his company perhaps the more on two accounts, one of which she might probably deduce from the words of the wise man, that "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;" but another most certainly was, that Gillies having opened her eyes to the true state of her father's affairs, and by this led her to perceive that she was only "a pennyless lass wi' a lang pedigree," she could not help drawing the conclusion, that the tailor was as good as she; that the course she was taking, besides being very agreeable to her own wishes, was the most prudent that could be conceived.

This information preying on Nancy's mind, she could not help communicating it in confidence to one of her sisters (Siobla, it is to be supposed), who, believing the report to be a malicious falsehood, went straight to her father with the news, as soon as he arrived from the market. Some vexatious occurrences connected with his depressed fortunes had put him sorely out of humour that night, and he had likewise been drinking a good deal, which made matters worse; so that when Siobla informed him of the country rumour that he was about to become a bankrupt, his fury rose to an ungovernable pitch, and, seizing her by the arm, he adjured her forthwith to name her informer, against whom he at the same time vowed the most consummate vengeance. His daughter was frightened, and without hesitation told him that she had learned the report from her sister Nancy. Nancy was a favourite with old Chisholm, but that circumstance seemed only to inflame him the more: that one so much cherished and beloved should make herself instrumental in breaking his credit was, he thought, a degree of ingratitude that justified his severest resentment; and with a countenance of the utmost fury, he turned on her, and demanded if what he had heard was true. With a face as pale as death, and trembling lips, she acknowledged that it was. But when desired to name her informer, she remained silent, trembled, and wept. On being further urged, and threatened, she said, hesitatingly, that she did not invent the story; and supposed she had heard it among the servants.

"This will not do, miss," exclaimed her father; "tell me at once the name of your informer; and depend upon it, that person, whoever it is, had better never been born."

Nancy could not answer, but sobbed and wept.

Just at that unlucky moment, a whistle was heard from the wood opposite the window. This was noticed by Mr. Chisholm, who looked a little startled, and inquired what or who it was; but no one gave him any answer.

It had been settled between the two lovers, that when Gillies came to see Nancy, he was to whistle from a certain spot in a certain manner, while she was to open the window, and hold the light close to the glass for an instant, that being the token that she heard and understood the signal. In the present dilemma, the performance of her part of the agreement was impracticable; and, of course, when old Chisholm was once more rising into a paroxysm of rage at his daughter, the ominous whistle was repeated.

"What *is* this?" demanded he, in a peremptory tone. "Tell me instantly; for I see by your looks you know and understand what it is. Siobla, do you know?"

"Yes, I do," replied Siobla. "I know well enough what it is—I do not hear it so seldom."

"Well, then, inform me at once what it means," said her father.

"It is Nancy's sweetheart come to whistle her out—young tailor Gillies;" answered Siobla, without any endeavour to avert her father's wrath, by giving the information in an indirect way.

"Oho! Is it thus?" exclaimed the infuriated father. "And Nancy always answers and attends to this audacious tailor's whistle, does she?"

"Indeed she does, sir; generally once or twice every week," replied the young woman, in the same willing tone.

"The secret is then out!" said old Chisholm, in words that quavered with anger. "It is plain from whence the injurious report has been obtained! Too fond father! alas, poor old man! Have matters already come thus low with thee? And hast thou indeed nourished and cherished this favourite child, given her an education fitting her for the highest rank in society, and all that she might throw herself away upon a—a—a tailor! Begone, girls! I must converse with this degraded creature alone."

When her sisters had left the apartment, Nancy knelt, wept, prayed, and begged forgiveness; but a temporary distraction had banished her father's reason, and he took hold of her long fair hair, wound it round his left hand in the most methodical manner, and began to beat her with his cane. She uttered a scream; on which he stopped, and told her that if she uttered another sound before he had done chastising her, it should be her last; but this causing her to scream only ten times louder he beat her with such violence that he shivered the cane to pieces. He then desisted, calling her the ruin of her sisters, of himself, and all her father's house; opened the door, and was about to depart and leave her, when the tailor's whistle again sounded in his ears, louder and nearer than before. This once more drove him to madness, and seizing a heavy dog-whip that hung in the lobby, he returned into the parlour, and struck his daughter repeatedly in the most unmerciful manner. During the concluding part of this horrid scene, she opened not her mouth, but eyed her ferocious parent with composure, thinking she had nothing but death to expect from his hands.

Alas! death was nothing to the pangs she then suffered, and those she was doomed to suffer! Her father at last ceased from his brutal treatment, led her from the house, threw her from him, with a curse, and closed the door with a force that made the casements of the house clatter.

There never was perhaps a human being whose circumstances in life were as suddenly changed, or more deplorable than Nancy Chisholm's were that night. But it was not only her circumstances in life that were changed: she felt at once that the very nature within her was changed also, and that from being a thing of happiness and joy, approaching to the nature of a seraph, she was now converted into a fiend. She had a cup measured to her which nature could not endure, and its baneful influence had the instant effect of making her abhor her own nature, and become a rebel to all its milder qualities.

The first resolution she formed was that of full and ample revenge. She determined to make such a dreadful retaliation as should be an example to all jealous sisters and unnatural parents, while the world lasted. Her plan was to wait till after midnight, and then set fire to the premises, and burn her father, her sisters, and all that pertained to them, to ashes. In little more than an instant was her generous nature so far altered, that she exulted in the prospect of this horrid catastrophe.

With such a purpose, the poor wretch went and hid herself until all was quiet; and there is no doubt that she would have put her scheme in execution, had it not been for the want of fire to kindle the house; for as to going into any dwelling, or seeing the face of an acquaintance, in her present degraded condition, her heart shrunk from it. So, after spending some hours in abortive attempts at raising fire, she was obliged to depart, bidding an eternal adieu to all that she had hitherto held dear on earth.

On the approach of daylight, she retired into a thicket, and, at a brook, washed and bathed her bloated arms and face, disentangled and combed her yellow hair with her fingers, and when she thought she was unobserved, drew the train of her gown over her head, and sped away on her journey, whither she knew not. No distinct account of her escape, or of what became of her for some time, can be given: but the whole bent of her inclinations was to do evil; she felt herself impelled to it by a motive she could not account for, but which she had no power or desire to resist. She felt it as it were incumbent on her always to retaliate evil for good—the most

fiendish disposition that the human heart could feel. She had a desire that the Evil One would appear in person that she might enter into a formal contract to do evil. She had a longing to impart to others some share of the torment she had herself endured, and missed no opportunity of inflicting such. Once in the course of her wanderings, she met, in a sequestered place, a little girl, whom she seized, and beat her "within an inch of her life," as she called it. She was at this period quite a vagabond, and a pest wherever she went.

The manner in which she first got into a place was not the least remarkable of her adventures. On first coming to Aberdeen, she went into the house of one Mr. Simon Gordon, in the upper Kirkgate, and asked some food, which was readily granted her by the housekeeper; for, owing to her great beauty and superior address, few ever refused her anything she asked. She seemed little disposed to leave the house again, and by no means could the housekeeper prevail upon her to depart, unless she were admitted to speak with Mr. Gordon.

This person was an old bachelor, rich and miserly; and the housekeeper was terrified at the very idea of acknowledging to him that she had disposed of the least morsel of food in charity; far less dared she allow a mendicant to carry her petition into her master's very presence. But the pertinacity of the individual she had now to deal with fairly overcame her fears, and she carried up to Mr. Simon Gordon the appalling message that a "seeking woman," that is, a begging woman, demanded to speak with him. Whether it was that Mr. Simon's abhorrence of persons of that cast was driven from the field by the audacity of the announcement, I cannot pretend to say; but it is certain that he remitted in his study of the state of the public funds, and granted the interview. And as wonders when they once commence are, for the most part, observed to continue to follow each other for a time, he not only astounded the housekeeper by his ready assent to let the stranger have speech of him; but the poor woman had nearly sunk into the ground with dismay when she heard him, after the interview was over, give orders that this same wanderer was to be retained in the house in the capacity of her assistant. Here, however, the miraculous part of this adventure stops; for the housekeeper, who had previously been a rich old miser's only servant, did, in the first place, remonstrate loudly against any person being admitted to share her labours, or her power; and on finding all that could be said totally without effect, she refused to remain with her master any longer, and immediately departed, leaving Nancy Chisholm in full possession of the premises.

Being now in some degree tired of a wandering unsettled life, she continued with Mr. Gordon, testifying her hatred of the world rather by a sullen and haughty apathy, than by any active demonstrations of enmity; and what was somewhat remarkable, by her attention to the wants of the peevish and feeble old man, her master, she gained greatly upon his good-will.

In this situation her father discovered her, after an absence of three years, during which time his compunctious visitings had never either ceased or diminished from the time he had expelled her his house, while under the sway of unbridled passion. He never had more heart for anything in the world. All his affairs went to wreck; he became bankrupt, and was driven from his ample possessions, and was forced to live in a wretched cottage in a sort of genteel penury. But all his misfortunes and disappointments put together did not affect him half so much as the loss of his darling daughter; he never doubted that she had gone to the home of her lover, to the house of old Gillies; and this belief was one that carried great bitterness to his heart. When he discovered that she had never been seen there, his next terror was that she had committed suicide; and he trembled night and day, anticipating all the horrid shapes in which he might hear that the desperate act had been accomplished. When the dread of this began to wear away, a still more frightful idea arose to haunt his troubled imagination—it was that of his once beloved child driven to lead a life of infamy and disgrace. This conclusion was but too natural, and he brooded on it with many repentant tears for the space of nearly two years, when he at last set out with a resolution either to find his lost daughter, or spend the remainder of his life in search of her.

It is painful to think of the scenes that he went through in this harassing and heart-rending search, until he at length discovered her in the house of Mr. Simon Gordon. For a whole week he had not the courage to visit her, though he stole looks of her every day; but he employed himself in making every inquiry concerning her present situation.

One day she was sitting, in gay attire, sewing, and singing the following rhyme, in crooning of which she spent a part of every day:—

I am lost to peace, I am lost to grace,
  I am lost to all that's beneath the sun;
I have lost my way in the light of day,
  And the gates of heaven I will never won.

If one sigh would part from my burning heart,
  Or one tear would rise in my thirsty eye,
Through woe and pain it might come again
  The soul that fled, from deep injury.

In one hour of grief I would find relief,
  One pang of sorrow would ease my pain;
But joy or woe, in this world below,
  I can never, never know again!

While she was thus engaged, old Chisholm, with an agitated heart and trembling frame, knocked gently at the door, which was slowly and carelessly opened by his daughter; for she performed everything as if she had no interest in it. The two gazed on one another for a moment, without speaking; but

the eyes of the father were beaming with love and tenderness, while those of the daughter had that glazed and joyless gleam which too well bespoke her hardened spirit. The old man spread out his arms to embrace her; but she closed the door upon him. He retired again to his poor lodgings, from whence he sent her a letter fraught with tenderness and sorrow, which produced no answer.

There was another besides her father who had found her out before this time, though he had never ventured to make himself known to her; and that was her former lover, Gillespick Gillies, the tailor. He had traced her in all her wanderings, and though it had been once his intention to settle in Edinburgh, yet for her sake he hired himself to a great clothier and tailor in the city of Aberdeen. After her father's ineffectual application to her, young Gillies ventured to make his appearance; but his reception was far from what he hoped. She was embarrassed and cold, attaching blame to him for everything, particularly for persuading her out to the woods by night, which had been the means of drawing down her father's anger upon her. He proffered all the reparation in his power; but she would not hear him speak, and even forbade him ever to attempt seeing her again.

The tailor's love was, however, too deeply rooted to be so easily overcome. He would not be said nay, but waited upon her evening and morning; still she remained callous and unmoved, notwithstanding of all his kind attentions.

The frame of her spirit at this period must have been an anomaly in human nature; she knew no happiness, and shunned, with the utmost pertinacity, every avenue leading towards its heavenly shrine. She often said afterwards, that she believed her father's rod had beat an angel out of her, and a demon into its place.

But Gillespick, besides being an affectionate and faithful lover, was a singularly acute youth. He told this perverse beauty again and again that she was acknowledged the flower of all Aberdeen, saving a Miss Marshall, who sat in the College Church every Sunday, to whom some gentlemen gave the preference; and then he always added, "But I am quite certain that were you to appear there dressed in your best style, every one would at once see how much you outshine her." He went over this so often, that Nancy's vanity became interested, and she proffered, of her own accord, to accompany him one day to the College Kirk.

From the time that Gillies got her to enter the church-door again, although she went from no good motive, he considered the victory won, and counted on the certainty of reclaiming his beloved from despair and destruction. All eyes were soon turned on her beauty, but hers sought out and rested on Mary Marshall alone. She was convinced of her own superiority, which added to the elegance of her carriage and gaiety of her looks; so that she went home exceedingly well pleased with—*the minister's sermon!*

She went back in the afternoon, the next day, and every day thereafter, and her lover noted that she sometimes appeared to fix her attention on the minister's discourse. But one day in particular, when he was preaching on that divine precept, contained in St. Luke's gospel, "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you," she seemed all the while enrapt by the most ardent feelings, and never for one moment took her eye from the speaker. Her lover perceived this, and kept his eyes steadfastly fixed on her face. At last the reverend divine, in his application of this doctrine to various characters, painted her own case in such a light that it appeared drawn from nature. He then expatiated on the sweet and heavenly joys of forgiveness with such ardour and devotion, that tears once more began to beam in those bright eyes, whose fountains seemed long to have been dried up; and ere the preacher concluded, she was forced to hide her face and give free vent to her feelings, weeping abundantly.

Her lover conducted her home, and observed a total alteration in her manner towards him. This change on her seared and hardened spirit was more, however, than her frame could brook. The next day she was ill, and she grew worse and worse daily; a strange disease was hers, for she was seized with stubborn and fierce paroxysms, very much resembling those possessed of devils in the dawning of Christianity. It appeared exactly as if a good spirit and an evil one were contending for the possession of her person as their tabernacle, none of the medical faculty being able to account for these extraordinary changes in a natural way. Her lover hired a sick-nurse, who attended both on her and the old man, which pleased the latter well, and he thought there was not such a man in the city of Aberdeen as the young tailor.

Nancy's disease was at length mastered, but it left her feeble and emaciated, and from that time forth she showed herself indeed an altered woman. The worthy divine who first opened her eyes to her lost condition, had visited her frequently in her sickness, and repeated his exhortations. Her lover waited on her every day; and not only this, but being, as I before observed, an acute youth, he carried to the house with him cordials for the old miser, and told or read him the news from the stock exchange. Nancy was now attached to Gillespick with the most ardent and pure affection, and more deeply than in her early days of frolic and thoughtlessness; for now her love toward him was mellowed by a ray from heaven. In few words, they were married. Old Simon Gordon died shortly after, and left them more than half his fortune, amounting, it was said, to £11,000; a piece of generosity to which he was moved, not only by the attention shown him in his latter days by the young pair, but, as he re-

pressed it in his will, "being convinced that Gillies would take care of the money." This legacy was a great fortune for an Aberdeen tailor and clothier. He bought the half of his master's stock and business, and in consequence of some army and navy contracts, realized a very large fortune in a short time.

Old Chisholm was by this time reduced to absolute beggary; he lived among his former wealthy acquaintances, sometimes in the hall, sometimes in the parlour, as their good or bad humour prevailed. His daughters, likewise, were all forced to accept situations as upper servants, and were of course very unhappily placed, countenanced by no class, being too proud to associate with those in the station to which they had fallen. The company of lowlanders that had taken Moorlaggan on Chisholm's failure, followed his example, and failed also. The farm was again in the market, and nobody to bid anything for it; at length an agent from Edinburgh took it for a rich lady, at half the rent that had been paid for it before; and then every one said, had old John Chisholm held it at such a rent, he would have been the head of the country to that day. The whole of the stock and furniture were bought up from the creditors, paid in ready money, and the discount returned; and as this was all done by the Edinburgh agent, no one knew who was to be the farmer, although the shepherds and servants were hired, and the business of the farm went on as before.

Old Chisholm was at this time living in the house of a Mr. Mitchell, on Spey, not far from Pitmain, when he received a letter from this same Edinburgh agent, stating that the new farmer of Moorlaggan wanted to speak with him on very important business relating to that farm; and that all his expenses would be paid to that place and back again, or to what other place in the country he chose to go. Chisholm showed Mr. Mitchell the letter, who said he understood it was to settle the marches about some disputed land, and it would be as well for him to go and make a good charge for his trouble, and at the same time offered to accommodate him with a pony. Mr. Mitchell could not spare his own saddle-horse, having to go a journey; so he mounted Mr. Chisholm on a small shaggy Highland nag, with crop ears, and equipped with an old saddle, and a bridle with hair reins. It was the evening of the third day after he left Mr. Mitchell's house before he reached Moorlaggan; and as he went up Coolen-aird, he could not help reflecting with bitterness of spirit on the alteration of times with him. It was not many years ago when he was wont to ride by the same path, mounted on a fine horse of his own, with a livery servant behind him; now he rode a little shabby nag, with crop ears and a hair bridle, and even that diminutive creature belonged to another man. Formerly he had a comfortable home, and a respectful family to welcome him; now he had no home, and that family was all scattered abroad. "Alas!" said he to himself, "times are indeed sadly altered with me; aye, and I may affect to blame misfortune for all that has befallen me; but I cannot help being persuaded that the man who is driven by unmanly passions to do that of which he is ashamed both before God and man, can never prosper. Oh, my child! my lost and darling child! What I have suffered for her both in body, mind, and outward estate!"

In this downcast and querulous mood did the forlorn old man reach his former habitation. All was neat and elegant about the place, and there was a chaise standing at the end of the house. When old Chisholm saw this, he did not venture up to the front door, but alighted, and led his crop-eared pony to the back door, at which he knocked, and having stated the errand upon which he came, was, after some delay, ushered into the presence of a courtly dame, who accosted him in proud and dignified language as follows:—

"Your name is Mr. John Chisholm, I believe?"

"It is, madam; at your service."

"And you were once farmer here, I believe?" (A bow.) "Aye. Hem. And how did you lose your farms?"

"Through misfortunes, madam, and by giving too much credit to insufficient parties."

"Aye—so! That was not prudent in you to give so much credit in such quarters—Eh?"

"I have been favoured with a letter from your agent, madam," said Chisholm, to whom this supercilious tone of cross-questioning was far from being agreeable, "and I beg to know what are your commands with me."

"Aye. True. Very right. So you don't like to talk of your own affairs, don't you? No; it seems not. Why, the truth is, that my agent wished me to employ you as factor or manager of these lands, as my husband and I must live for the greater part of the year at a great distance. We are willing to give a good salary; and I believe there is no man so fit for our purpose. But I have heard accounts of you that I do not like—that you were an inexorable tyrant in your own family, abusing and maltreating the most amiable of them in a very unmanly manner. And, I have heard, but I hope not truly, that you drove one daughter to disgrace and destruction."

Here Chisholm turned his face towards the window, burst into tears, and said, he hoped she had not sent for a miserable and degraded old man to torture his feelings by probing those wounds of the soul that were incurable.

"Nay, I beg your pardon, old gentleman. I sent for you to do you a service. I was only mentioning a vile report that reached my ear, in hopes that you could exculpate yourself."

"Alas, madam, I cannot."

"Dreadful! dreadful! Father of heaven, could

thy hand frame a being with feelings like this! But I hope you did not, as is reported. No—you could not—you did not strike her, did you?"

"Alas! alas!" exclaimed the agonized old man.

"What? Beat her—scourge her—throw her from your house at midnight with a father's curse upon her head?"

"I did! I did! I did!"

"Monster! monster! Go, and hide your devoted and execrable head in some cavern in the bowels of the earth, and wear out the remainder of your life in praying to thy God for repentance; for thou art not fit to herd with the rest of his creatures!"

"My cup of sorrow and misery is now full," said the old man as he turned, staggering, towards the door. "On the very spot has this judgment fallen on me."

"But stop, sir—stop for a little space," said the lady. "Perhaps I have been too hasty, and it may be you have repented of that unnatural crime already?"

"Repented! Aye, God is my witness, not a night or day has passed over this gray head, on which I have not repented: in that bitterness of spirit, too, which the chief of sinners only can feel."

"Have you indeed repented of your treatment of your daughter? Then all is forgiven on her part. And do you, father, forgive me too!"

The old man looked down with bewildered vision, and, behold, there was the lady of the mansion kneeling at his feet, and embracing his knees! She had thrown aside her long flowing veil, and he at once discovered the comely face of his beloved daughter.

That very night she put into her father's hand the new lease of all his former possessions, and receipts for the stock, crop, and furniture. The rest of the family were summoned together, and on the following Sabbath they went all to church and took possession of their old family seat, every one sitting in the place she occupied formerly, with Siobla at the head. But the generous creature who had thus repaid good for evil, was the object of attraction for every eye, and the admiration of every heart.

This is a true story, and it contains not one moral, but many, as every true portraiture of human life must do. It shows us the danger of youthful imprudence, of jealousy, and of unruly passions; but, above all, it shows that without a due sense of religion there can be no true and disinterested love.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SHEPHERD'S DOG.

A curious story that appeared lately of a dog belonging to a shepherd, named John Hoy, has brought sundry similar ones to my recollection, which I am sure cannot fail to be interesting to those unacquainted with the qualities of that most docile and affectionate of the whole animal creation—the shepherd's dog.

The story alluded to was shortly this. John was at a sacrament of the Cameronians, and being loath to leave the afternoon sermon, and likewise obliged to have his ewes at the bught by a certain hour, gave his dog a quiet hint at the outskirts of the congregation, and instantly she went away, took the hills, and gathered the whole flock of ewes to the bught, as carefully and quietly as if her master had been with her, to the astonishment of a thousand beholders, for the ewes lay scattered over two large and steep hills.

This John Hoy was my uncle; that is, he was married to my mother's sister. He was all his life remarkable for breeding up his dogs to perform his commands with wonderful promptitude and exactness, especially at a distance from him, and he kept always by the same breed. It may be necessary to remark here, that there is no species of animals so varied in their natures and propensities as the shepherd's dog, and these propensities are preserved inviolate in the same breed from generation to generation. One kind will manage sheep about hand, about a bught, shedding, or fold, almost naturally, and those that excel most in this kind of service are always the least tractable at a distance; others will gather sheep from the hills, or turn them this way and that way, as they are commanded, as far as they can hear their master's voice, or note the signals made by his hand, and yet can never be taught to command sheep close around him. Some excel again in a kind of social intercourse. They understand all that is said to them, or of them, in the family; and often a good deal that is said of sheep, and of other dogs, their comrades. One kind will bite the legs of cattle, and no species of correction or disapprobation will restrain them, or ever make them give it up; another kind bays at the heads of cattle, and neither precept nor example will ever induce them to attack a beast behind, or bite its legs.

My uncle Hoy's kind were held in estimation over the whole country for their docility in what is termed *hirsil-rinning;* that is, gathering sheep at a distance, but they were never very good at commanding sheep about hand. Often have I been astonished at seeing him standing on the top of one hill, and the Tub, as he called an excellent snow-white bitch that he had, gathering all the sheep from another with great care and caution. I once saw her gathering the head of a hope, or glen, quite out of her master's sight, while all that she heard of him was now and then the echo of his voice or whistle from another hill; yet, from the direction of that echo, she gathered the sheep with perfect acuteness and punctuality.

I have often heard him tell an anecdote of another

dog called Nimble. One drifty day, in *the seventy-four*, after gathering the ewes of Chapelhope, he found that he wanted about an hundred of them. He again betook himself to the heights, and sought for them the whole day without being able to find them, and began to suspect that they were covered over with snow in some ravine. Towards the even it cleared up a little, and as a last resource, he sent away Nimble. She had found the scent of them on the hill while her master was looking for them; but not having received orders to bring them, she had not the means of communicating the knowledge she possessed. But as soon as John gave her the gathering word, she went away, he said, like an arrow out of a bow, and in less than five minutes he beheld her at about a mile's distance, bringing them round a hill, called the Middle, cocking her tail behind them, and apparently very happy at having got the opportunity of terminating her master's disquietude with so much ease.

I once witnessed another very singular feat performed by a dog belonging to John Graham, late tenant in Ashesteel. A neighbour came to his house after it was dark, and told him that he had lost a sheep on his farm, and that if he (Graham) did not secure her in the morning early, she would be lost, as he had brought her far. John said, he could not possibly get to the hill next morning, but if he would take him to the very spot where he lost the sheep, perhaps his dog Chieftain would find her that night. On that they went away with all expedition, lest the traces of the feet should cool; and I, then a boy, being in the house, went with them. The night was pitch dark, which had been the cause of the man losing his ewe; and at length he pointed out a place to John, by the side of the water, where he had lost her. "Chieftain, fetch that," said John, "bring her back, sir." The dog jumped around and around, and reared himself up on end, but not being able to see anything, evidently misapprehended his master; on which John fell a-cursing and swearing at the dog, calling him a great many blackguard names. He at last told the man, that he must point out the *very track* that the sheep went, otherwise he had no chance of recovering it. The man led him to a gray stone, and said, he was sure she took the brae within a yard of that. "Chieftain, come hither to my foot, you great numb'd whelp," said John. Chieftain came. John pointed with his finger to the ground, "Fetch that, I say, sir, you stupid idiot—bring that back. Away!" The dog scented slowly about on the ground for some seconds, but soon began to mend his pace, and vanished in the darkness. "Bring her back—away, you great calf!" vociferated John, with a voice of exultation, as the dog broke to the hill; and as all these good dogs perform their work in perfect silence, we neither saw nor heard any more for a long time. I think, if I remember right, we waited there about half an hour; during which time, all the conversation was about the small chance that the dog had to find the ewe, for it was agreed on all hands that she might long ago have mixed with the rest of the sheep on the farm. John, however, still persisted in waiting until his dog came back, either with the ewe or without her; and at last the trusty animal brought the individual lost sheep to our very foot, which the man took on his back, and went on his way rejoicing. I remember the dog was very warm, and hanging out his tongue. John called him all the ill names he could invent, which the animal seemed to take in very good part. Such language seemed to be John's flattery to his dog. For my part, I went home, fancying I had seen a miracle, little weeting that it was nothing to what I myself was to experience in the course of my pastoral life, from the sagacity of the shepherd's dog.

My dog was always my companion. I conversed with him the whole day—I shared every meal with him, and my plaid in the time of a shower; the consequence was, that I generally had the best dogs in all the country. The first remarkable one that I had was named Sirrah. He was beyond all comparison the best dog I ever saw. He was of a surly unsocial temper—disdained all flattery, and refused to be caressed; but his attention to his master's commands and interests never will again be equalled by any of the canine race. The first time that I saw him, a drover was leading him in a rope; he was hungry, and lean, and far from being a beautiful cur, for he was all over black, and had a grim face striped with dark brown. The man had bought him of a boy for three shillings, somewhere on the Border, and doubtless had used him very ill on his journey. I thought I discovered a sort of sullen intelligence in his face, notwithstanding his dejected and forlorn situation; so I gave the drover a guinea for him, and appropriated the captive to myself. I believe there never was a guinea so well laid out; at least I am satisfied that I never laid out one to so good purpose. He was scarcely then a year old, and knew so little of herding, that he had never turned sheep in his life; but as soon as he discovered that it was his duty to do so, and that it obliged me, I can never forget with what anxiety and eagerness he learned his different evolutions. He would try every way deliberately, till he found out what I wanted him to do; and when once I made him to understand a direction, he never forgot or mistook it again. Well as I knew him, he very often astonished me, for when hard pressed in accomplishing his task, he had expedients of the moment that bespoke a great share of the reasoning faculty. Were I to relate all his exploits, it would require a volume; I shall only mention one or two, to prove what kind of an animal he was.

I was a shepherd for ten years on the same farm, where I had always about 700 lambs put under my charge every year at weaning-time. As they were of the short, or black-faced breed, the breaking of

them was a very ticklish and difficult task. I was obliged to watch them night and day for the first four days, during which time I had always a person to assist me. It happened one year, that just about midnight the lambs broke loose, and came up the moor upon us, making a noise with their running louder than thunder. We got up and waved our plaids, and shouted, in hopes to turn them, but we only made matters worse, for in a moment they were all round us, and by our exertions we cut them into three divisions; one of these ran north, another south, and those that came up between us, straight up the moor to the westward. I called out, "Sirrah, my man, they're a' away;" the word, of all others, that set him most upon the alert, but owing to the darkness of the night, and blackness of the moor, I never saw him at all. As the division of the lambs that ran southward were going straight towards the fold, where they had been that day taken from their dams, I was afraid they would go there and again mix with them; so I threw off part of my clothes, and pursued them, and by great personal exertion, and the help of another old dog that I had besides Sirrah, I turned them, but in a few minutes afterwards lost them altogether. I ran here and there, not knowing what to do, but always, at intervals, gave a loud whistle to Sirrah, to let him know that I was depending on him. By that whistling, the lad who was assisting me found me out; but he likewise had lost all trace whatsoever of the lambs. I asked if he had never seen Sirrah? He said he had not; but that after I left him, a wing of the lambs had come round him with a swirl, and that he supposed Sirrah had then given them a turn, though he could not see him for the darkness. We both concluded, that whatever way the lambs ran at first, they would finally land at the fold where they left their mothers, and without delay we bent our course towards that; but when we came there there was nothing of them, nor any kind of bleating to be heard, and we discovered with vexation that we had come on a wrong track.

My companion then bent his course towards the farm of Glen on the north, and I ran away westward for several miles, along the wild tract where the lambs had grazed while following their dams. We met after it was day, far up in a place called the Black Cleuch, but neither of us had been able to discover our lambs, nor any traces of them. It was the most extraordinary circumstance that had ever occurred in the annals of the pastoral life! We had nothing for it but to return to our master, and inform him that we had lost his whole flock of lambs, and knew not what was become of one of them.

On our way home, however, we discovered a body of lambs at the bottom of a deep ravine, called the Flesh Cleuch, and the indefatigable Sirrah standing in front of them, looking all around for some relief, but still standing true to his charge. The sun was then up; and when we first came in view of them, we concluded that it was one of the divisions of the lambs, which Sirrah had been unable to manage until he came to that commanding situation, for it was about a mile and a half distant from the place where they first broke and scattered. But what was our astonishment when we discovered by degrees that not one lamb of the whole flock was wanting! How he had got all the divisions collected in the dark is beyond my comprehension. The charge was left entirely to himself from midnight until the rising of the sun; and if all the shepherds in the Forest had been there to assist him, they could not have effected it with greater propriety. All that I can say further is, that I never felt so grateful to any creature below the sun as I did to Sirrah that morning.

I remember another achievement of his which I admired still more. I was sent to a place in Tweeddale, called Stanhope, to bring home a wild ewe that had strayed from home. The place lay at the distance of about fifteen miles, and my way to it was over steep hills, and athwart deep glens: there was no path, and neither Sirrah nor I had ever travelled the road before. The ewe was brought in and put into a barn over night; and, after being frightened in this way, was set out to me in the morning to be driven home by herself. She was as wild as a roe, and bounded away to the side of the mountain like one. I sent Sirrah on a circular route wide before her, and let him know that he had the charge of her. When I left the people at the house, Mr. Tweedie, the farmer, said to me, "Do you really suppose that you will drive that sheep over these hills, and out through the midst of all the sheep in the country?" I said I would try to do it. "Then, let me tell you," said he, "that you may as well try to travel to yon sun." The man did not know that I was destined to do both the one and the other! Our way, as I said, lay all over wild hills, and through the middle of flocks of sheep. I seldom got a sight of the ewe, for she was sometimes a mile before me, sometimes two; but Sirrah kept her in command the whole way—never suffered her to mix with other sheep—nor, as far as I could judge, ever to deviate twenty yards from the track by which he and I went the day before. When we came over the great height towards Manor Water, Sirrah and his charge happened to cross it a little before me, and our way lying down hill for several miles, I lost all trace of them, but still held on my track. I came to two shepherd's houses, and asked if they had seen anything of a black dog, with a branded face and a long tail, driving a sheep? No; they had seen no such thing; and, besides, all their sheep, both above and below the houses, seemed to be unmoved. I had nothing for it but to hold on my way homeward, and at length, on the corner of a hill at the side of the water, I discovered my trusty coal-black friend sitting with his eye fixed intently on the burn below

him, and sometimes giving a casual glance behind to see if I was coming: he had the ewe standing there, safe and unhurt.

When I got her home, and set her at liberty among our own sheep, he took it highly amiss. I could scarcely prevail with him to let her go; and so dreadfully was he affronted, that she should have been let go free after all his toil and trouble, that he would not come near me all the way to the house, nor yet taste any supper when we got there. I believe he wanted me to take her home and kill her.

He had one very laughable peculiarity, which often created no little disturbance about the house—it was an outrageous ear for music. He never heard music but he drew towards it; and he never drew towards it but he joined in it with all his vigour. Many a good psalm, song, and tune was he the cause of spoiling; for when he set fairly to, at which he was not slack, the voices of all his coadjutors had no chance with his. It was customary with the worthy old farmer with whom I resided to perform family worship evening and morning; and before he began, it was always necessary to drive Sirrah to the fields and close the door. If this was at any time forgot or neglected, the moment that the psalm was raised he joined with all his zeal, and at such a rate, that he drowned the voices of the family before three lines could be sung. Nothing further could be done till Sirrah was expelled. But then! when he got to the peat-stack knowe before the door, especially if he got a blow in going out, he *did* give his powers of voice full scope, without mitigation; and even at that distance he was often a hard match for us all.

Some imagined that it was from a painful sensation that he did this. No such thing. Music was his delight; it always drew him towards it like a charm. I slept in the byre-loft—Sirrah in the hay-nook in a corner below. When sore fatigued, I sometimes retired to my bed before the hour of family worship. In such cases, whenever the psalm was raised in the kitchen, which was but a short distance, Sirrah left his lair; and laying his ear close to the bottom of the door to hear more distinctly, he growled a low note in accompaniment, till the sound expired: and then rose, shook his ears, and returned to his hay-nook. Sacred music affected him most; but in either that or any slow tune, when the tones dwelt upon the key-note, they put him quite beside himself; his eyes had the gleam of madness in them; and he sometimes quitted singing, and literally fell to barking. All his race have the same qualities of voice and ear in a less or greater degree.

The most painful part of Sirrah's history yet remains; but in memory of himself, it must be set down. He grew old, and unable to do my work by himself. I had a son of his coming up that promised well, and was a greater favourite with me than ever the other was. The times were hard, and the keeping of them both was a tax upon my master which I did not like to impose, although he made no remonstrances. I was obliged to part with one of them; so I sold old Sirrah to a neighbouring shepherd for three guineas. He was accustomed, while I was smearing or doing any work about the farm, to go with any of the family when I ordered him, and run at their bidding the same as at my own; but then, when he came home at night, a word of approbation from me was recompense sufficient, and he was ready next day to go with whomsoever I commanded him. Of course, when I sold him to this lad, he went away when I ordered him, without any reluctance, and wrought for him all that day and the next as well as ever he did in his life. But when he found that he was abandoned by me, and doomed to be the slave of a stranger for whom he did not care, he would never again do another feasible turn. The lad said that he ran in among the sheep like a whelp, and seemed intent on doing him all the mischief he could. The consequence was, that he was obliged to part with him in a short time; but he had more honour than I had, for he took him to his father, and desired him to foster Sirrah, and be kind to him as long as he lived, *for the sake of what he had been;* and this injunction the old man faithfully performed.

He came back to see me now and then for months after he went away, but afraid of the mortification of being driven from the farm-house, he never came there; but knowing well the road that I took to the hill in the morning, he lay down near to that. When he saw me coming he did not venture near me, but walked round the hill, keeping always about 200 yards off, and then returned to his new master again, satisfied for the time that there was no more shelter with his beloved old one for him. When I thought how easily one kind word would have attached him to me for life, and how grateful it would have been to my faithful old servant and friend, I could not help regretting my hard fortune that obliged us to separate. That unfeeling tax on the shepherd's dog, his only bread-winner, has been the cause of much pain in this respect. The parting with old Sirrah, after all that he had done for me, had such an effect on my heart, that I have never been able to forget it to this day; the more I have considered his attachment and character, the more I have admired them; and the resolution that he took up, and persisted in, of never doing a good turn for any other of my race, after the ingratitude that he had experienced from me, appeared to me to have a kind of heroism and sublimity in it. I am, however, writing nothing but the plain simple truth, to which there are plenty of living witnesses. I then made a vow to myself, which I have religiously kept, and ever shall, never to sell another dog; but that I may stand acquitted of all pecuniary motives—which indeed those who know me will scarcely suspect me of—I must add, that when I saw how matters went, I never took a farthing of the stipu-

lated price of old Sirrah. I have Sirrah's race to this day; and though none of them has ever equalled him as a sheep dog, yet they have far excelled him in all the estimable qualities of sociality and humour.

A single shepherd and his dog will accomplish more in gathering a stock of sheep from a Highland farm, than twenty shepherds could do without dogs; and it is a fact that, without this docile animal, the pastoral life would be a mere blank. Without the shepherd's dog, the whole of the open mountainous land in Scotland would not be worth a sixpence. It would require more hands to manage a stock of sheep, gather them from the hills, force them into houses and folds, and drive them to markets, than the profits of the whole stock would be capable of maintaining. Well may the shepherd feel an interest in his dog; he it is indeed that earns the family's bread, of which he is himself content with the smallest morsel; always grateful, and always ready to exert his utmost abilities in his master's interest. Neither hunger, fatigue, nor the worst of treatment will drive him from his side; he will follow him through fire and water, as the saying is, and through every hardship, without murmur or repining, till he literally fall down dead at his foot. If one of them is obliged to change masters, it is sometimes long before he will acknowledge the new one, or condescend to work for him with the same willingness as he did for his former lord; but if he once acknowledge him, he continues attached to him till death; and though naturally proud and high-spirited, in as far as relates to his master, these qualities (or rather failings) are kept so much in subordination, that he has not a will of his own.

My own renowned Hector[1] was the son and immediate successor of the faithful old Sirrah; and though not nearly so valuable a dog, he was a far more interesting one. He had three times more humour and whim; and though exceedingly docile, his bravest acts were mostly tinctured with a grain of stupidity, which showed his reasoning faculty to be laughably obtuse.

I shall mention a striking instance of it. I was once at the farm of Shorthope, in Ettrick-head, receiving some lambs that I had bought, and was going to take to market, with some more, the next day. Owing to some accidental delay, I did not get final delivery of the lambs till it was growing late; and being obliged to be at my own house that night, I was not a little dismayed lest I should scatter and lose my lambs, if darkness overtook me. Darkness did overtake me by the time I got half way, and no ordinary darkness for an August evening. The lambs having been weaned that day, and of the wild black-faced breed, became exceedingly unruly, and for a good while I lost hopes of mastering them. Hector managed the point, and we got them safe home; but both he and his master were alike sore forefoughten. It had become so dark that we were obliged to fold them with candles: and after closing them safely up, I went home with my father and the rest to supper. When Hector's supper was set down, behold he was wanting! and as I knew we had him at the fold, which was within call of the house, I went out and called and whistled on him for a good while; but he did not make his appearance. I was distressed about this; for, having to take away the lambs next morning, I knew I could not drive them a mile without my dog, if it had been to save me the whole drove.

The next morning, as soon as it was day, I arose, and inquired if Hector had come home. No; he had not been seen. I knew not what to do; but my father proposed that he would take out the lambs and herd them, and let them get some meat to fit them for the road; and that I should ride with all speed to Shorthope, to see if my dog had gone back there. Accordingly, we went together to the fold to turn out the lambs, and there was poor Hector sitting trembling in the very middle of the fold door, on the inside of the flake that closed it, with his eyes still steadfastly fixed on the lambs. He had been so hardly set with them after it grew dark that he durst not for his life leave them, although hungry, fatigued, and cold; for the night had turned out a deluge of rain. He had never so much as lain down, for only the small spot that he sat on was dry, and there had he kept watch the whole night. Almost any other collie would have discerned that the lambs were safe enough in the fold; but Hector had not been able to see through this. He even refused to take my word for it; for he durst not quit his watch, though he heard me calling both at night and morning.

Another peculiarity of his was, that he had a mortal antipathy to the family mouser, which was ingrained in his nature from his very pupphood; yet so perfectly absurd was he, that no impertinence on her side, and no baiting on, could ever induce him to lay his mouth on her, or injure her in the slightest degree. There was not a day, and scarcely an hour, passed over, that the family did not get some amusement with these two animals. Wherever he was within doors, his whole occupation was watching and pointing the cat from morning to night. When she flitted from one place to another, so did he in a moment; and then squatting down, he kept his point sedulously, till he was either called off or fell asleep.

He was an exceedingly poor taker of meat. He was always to press to it, and always lean; and often he would not taste it till we were obliged to bring in the cat. The malicious looks that he cast at her from under his eyebrows on such occasions, were exceedingly ludicrous, considering his utter inability of wronging her. Whenever he saw her, he drew near his bicker, and looked angry, but still he would not taste till she was brought to it; and then

[1] See the "Mountain Bard."

he cocked his tail, set up his birses, and began a-lapping furiously, in utter desperation. His good nature was so immoveable, that he would never refuse her a share of what he got; he even lapped close to the one side of the dish, and left her room—but mercy as he did ply!

It will appear strange to hear a dog's reasoning faculty mentioned, as it has been; but I have hardly ever seen a shepherd's dog do anything without perceiving his reasons for it. I have often amused myself in calculating what his motives were for such and such things, and I generally found them very cogent ones. But Hector had a droll stupidity about him, and took up forms and rules of his own, for which I could never perceive any motive that was not even further out of the way than the action itself. He had one uniform practice, and a very bad one it was, during the time of family worship—that just three or four seconds before the conclusion of the prayer, he started to his feet, and ran barking round the apartment like a crazed beast. My father was so much amused with this, that he would never suffer me to correct him for it, and I scarcely ever saw the old man rise from the prayer without his endeavouring to suppress a smile at the extravagance of Hector. None of us ever could find out how he knew that the prayer was near done, for my father was not formal in his prayers; but certes he did know—of that we had nightly evidence. There never was anything for which I was so puzzled to discover a reason as this; but, from accident, I did discover it, and, however ludicrous it may appear, I am certain I was correct. It was much in character with many of Hector's feats, and rather, I think, the most *outré* of any principle he ever acted on. As I said, his chief daily occupation was pointing the cat. Now, when he saw us all kneel down in a circle with our faces couched on our paws, in the same posture with himself, it struck his absurd head, that we were all engaged in pointing the cat. He lay on tenters all the time, but the acuteness of his ear enabling him, through time, to ascertain the very moment when we would all spring to our feet, he thought to himself, "I shall be first after her for you all!"

He inherited his dad's unfortunate ear for music, not perhaps in so extravagant a degree, but he ever took care to exhibit it on the most untimely and ill-judged occasions. Owing to some misunderstanding between the minister of the parish and the session clerk, the precenting in church devolved on my father, who was the senior elder. Now, my father could have sung several of the old church tunes middling well, in his own family circle; but it so happened that, when mounted in the desk, he never could command the starting notes of any but one (St. Paul's), which were always in undue readiness at the root of his tongue, to the exclusion of every other semibreve in the whole range of sacred melody. The minister gave out psalms four times in the course of every day's service, and consequently the congregation were treated with St. Paul's in the morning, at great length, twice in the course of the service, and then once again at the close—nothing but St. Paul's. And, it being of itself a monotonous tune, nothing could exceed the monotony that prevailed in the primitive church of Ettrick. Out of pure sympathy for my father alone, I was compelled to take the precentorship in hand; and, having plenty of tunes, for a good while I came on as well as could be expected, as men say of their wives. But, unfortunately for me, Hector found out that I attended church every Sunday, and though I had him always closed up carefully at home, he rarely failed to make his appearance in church at some time of the day. Whenever I saw him, a tremour came over my spirits; for I well knew what the issue would be. The moment he heard my voice strike up the psalm, "with might and majesty," then did he fall in with such overpowering vehemence, that he and I seldom got any to join in the music but our two selves. The shepherds hid their heads, and laid them down on the backs of the seats wrapped in their plaids, and the lasses looked down to the ground and laughed till their faces grew red. I disdained to stick the tune, and therefore was obliged to carry on in spite of the obstreperous accompaniment; but I was, time after time, so completely put out of all countenance by the brute, that I was obliged to give up my office in disgust, and leave the parish once more to their old friend, St. Paul.

Hector was quite incapable of performing the same feats among sheep that his father did; but, as far as his judgment served him, he was a docile and obliging creature. He had one singular quality, of keeping true to the charge to which he was set. If we had been shearing or sorting sheep in any way, when a division was turned out, and Hector got the word to attend to them, he would have done it pleasantly for a whole day, without the least symptom of weariness. No noise or hurry about the fold, which brings every other dog from his business, had the least effect on Hector, save that it made him a little troublesome on his own charge, and set him a-running round and round them, turning them in at corners, out of a sort of impatience to be employed as well as his baying neighbours at the fold. Whenever old Sirrah found himself hard set, in commanding wild sheep on steep ground, where they are worst to manage, he never failed, without any hint to the purpose, to throw himself wide in below them, and lay their faces to the hill, by which means he got the command of them in a minute. I never could make Hector comprehend this advantage, with all my art, although his father found it out entirely of himself. The former would turn or wear sheep no other way, but on the hill above them; and though very good at it, he gave both them and himself double the trouble and fatigue.

It cannot be supposed that he could understand all that was passing in the little family circle, but he certainly comprehended a good part of it. In particular, it was very easy to discover that he rarely missed anything that was said about himself, the sheep, the cat, or of a hunt. When aught of that nature came to be discussed, Hector's attention and impatience soon became manifest. There was one winter evening, I said to my mother that I was going to Bowerhope for a fortnight, for that I had more conveniency for writing with Alexander Laidlaw than at home; and I added, "But I will not take Hector with me, for he is constantly quarrelling with the rest of the dogs, singing music, or breeding some uproar."—"Na, na," quoth she, "leave Hector with me; I like aye best to have him at hame, poor fallow."

These were all the words that passed. The next morning the waters were in a great flood, and I did not go away till after breakfast; but when the time came for tying up Hector, he was wanting.—"The deuce's in that beast," said I; "I will wager that he heard what we were saying yesternight, and has gone off for Bowerhope as soon as the door was opened this morning."

"If that should really be the case, I'll think the beast no canny," said my mother.

The Yarrow was so large as to be quite impassable, so that I had to go up by St. Mary's Loch, and go across by the boat; and, on drawing near to Bowerhope, I soon perceived that matters had gone precisely as I suspected. Large as the Yarrow was, and it appeared impassable by any living creature, Hector had made his escape early in the morning, had swam the river, and was sitting, "like a drookit hen," on a knoll at the east end of the house, awaiting my arrival with much impatience. I had a great attachment to this animal, who, with a good deal of absurdity, joined all the amiable qualities of his species. He was rather of a small size, very rough and shagged, and not far from the colour of a fox.

His son, Lion, was the very picture of his dad, had a good deal more sagacity, but also more selfishness. A history of the one, however, would only be an epitome of that of the other. Mr. William Nicholson took a fine likeness of this latter one, which that gentleman still possesses. He could not get him to sit for his picture in such a position as he wanted, till he exhibited a singularly fine picture of his, of a small dog, on the opposite side of the room. Lion took it for a real animal, and, disliking its fierce and important look exceedingly, he immediately set up his ears and his shaggy birses, and fixing a stern eye on the picture, in manifest wrath, he would then sit for a whole day, and point his eye at it, without moving away or altering his position.

It is a curious fact, in the history of these animals, that the most useless of the breed have often the greatest degree of sagacity in trifling and useless matters. An exceedingly good sheep-dog attends to nothing else but that particular branch of business to which he is bred. His whole capacity is exerted and exhausted on it, and he is of little avail in miscellaneous matters; whereas, a very indifferent cur, bred about the house, and accustomed to assist in everything, will often put the more noble breed to disgrace in these paltry services. If one calls out, for instance, that the cows are in the corn, or the hens in the garden, the house-collie needs no other hint, but runs and turns them out. The shepherd's dog knows not what is astir; and, if he is called out in a hurry for such work, all that he will do is to break to the hill, and rear himself up on end, to see if no sheep are running away. A bred sheep-dog, if coming ravening from the hills, and getting into a milk-house, would most likely think of nothing else than filling his belly with the cream. Not so his initiated brother. He is bred at home to a more civilized behaviour. I have known such lie night and day, among from ten to twenty pails full of milk, and never once break the cream of one of them with the tip of his tongue, nor would he suffer cat, rat, or any other creature, to touch it. This latter sort, too, are far more acute at taking up what is said in a family. There was a farmer of this country, a Mr. Alexander Cuninghame, who had a bitch that, for the space of three or four years, in the latter part of her life, met him always at the boundary of his farm, about a mile and a half from his house, on his way home. If he was half a day away, a week, or a fortnight, it was all the same; she met him at that spot, and there never was an instance known of her going to wait his arrival there on a wrong day. If this was a fact, which I have heard averred by people who lived in the house at that time, she could only know of his coming home by hearing it mentioned in the family. The same animal would have gone and brought the cows from the hill when it grew dark, without any bidding, yet she was a very indifferent sheep-dog.

The anecdotes of these animals are all so much alike, that were I but to relate the thousandth part of those I have heard, they would often look very much like repetitions. I shall therefore only mention one or two of the most singular, which I know to be well authenticated.

There was a shepherd lad near Langholm, whose name was Scott, who possessed a bitch, famed over all the West Border for her singular tractability. He could have sent her home with one sheep, two sheep, or any given number, from any of the neighbouring farms; and in the lambing season, it was his uniform practice to send her home with the kebbed ewes just as he got them. I must let the town reader understand this. A kebbed ewe is one whose lamb dies. As soon as such is found, she is immediately brought home by the shepherd, and another lamb put to her; and this lad, on going his rounds on the hill, whenever he found a kebbed ewe,

immediately gave her in charge to his bitch to take home, which saved him from coming back that way again, and going over the same ground he had looked before. She always took them carefully home, and put them into a fold which was close by the house, keeping watch over them till she was seen by some one of the family; and then that moment she decamped, and hasted back to her master, who sometimes sent her three times home in one morning, with different charges. It was the custom of the farmer to watch her, and take the sheep in charge from her; but this required a good deal of caution; for as soon as she perceived that she was seen, whether the sheep were put into the fold or not, she conceived her charge at an end, and no flattery could induce her to stay and assist in folding them. There was a display of accuracy and attention in this, that I cannot say I have ever seen equalled.

The late Mr. Steel, flesher in Peebles, had a bitch that was fully equal to the one mentioned above, and that in the very same qualification too. Her feats in taking home sheep from the neighbouring farms into the flesh-market at Peebles by herself, form innumerable anecdotes in that vicinity, all similar to one another. But there is one instance related of her, that combines so much sagacity with natural affection, that I do not think the history of the animal creation furnishes such another.

Mr. Steel had such an implicit dependence on the attention of this animal to his orders, that whenever he put a lot of sheep before her, he took a pride in leaving it to herself, and either remained to take a glass with the farmer of whom he had made the purchase, or took another road, to look after bargains or other business. But one time he chanced to commit a drove to her charge at a place called Willenslee, without attending to her condition, as he ought to have done. This farm is five miles from Peebles, over wild hills, and there is no regularly defined path to it. Whether Mr. Steel remained behind, or took another road, I know not; but on coming home late in the evening, he was astonished at hearing that his faithful animal had never made her appearance with the drove. He and his son, or servant, instantly prepared to set out by different paths in search of her; but on their going out to the street, there was she coming with the drove, no one missing; and, marvellous to relate, she was carrying a young pup in her mouth! She had been taken in travail on the hills; and how the poor beast had contrived to manage her drove in her state of suffering, is beyond human calculation; for her road lay through sheep the whole way. Her master's heart smote him when he saw what she had suffered and effected; but she was nothing daunted; and having deposited her young one in a place of safety, she again set out full speed to the hills, and brought another, and another, till she brought her whole litter, one by one; but the last one was dead.

I give this as I have heard it related by the country people; for though I knew Mr. Walter Steel well enough, I cannot say I ever heard it from his own mouth. I never entertained any doubt, however, of the truth of the relation, and certainly it is worthy of being preserved, for the credit of that most docile and affectionate of all animals—the shepherd's dog.

The stories related of the dogs of sheep-stealers are fairly beyond all credibility. I cannot attach credit to those, without believing the animals to have been devils incarnate, come to the earth for the destruction of both the souls and bodies of men. I cannot mention names, for the sake of families that still remain in the country; but there have been sundry men executed, who belonged to this quarter of the realm, for that heinous crime, in my own time; and others have absconded, just in time to save their necks. There was not one of these to whom I allude who did not acknowledge his dog to be the greatest offender. One young man, in particular, who was, I believe, overtaken by justice for his first offence, stated, that after he had folded the sheep by moon-light, and selected his number from the flock of a former master, he took them out, and set away with them towards Edinburgh. But before he had got them quite off the farm, his conscience smote him, as he said (but more likely a dread of that which soon followed), and he quitted the sheep, letting them go again to the hill. He called his dog off them; and mounting his pony, rode away. At that time he said his dog was capering and playing around him, as if glad of having got free of a troublesome business; and he regarded him no more, till, after having rode about three miles, he thought again and again that he heard something coming up behind him. Halting, at length, to ascertain what it was, in a few minutes his dog came up with the stolen drove, driving them at a furious rate to keep pace with his master. The sheep were all smoking, and hanging out their tongues, and their driver was fully as warm as they. The young man was now exceedingly troubled; for the sheep having been brought so far from home, he dreaded there would be a pursuit, and he could not get them home again before day. Resolving, at all events, to keep his hands clear of them, he corrected his dog in great wrath, left the sheep once more, and taking his dog with him, rode off a second time. He had not ridden above a mile, till he perceived that his dog had again given him the slip; and suspecting for what purpose, he was terribly alarmed as well as chagrined; for the daylight approached, and he durst not make a noise calling on his dog, for fear of alarming the neighbourhood, in a place where both he and his dog were known. He resolved therefore to abandon the animal to himself, and take a road across the country which he was sure his dog did not know, and could not follow. He took that road; but being on horseback, he could

not get across the inclosed fields. He at length came to a gate, which he closed behind him, and went about half a mile farther, by a zigzag course, to a farm-house where both his sister and sweetheart lived; and at that place he remained until after breakfast-time. The people of this house were all examined on the trial, and no one had either seen sheep, or heard them mentioned, save one man, who came up to the young man as he was standing at the stable-door, and told him that his dog had the sheep safe enough down at the Crooked Yett, and he need not hurry himself. He answered, that the sheep were not his—they were young Mr. Thomson's, who had left them to his charge; and he was in search of a man to drive them, which made him come off his road.

After this discovery, it was impossible for the poor fellow to get quit of them; so he went down and took possession of the stolen property once more, carried them on, and disposed of them; and, finally, the transaction cost him his life. The dog, for the last four or five miles that he had brought the sheep, could have no other guide to the road his master had gone, but the smell of his pony's feet.

It is also well known that there was a notorious sheep-stealer in the county of Mid-Lothian, who, had it not been for the skins and sheep's-heads, would never have been condemned, as he could, with the greatest ease, have proved an *alibi* every time on which there were suspicions cherished against him. He always went by one road, calling on his acquaintances, and taking care to appear to every body by whom he was known; while his dog went by another with the stolen sheep; and then on the two felons meeting again, they had nothing more ado than turn the sheep into an associate's inclosure, in whose house the dog was well fed and entertained, and would have soon taken all the fat sheep on the Lothian Edges to that house. This was likewise a female, a jet-black one, with a deep coat of soft hair, but smooth-headed, and very strong and handsome in her make. On the disappearance of her master, she lay about the hills and the places he had frequented; but never attempted to steal a drove by herself, nor yet anything for her own hand. She was kept a while by a relation of her master's; but never acting heartily in his service, soon came to an untimely end. Of this there is little doubt, although some spread the report that one evening, after uttering two or three loud howls, she had vanished.

EMIGRATION.

I KNOW of nothing in the world so distressing as the last sight of a fine industrious independent peasantry taking the last look of their native country, never to behold it more. I have witnessed several of these scenes now, and I wish I may never witness another; for each of them has made tears burst every now and then from my eyes for days and nights, and all the while in that mood of mind that I could think about nothing else. I saw the children all in high spirits, playing together and amusing themselves with trifles, and I wondered if those dear innocents, in after life, would remember anything at all of the land of their nativity. They felt no regret, for they knew that they had no home but where their parents were, no staff or stay but on them. They were beside them, and attending to all their little wants, and they were happy. How different the aspect of the parents! They looked backward toward their native mountains and glades with the most rueful expression of countenance. These looks never can be effaced from my heart; and I noted always, that the older the men were, their looks were the more regretful and desolate. They thought, without doubt, of the tombs of their parents and friends whose heads they had laid in an honoured grave, and that, after a few years of the toil and weariness collateral with old age, they were going to lay down their bones in a new world, a far-distant clime, never to mix their ashes with those that were dearest to them. Alas! the days are gone that I have seen! It is long since emigration from the Highlands commenced; for, when clanship was abolished, as far as government edicts could abolish it, the poor Highlanders were obliged to emigrate. But never till now did the brave and intelligent Borderers rush from their native country, all with symptoms of reckless despair. It is most deplorable. The whole of our most valuable peasantry and operative manufacturers are leaving us. All who have made a little money to freight them over the Atlantic, and procure them a settlement in America, Van Diemen's Land, or New South Wales, are hurrying from us as from a place infected with the plague. Every day the desire to emigrate increases, both in amount and intensity: in some parts of the country the movement is taking place to an immense extent. In the industrious village of Galashiels, fifty-two are

already booked for transportation. In the town of Hawick, and its subordinate villages, are double that number. My own brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces, are all going away; and if I were not the very individual that I am, I should be the first to depart. But my name is now so much identified with Scotland and Ettrick Forest, that though I must die as I have lived, I cannot leave them.

But the little affecting story I set out with the purpose of telling is not begun yet. I went the other year to see some particular friends on board the gallant ship, *Helen Douglas*, for the British settlements of America. Among the rest was Adam Haliday, a small farmer, who had lost his farm, and whom I had known intimately in my young days. He had a wife, and, I think, nine sons and daughters; but his funds being short, he was obliged to leave his two eldest sons behind, until they themselves could procure the means of following him. An old pedlar, whom I think they named Simon Ainsley, was there distributing little religious tracts among the emigrants gratis, and perhaps trying to sell some of his cheap wares. The captain and he and Mr. Nicholson, the owner of the vessel, myself, and some others, were standing around the father and sons, when the following interesting dialogue took place:—

"Now, Aidie, my man, ye're to behave yoursel, and no be like a woman and greet. I canna bide to see the tears comin' papplin' ower thae manly young cheeks; for though you an' Jamie wad hae been my riches, my strength, an' shield in America, in helpin' me to clear my farm, it is out o' my power to take ye wi' me just now. Therefore, be good lads, an' mind the thing that's good. Read your Bibles, tell aye the truth, an' be obedient to your masters; an' the next year, or the next again, you will be able to join your mother and the bairns an' me, an' we'll a' work thegither to ane anither's hands."

"I dinna want to gang, father," said Adam, "until I can bring something wi' me to help you. I ken weel how ye are circumstanced, an' how ye hae been screwed at hame. But if there's siller to be made in Scotland in an honest way, Jamie an' me will join you in a year or twa wi' something that will do ye good."

By this time poor little Jamie's heart was like to burst with crying. He was a fine boy, about fourteen. His father went to comfort him, but he made matters only the worse. "Hout, Jamie, dinna greet that gate, man, for a thing that canna be helpit," said he. "Ye ken how weel I wad hae likit to hae had ye wi' me, for the leavin' ye is takin' the pith out o' my arm. But it's out o' my power to take ye just now; for, as it is, afore I win to the settlement, I'll no hae a siller sixpence. But ye're young, an' healthy, an' stout, an' gin ye be a good lad, wi' the blessing o' God, ye'll soon be able to join your auld father an' mother, an' help them."

"But aince friends are partit, an' the half o' the globe atween them, there's but a sma' chance that they ever meet again," said poor James, with the most disconsolate look. "I wad hae likit to hae gane wi' ye, an' helpit ye, an' wrought wi' ye, an' leev'd an' dee'd wi' ye. It's an awfu' thing to be left in a country where ane has nae hame to gang to, whatever befa' him."

The old man burst into tears. He saw the prospect of helpless desolation, that preyed on his boy's heart, in the event of his being laid on a bed of sickness; but he had no resource. The boat came to the quay, in which they were about to step; but word came with her that the vessel could not sail before high tide to-morrow; so the family got one other night to spend together, at which they seemed excessively happy, though lodged in a hay loft.

Having resolved to sail with the *Helen Douglas* as far as the Point of Cumberland, I attended the next day at the quay, where a great number of people were assembled to take farewell of their friends. There were four boats lying ready to take the emigrants on board. The two brothers embraced their parents and sisters, and were just parting rather decently, when the captain, stepping out of a handsome boat, said to Haliday, "Sir, your two sons are entered as passengers with me, so you need not be in such a hurry in taking farewell of them."

"Entered as passengers!" said Haliday; "why, the poor fellows hae na left themsels a boddle in helpin' to fit out their mother and me; how can they enter themsels as passengers?"

"They are entered, however," said the captain, "and both their fare and board paid to Montreal, from which place you can easily reach your destination; but if any more is required, I am authorized to advance that likewise."

"An' wha is the generous friend that has done this?" cried Haliday, in raptures, the tears streaming from his eyes. "He has strengthened my arms, and encouraged my heart, and rendered me an independent man—at aince, tell me wha is the kind good man?—was it Mr. Hogg?"

The captain shook his head. "I am debarred from telling you, Mr. Haliday," said he; "let it suffice that the young men are franked to Montreal. Here are both their tickets, and there are their names registered as *paid*."

"I winna set my fit aff the coast o' Scotland, sir," said Haliday, "until I ken wha has done this generous deed. If he should never be paid mair, he can be nae the waur o' an auld man's prayers night and morning; no, I winna set a fit into the boat—I winna leave the shore o' auld Scotland till I ken wha my benefactor is. Can I gang awa without kenning wha the friend is that has rendered me the greatest service ever conferred on me sin' I was born? Na, na! I canna, captain; sae ye may just as weel tell me at aince."

"Then, since I must tell you, I must," said the

captain; "it was no other than that old packman with the ragged coat."

"God bless him! God bless him!" fell, I think, from every tongue that was present. The mother of the young men was first at the old pedlar, and clapping her hands about his neck, she kissed him again and again, even maugre some resistance. Old Haliday ran and took the pedlar by both hands, and in an ecstasy, mixed with tears and convulsive laughter, said, "Now, honest man, tell me your direction, for the first money that I can either win, or beg, or borrow, shall be sent to reimburse you for this. There was never sic a benefit conferred on a poor father an' mother sin' the world stood up. An' ye sall hae your money, good auld Christian—ye sall hae your siller."

"Ay, that he sall!" exclaimed both of the young lads.

"Na, na, Aidie Haliday, say nae mair about the payment just now," said the pedlar; "d'ye ken, man, I had sundra very strong motives for this: in the first place, I saw that you *could not* do without the lads; and mair than that, I am coming up amang my countrymen about New Dumfries an' Loch Eiry, to vend my wares for a year or twa, an' I wantit to hae ae house at ony rate where I wad be sure o' a night's quarters. I'll ca' for my siller, Aidie, an' I'm sure to get it, or value for't; an' if I dinna ca' for't, be sure never to send it. It wad be lost by the way, for there's never ony siller reaches this frae America."

I never envied any man's feelings more than I did the old pedlar's that day, when all the grateful family were hanging around him, and every eye turned on him with admiration.

THE TWO HIGHLANDERS.

On the banks of the Albany River, which falls into Hudson's Bay, there is, amongst others, a small colony settled, which is mostly made up of emigrants from the Highlands of Scotland. Though the soil of the valleys contiguous to the river is exceedingly rich and fertile, yet the winter being so long and severe, these people do not labour too incessantly in agriculture, but depend for the most part upon their skill in hunting and fishing for their subsistence—there being commonly abundance of both game and fish.

Two young kinsmen, both Macdonalds, went out one day into these boundless woods to hunt, each of them armed with a well-charged gun in his hand, and a skein-dhu, or Highland dirk by his side. They shaped their course towards a small stream, which descends from the mountains to the north-west of the river, on the banks of which they knew there were still a few wild swine remaining; and of all other creatures they wished most to meet with one of them, little doubting but that they would overcome even a pair of them, if chance would direct them to their lurking places, though they were reported to be so remarkable both for their strength and ferocity. They were not at all successful, having neglected the common game in searching for these animals; and a little before sun-set they returned homeward, without having shot anything save one wild turkey. But when they least expected it, to their infinite joy they discovered a deep pit or cavern, which contained a large litter of fine half-grown pigs, and none of the old ones with them. This was a prize indeed; so, without losing a moment, Donald said to the other, "Mack, you pe te littlest man—creep you in and durk te little sows, and I'll pe keeping vatch at te door." Mack complied without hesitation, gave his gun to Donald, unsheathed his skein-dhu, and crept into the cave head foremost; but after he was all out of sight, save the brogues, he stopped short, and called back, "But Lord, Tonald, pe shoor to keep out te auld ones."—"Ton't you pe fearing tat, man," said Donald.

The cave was deep, but there was abundance of room in the further end, where Mack, with his sharp skein-dhu, now commenced the work of death. He was scarcely well begun, when Donald perceived a monstrous wild boar advancing upon him, roaring and grinding his tusks, while the fire of rage gleamed from his eyes. Donald said not a word for fear of alarming his friend; besides, the savage was so hard upon him ere he was aware, that he scarcely had time for anything: so setting himself firm, and cocking his gun, he took aim; but that the shot might prove the more certain death, he suffered the boar to come within a few paces of him before he ventured to fire: he at last drew the fatal trigger, expecting to blow out his eyes, brains and all. Merciful heaven!—the gun missed fire, or flashed in the pan, I am not sure which. There was no time to lose—Donald dashed the piece in the animal's face, turned his back, and fled with precipitation. The boar pursued him only for a short space, for having heard the cries of his suffering young ones as he passed the mouth of the den, he hasted back to their rescue.

Most men would have given all up for lost. It was not so with Donald—Mack's life was at stake. As soon as he observed the monster return from pursuing him, Donald faced about, and pursued him in turn; but having, before this, from the horror of being all torn to pieces, run rather too far without looking back, the boar had by that oversight got considerably ahead of him. Donald strained every nerve—uttered some piercing cries—and even for all his haste did not forget to implore assistance from heaven. His prayer was short but pithy—"O Lord, puir Mack!—puir Mack!" said Donald, in a loud voice, while the tears gushed from his eyes. In spite of all his efforts, the enraged animal reached the mouth of the den before him, and entered! It was, however, too narrow for him to walk in on all-four; he was obliged to drag himself in as Mack had done before, and, of course, his hind feet lost their hold of the ground. At this important crisis Donald overtook him—laid hold of his large long tail—wrapped it round both his hands—set his feet to the bank, and held back in the utmost desperation.

Mack, who was all unconscious of what was going on above ground, wondered how he came to be involved in utter darkness in a moment. He waited a little while, thinking that Donald was only playing a trick upon him, but the most profound obscurity still continuing, he at length bawled out, "Tonald, man, Tonald—phat is it that'll ay pe stoping te light?" Donald was too much engaged, and too breathless, to think of making any reply to Mack's impertinent question, till the latter having waited in vain a considerable time for an answer, repeated it in a louder cry. Donald's famous laconic answer, which perhaps never was, nor ever will be equalled, has often been heard of—"Tonald, man, Tonald—I say phat is it that'll aye pe stoping te light?" bellowed Mack—"Should te tail preak, you'll fin' tat," said Donald.

Donald continued the struggle, and soon began to entertain hopes of ultimate success. When the boar pulled to get in, Donald held back; and when he struggled to get back again, Donald set his shoulder to his large buttocks, and pushed him in; and in this position he kept him, until he got an opportunity of giving him some deadly stabs with his skein-dhu behind the short rib, which soon terminated his existence.

Our two young friends by this adventure realized a valuable prize, and secured so much excellent food, that it took them several days to get it conveyed home. During the long winter nights, while the family were regaling themselves on the hams of the great wild boar, often was the above tale related, and as often applauded and laughed at.

THE WATCHMAKER.

David Deybugh was the head watchmaker in the old burgh of Caverton, and a very good watchmaker he was; at least I never knew one who could better make a charge, and draw out a neat and specious bill. Every watch that went to him to clean required a new mainspring at least, and often new jewels for pivots to the fly-wheel, or a new chain or hairspring; or, if the owner had a very simple look, his watch needed all these together.

But experience teacheth fools wisdom. David, for all his good workmanship and handsome charges, never had one sixpence to polish another; so, after due consideration, he said to himself one day, "This will never do. I must have a wife. There is no respectability to be obtained in this world without a wife. No riches, no comfort, without a wife. I'll have one, if there is one to be had in this town for love or money. Money! God bless the mark! I'll not have a lady. No, no; I'll not have a lady; I never could find out what these creatures called ladies were made for. It could not be for mothers of families, for not one of them can nurse a child; and it is a queer thing if our Maker made so many handsome elegant creatures just to strum upon a piano, eat fine meat, and wear braw claes. No, no! Before I married a lady, I would rather marry a tinkler. I'll marry Peg Ketchen. She can put a hand to everything; and if anybody can lay by something for a sore foot or a rainy day, I think Peg's that woman. I'll ask Peg. If she refuse, I have no less than I have."

David went that very evening and opened his mind to Peg Ketchen. "Peg, I have taken it into my head to have a wife to keep me decent, sober, and respectable, and I'm going to make you the first offer."

"Thank you, sir; I'm singularly obliged to you. Only you may save yourself the trouble of making such an offer to me; for of all characters, a confirmed drunkard is the one that I dread most. You are a Sabbath-breaker; I know that. You are a profane swearer; I know that also. From these I think I

could wean you; but a habitual drunkard it is out of the power of woman or man to reclaim. Oh, I would not be buckled to such a man for the world! As lang as Will Dunlop, or Jamie Inglis, or John Cheap needed a dram, your last penny would go for it."

"It is ower true you say, Peg, my bonny woman. But ye ken I can work weel, an' charge fully as weel; an' gin ye were to take the management o' the *proceeds*, as the writers ca't, I think things wad do better. Therefore, take a walk into the country with me on Sunday."

"Did ever ony leevin' hear the like o' that! preserve us a' to do weel and right; the man's a heathen, an', I declare, just rinnin' to the deil wi' his een open. Wad ye hae me to profane the Sabbath-day, gaun rakin' athwart the country wi' a chap like you? Heigh-wow! I wad be come to a low mete then! What wad the auld wives be sayin' to the lads an' I were to do that? I can tell you what they wad be sayin', 'What think ye o' your bonny Peg Ketchen now! When she should hae been at the kirk, like a decent lass, serving her Maker, she has been awa' flirtin' the haill Sunday wi' a drunken profligate, wha bilkit his auld uncle, an' sang himsel hame frae London wi' a tied up leg, like a broken sailor.' Ha, ha, Davie! I ken ye, lad."

"Now, you are rather too hard on me, Peg; I am proffering you the greatest honour I have in my power to bestow."

"The greatest *dis*honour, you mean."

"You know I am as good a tradesman as is in Scotland."

"The mair's the pity! And wha's the best drinker i' Scotland? For it will lie atween you an' John Henderson, and Will Dunlop; for, as for Tam Stalker, he's no aince to be compared wi' you."

"But, Peg, my woman—my dear bonny woman—hear me speak, will you!"

"No, no, David, I winna hear you speak; sae dinna try to lead me into a scrape, for I tell you again, as I tauld ye already, that of a' characters i' the warld a confirmed drunkard is the most dangerous that a virtuous young woman can be connectit wi'. Depend on it, the heat o' your throat will soon burn the claes aff your back; an' how soon wad it burn them aff mine too!—for ye ken, a woman's claes are muckle easier brunt than a man's. Sae, gang your ways to the change-house, an' tak a dram wi' Will Dunlop; ye'll be a great deal the better o't. An', hear ye, dinna come ony mair to deave me wi' your love, and your offers o' marriage; for, there's my hand, I sall never court or marry wi' you. I hae mair respect for mysel than that comes to."

Was not Peg a sensible girl? I think she was. I still think she must naturally have been a shrewd girl; but no living can calculate what a woman will do when a man comes in question. There is a feeling of dependence and subordination about their guileless hearts, in reference to the other sex, that can be wound up to anything, either evil or good. Peg was obliged to marry David, after all her virtuous resolutions. The very night of the wedding he got drunk; and poor Peg, seeing what she had brought herself to, looked in his face with the most pitiful expression, while his drunken cronies made game of him, and were endless in their jests on "Benedict the married man." Peg saw the scrape she had brought herself into, but retreat was impracticable: so she resolved to submit to her fate with patience and resignation, and to make the most of a bad bargain that she could.

And a bad bargain she has had of it, poor woman, apparently having lost all heart several years ago, and submitted, along with three children, to pine out life in want and wretchedness. The wedding booze increased David's thirst so materially, that it did not subside, night or day, for nearly a fortnight, until a kind remonstrance, mixed with many tears from his young wife, made him resolve to turn over a new leaf. So away David went into the country, and cleaned all the people's clocks early in the morning, before the owners rose, for fear of making confusion or disturbance in the house afterwards. David was very attentive and obliging that way. Of course the clocks got nothing more than a little oil on the principal wheels; but the charge was always fair and reasonable, seldom exceeding five shillings. Then all the bells in each house required new cranks and new wires. They needed neither, but only a little oil and scrubbing up; but these were a source of considerable emolument. Then he gathered in all the watches of the country which were not going well, cleaned them all, and put in a great many nominal mainsprings, and really would have made a great deal of money, had it not been for the petty change-houses, not one of which he could go by; and when he met with a drouthy crony like Captain Palmer, neither of them would rise while they had a sixpence between them.

But the parish minister of the old burgh of Caverton, though accounted a very parsimonious gentleman himself, had a sincere regard for the welfare of his flock, temporal as well as spiritual; and in his annual visit he charged every one of them, that when David did any work for them, they were to pay the wife, and not him. The greater part of them acquiesced; but Wattie Henderson refused, and said, "Oh, poor soul, ye dinna ken what he has to thole! Ye ken about his drinkin', but ye ken little thing about his drouth."

The shifts that David was now put to for whisky were often very degrading, but still rather amusing. One day he and Dunlop went into Mr. Mercer's inn. David saying, "I must try to get credit for a Hawick gill or two here to-day, else we'll both perish." They went in and called for the whisky. Mercer asked David if he had the money to pay for it? David confessed that he had not, but said Mr. Elliot of Dodhope was owing him 3*s.* 6*d.*, and as he

was in town that day, he would give him an order on him, if he was afraid of the money coming through his hands. Mr. Mercer said he would never desire a better creditor than Gideon, and gave them their three gills of whisky; but on going and presenting his order to Mr. Elliot, he found that he had never in his life been owing David anything which he had not paid before he left the house.

Another time he met the clergyman, and said to him, "You have been a great deal of money out of my pouch, sir, wi' your grand moral advices. I think you owe me one-and-sixpence about yon bells —would it be convenient to pay me to-day? I have very much need of it."

"And what are you going to do with it, David? I wish I were owing you ten times the sum; I should know whom to pay it to, for you have a wife and family that are worth looking after; but if you tell me the sterling truth of your necessity, perhaps I may pay you."

"Why, the truth is, sir—look yonder: yonder is Will Dunlop and Jamie Inglis, standing wi' their backs against the wa', very drouthy like. I wad like to gie them something, poor chiels, to drink."

"Now, David, as I am convinced you have told me the sterling truth, and as there is no virtue I value higher, there is your eighteen-pence, although I shall tax myself with the payment of it a second time to Peg."

"God bless you, sir! God bless you! and may you never want a glass of whisky when you are longing as much for it as I am."

Another day he came up with Will Dunlop, and said, "O man, what hae ye on ye? for I'm just spitting sixpences."

"I have just eighteen-pence," said Dunlop, "which I got from my wife to buy a shoulder of mutton for our dinner; and as it is of her own winning, I dare not part with it, for then, you know, the family would want their dinner."

"It is a hard case any way," said David; "but I think the hardest side of it is, for two men, dying of thirst, to lose that eighteen-pence. Give it to me, and I'll try to make a shift."

Dunlop gave it him, and David went away to Wattie Henderson, an honest, good-natured, simple man, and said that his wife had sent him "for a shoulder of mutton for their dinner, and she has limited me to a sum, you see (showing him the money). If you have a shoulder that suits the price, I must have it."

"We can easily manage that, David," said he; "for see, here is a good cleaver; I can either add or diminish." He cut off a shoulder. "It is too heavy for the money, David; it comes to two-and-fourpence."

"I wad like to hae the shoulder keepit hale, sir, as I suspect my sister is to dine with us to day. Will you just allow me to carry the mutton over to the foot of the wynd, and see if Peg be pleased to advance the rest of the price?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Henderson; "I can trust your wife with anything."

David set straight off with the shoulder of mutton to Mrs. Dunlop, who declared that she had never got such a good bargain in the flesh-market before; and the two friends enjoyed their three gills of whisky exceedingly. Mr. Henderson, wondering that neither the mutton nor the money was returned, sent over a servant to inquire about the matter. Poor Peg had neither ordered nor received the shoulder of mutton; and all that she and her three children had to dine upon was six potatoes.

"Poor fellow," said Wattie, "if I had kend he had been sae dry, I wad hae wat his whistle to him without ony cheatery."

At length there came one very warm September, and the thirst that some men suffered was not to be borne. David felt that in a short time his body would actually break into chinks with sheer drought, and that some shift was positively required to keep body and soul together. Luckily, at that very time a Colonel Maxwell came to the house of John Fairgrieve, an honest, decent man, who had made a good deal of money by care and parsimony, and lived within two or three miles of Caverton. The colonel came with his dog, his double-barrelled gun, and livery servant, and bargained with John, at a prodigiously high board, for himself and servant. He said, as his liberty of shooting lay all around there, he did not care how much board he paid for a few weeks, only John was to be sure to get him the best in the country, both to eat and drink. He did so—laying in wine and spirits, beef and mutton; and the colonel and his servant lived at heck and manger, the one boozing away in the room, and the other in the kitchen, in both of which every one who entered was treated liberally. In the forenoons the colonel thundered among the partridges; but he never killed any, as he was generally drunk from morning to night, and from night to morning.

At length, John's daughter, Joan, a comely and sensible girl, began rather to smell a rat; and she says to her father one day, "Father, dinna ye think this grand cornel o' your's is hardly sickan a polished gentlemanly man as ane wad expect o' ane o' his rank?"

"I dinna ken, Joan; the man's weel eneuch if he wadna swear sae whiles, whilk I like unco ill. But there's ae thing that's ayont my comprehension: I wish he may be cannie; for dinna ye hear that our cock begins to craw every night about midnight, an' our hens to cackle as gin they war a' layin' eggs thegither, an' feint an egg's amang them a'?"

Joan could not repress a laugh; so she turned her back, and took a hearty one, saying, when she recovered her breath, "I think baith master an' man are very uncivil and worthless chaps."

"If either the ane or the ither hae been unceevil

to you, my woman, just tell me sae. Say but the word, an' I'll——"

"Na, na, father; dinna get intil a passion for naething. I'll take care o' *mysel* if ye can but take care o' *yoursel*. It is that I'm put till't about. Dinna ye think that for a' your outlay ye're unco lang o' fingerin' ony o' their siller?"

John gave a hitch up with his shoulder, as if something had been biting it, rubbed his elbow, and then said, "The siller will answer us as weel when it comes a' in a slump thegither; for then, ye ken, we can pop it into the bank; whereas, if it were coming in every day, or even every week, we might be mootering it away, spending it on this thing an' the ither thing."

"Yes, father; but, consider, if ye shoudna get it ava. Is nae the cornel's chaise an' horses standin' ower at the Blue Bell?"

"Ay, that they are, an' at ten shillings a-day, too. Gin the cornel warna a very rich man, could he afford to pay that sae lang, think ye?"

"Weel, father, take ye my advice. Gang away ower to Mr. Mather, o' the Bell, an' just see what the carriage an' horses are like; for I wadna wonder if ye had to arreest them yet for your expenses. Mr. Mather's a gayan auld-farrant chap, and, it is said, kens every man's character the first time he hears him speak. He'll tell you at aince what kind o' man your grand cornel is. And by a' means, father, tak a good look o' the carriage an' the horses, that ye may ken them again, like."

John knew that his daughter Joan was a shrewd sensible lassie; so, without more expostulation, he put on his Sunday clothes, went away to the old burgh of Caverton, and called on Mr. Mather. No! there were no carriage nor horses there belonging to a Colonel Maxwell, nor ever had been. This was rather astounding news to John; but what astounded him more was a twinkling blink from the wick of Mr. Mather's wicked black eye, and an ominous shake of his head. "Pray tell me this, John," said Mr. Mather, "does this grand colonel of yours ever crow like a cock, or cackle like a laying hen?"

John's jaws fell down. "It's verra extrordner how ye should hae chanced to speer that question at me, sir," said he; "for the truth is, that, sin' ever that man came to our house, our cock has begun a crawin' at midnight, an' a' our hens a-cackling, as the hale o' them had been layin' eggs, an' yet no an egg amang them a'."

"Ah, John, ye may drink to your expenses and board wages, then; for I heard of a certain gentleman being amissing out of this town for a while past; and I likewise heard that he had borrowed a hunting-jacket, a dog, and a gun, from John Henderson."

John went away home in very great wrath, resolved, I believed, to throttle the colonel and his servant both; but they had been watching his motions that day, and never returned to his house more, neither to crow like cocks, cackle like hens, drink whisky, or pay for their board and lodging.

Tom Brown was very angry at David about this, and reproved him severely for taking in an honest industrious old man. "But, dear man, what could a body do?" said David. "A man canna dee for thirst if there's ony thing to be had to drink either for love or money."

"But you should have wrought for your drink yoursel, David."

"Wrought for my drink? An' what at, pray. A' the house bells were gaun janglin' on, like broken pots, in their usual way; there wasna even the mainspring of a watch wanting. And as for the clocks, they just went on, tick-for-tick, tick-for-tick with the most tedious and provoking monotony. I couldna think of a man, in the whole country, who didna ken my face, but John; an' I kend he was as able to keep me a wee while as ony other body. An' what's the great matter? I'll clean his watch an' his clock to him as lang as he lives, an' never charge him ony thing, gin it be na a new main-spring whiles, an' we'll maybe come nearly equal again."

The last time I saw Peg Ketchen—what a change! From one of the sprightliest girls in the whole country, she is grown one of the most tawdry, miserable-looking objects. There is a hopeless dejection in her looks which I never saw equalled; and I am afraid that, sometimes when she has it in her power, she may take a glass herself, and even get a basting, for no one can calculate what a drunken man will do.

Now, though I have mixed two characters together in these genuine and true sketches, my reason for thus publishing them is to warn and charge every virtuous maiden, whatever she does, never to wed with a habitual drunkard. A virtuous woman may reclaim a husband from almost every vice but that; but that will grow upon him to his dying day; and if she outlive him, he will leave her a penniless and helpless widow. It is well known the veneration I have for the fair sex, and I leave them this charge as a legacy, lest I should not be able to address them again.

A STORY OF THE FORTY-SIX.

One day in July, 1746, a tall raw-boned Highlander came into the house of Inch-Croy, the property of Stewart Shaw, Esq., in which there was apparently no person at the time but Mrs. Shaw and her three daughters, for the laird was in hiding, having joined the Mackintoshes, and lost two sons at Culloden. This Highlander told the lady of the house that his name was Sergeant Campbell, and that he had been commissioned to search the house for her husband, as well as for Cluny, Loch-Garry, and other proscribed rebels. Mrs. Shaw said that she would rather the rudest of Cumberland's English officers had entered her house to search for the prince's friends, than one of the Argyle Campbells —those unnatural ruffians who had risen against their lawful prince to cut their brethren's throats.

The Highlander, without being in the least ruffled, requested her to be patient, and added, that at all events the ladies were safer from insult in a countryman's hands than in the hands of an English soldier. The lady denied it, and in the haughtiest manner flung him the keys, saying that she hoped some of hers would yet see the day when the rest of the clans would get their feet on the necks of the Campbells. He lifted the keys, and instantly commenced a regular and strict scrutiny; and just as he was in the act of turning out the whole contents of a wardrobe, the lady in the meanwhile saying the most cutting things to him that she could invent, he stood straight up, looked her steadily in the face, and pointed to a bed, shaking his hand at the same time. Simple as that motion was, it struck the lady dumb. She grew as pale as death in a moment. At that moment an English officer and five dragoons entered the house.

"O, sir," said Mrs. Shaw, "here is a ruffian of a sergeant, who has been sent to search the house, and who, out of mere wantonness and despite, is breaking everything, and turning the whole house topsy-turvy."

"Desist, you vagabond," said the cornet, "and go about your business. If any of the proscribed rebels are in the house, I'll be accountable for them."

"Nay, nay," said the Highlander, "I am first in commission, and I'll hold my privilege. The right of search is mine, and whoever are found in the house, I claim the reward. And moreover, in accordance with the orders issued at head-quarters, I order you hence."

"Show me your commission then, you Scotch dog; your search-warrant, if you so please?'

"Show me your authority for demanding it first?"

"My designation is Cornet Letham of Cobham's dragoons, who is ready to answer every charge against him. Now, pray tell me, sir, under whom you hold your commission?"

"Under a better gentleman than you, or any one who ever commanded you."

"A better gentleman than me, or any who ever commanded me! The first expression is an insult not to be borne. The other is high treason; and on this spot I seize you for a Scotch rebel, and a traitor knave."

With that he seized the tall red-haired loon by the throat, who, grinning, heaved his long arm at him as threatening a blow; but the English officer only smiled contemptuously, knowing that no single man of that humiliated country durst lift his hand against him, especially backed as he was by five sturdy dragoons. He was mistaken in this instance, for the Highlander lent him such a blow as felled him in a moment, so that with a heavy groan, he fell dead on the floor. Five horse-pistols were instantly pointed at the Highlander by the dragoons, but he took shelter behind the press, or wardrobe, and with his cocked pistol in one hand, and drawn broadsword, kept them at bay, for the entrance ben the house was so narrow, that two could not enter at a time, and certain death awaited the first to enter. At length two of them went out to shoot him in at a small window behind, which hampered him terribly, as he could not get far enough forward to guard his entry, without exposing himself to the fire of the two at the window. An expedient of the moment struck him; he held his bonnet by the corner of the wardrobe, as if peeping to take aim, when crack went two of the pistols, his antagonists having made sure of shooting him through the head. Without waiting further either to fire or receive theirs, he broke at them with his drawn sword; and the fury with which he came smashing and swearing up the house on them appalled them so horribly that they all three took to their heels, intending probably to fight him in the open fields. But a heavy dragoon of Cobham's was no match for a kilted clansman six feet high; before they reached the outer door two of them were cut down, and the third after a run of about thirty or forty yards. By

this time the two at the west window had betaken them to their horses, and were galloping off. The Highlander, springing on the officer's horse, galloped after them, determined that they should not escape, still waving his bloody sword and calling on them to stop. But stop they would not; and a better chase never was seen. Peter Grant and Alexander M'Eachen, both in hiding at the time, saw it from Craig-Neart at a short distance, and described it as unequalled. There went the two dragoons spurring on for bare life, the one always considerably before the other, and behind all came the tall Highlander, riding very awkwardly as might be supposed, and thrashing the hind quarters of his horse with his bloody sword for lack of spurs and whip. He did not appear to be coming up with them, but nevertheless cherishing hopes that he would, till his horse floundered with him in a bog, and threw him: he then reluctantly gave up the chase and returned, leading his horse by the bridle, having got enough of riding for that day.

The two Highlanders, M'Eachen and Grant, then ran from the rock and saluted him, for this inveterate Highlander was no other than their own brave and admired colonel, John Roy Stewart. They accompanied him back to Inch-Croy, where they found the ladies in the greatest dismay, and the poor dragoons all dead. Mrs. Stewart Shaw and her daughters had taken shelter in an outhouse on the breaking out of the quarrel; and that which distressed her most of all was, the signal which the tremendous Highlander made to her; for beyond that bed there was a concealed door to a small apartment, in which her husband, and Captain Finlayson, and Loch-Garry were all concealed at the time, and she perceived that that door was no secret to Sergeant Campbell, as he called himself. When the pursuit commenced, the ladies hastened to apprise the inmates of their little prison of the peril that awaited them; but they refused to flee till matters were cleared up, for they said that one who was cutting down the red coats at such a rate could scarcely be an enemy to them. We may conceive how delighted they were on finding that this hero was their brave and beloved Colonel Stewart. He knew that they were concealed in that house, and in that apartment; and perceiving, from the height where he kept watch, the party of dragoons come in at the strait of Corry-Bealach, he knew to what place they were bound, and hastened before them, either to divert the search, or assist his friends in repelling the aggressors.

There was now no time to lose. Mr. Shaw, Captain Finlayson, Alexander M'Eachen, and another gentleman, whose name I have lost, mounted as King George's dragoons, effected their escape to Glasgow through a hundred dangers, mostly arising from their own friends. In particular, the very first night of their flight, in one of the woods of Athol, at the dead of the night, they were surrounded by a party of the Clan Donnach, and would have been sacrificed, had not Stewart Shaw made an exclamation in Gaelic, which awakened as great an overflow of kindness. Colonel Roy Stewart and Loch-Garry escaped on foot, and fled towards the wild banks of Loch Erriched, where they remained in safety till they went abroad with Prince Charles.

It is amazing how well this incident was kept secret, as well as several others that tended to the disgrace of the royalists, owing to the control they exercised over the press of the country; but neither Duke William nor any of his officers ever knew who the tall red-haired Sergeant Campbell was, who overthrew their six dragoons. The ladies of Inch-Croy did not escape so well, for Cumberland, in requital for a disgrace in which they were nowise influential, sent out another party, who plundered the house and burned it, taking the ladies into custody, and everything else that was left on the lands of Inch-Croy and Bally-Beg—an instance of that mean and ungentlemanly revenge for which he was so notorious.

A TALE OF THE MARTYRS.

Red Tam Harkness came into the farm-house of Garrick, in the parish of the Closeburn, one day, and began to look about for some place to hide in, when the goodwife, whose name was Jane Kilpatrick, said to him in great alarm, "What's the matter, what's the matter, Tam Harkness?"

"Hide me, or else I'm a dead man: that's the present matter, goodwife," said he. "But yet, when I have time, if ever I hae mair time, I have heavy news for you. For Christ's sake, hide me, Jane, for the killers are hard at hand."

Jane Kilpatrick sprang to her feet, but she was quite benumbed and powerless. She ran to one press, and opened it, and then to another; there was not room to stuff a clog into either of them. She looked into a bed; there was no shelter there, and her knees began to plait under her weight with terror. The voices of the troopers were by this time heard fast approaching, and Harkness had no other shift, but in one moment to conceal himself behind the outer door, which stood open, yet the place where he stood was quite dark. He heard one of them say to another, "I fear the scoundrel is not here after all. Guard the outhouses."

On that three or four of the troopers rushed by him, and began to search the house and examine the inmates. Harkness that moment slid out without being observed, and tried to escape up a narrow glen called Kinrivvah, immediately behind the house; but unluckily two troopers, who had been in another chase, there met him in the face. When he perceived them, he turned and ran to the eastward; but they both fired, which raised the alarm, and instantly the whole pack were after him. It was afterwards conjectured that one of the shots had wounded him, for, though he, with others, had been nearly surrounded that morning, and twice waylaid, he had quite outrun the soldiers; but now it was observed that some of them began to gain ground on him, and they still continued firing, till at length he fell in a kind of slough east from the farm-house of Locherben, where they came up with him, and ran him through with their bayonets. The spot is called Red Tam's Gutter to this day.

Jane Kilpatrick was one of the first who went to his mangled corpse, a woeful sight, lying in the slough, and sore did she lament the loss of that poor and honest man. But there was more; she came to his corpse by a sort of yearning impatience to learn what was the woeful news he had to communicate to her. But, alas, the intelligence was lost, and the man to whose bosom alone it had haply been confided was no more; yet Jane could scarcely prevail on herself to have any fears for her own husband, for she knew him to be in perfectly safe hiding in Glen Gorar. Still Tam's last words hung heavy on her mind. They were both suspected to have been at the harmless rising at Enterkin, for the relief of a favourite minister, which was effected; and that was the extent of their crime. And though it was only suspicion, four men were shot on the hills that morning, without trial or examination, and their bodies forbidden Christian burial.

One of these four was John Weir of Garrick, the husband of Jane Kilpatrick, a man of great worth and honour, and universally respected. He had left his hiding-place in order to carry some intelligence to his friends, and to pray with them, but was entrapped among them and slain. Still there was no intelligence brought to his family, save the single expression that fell from the lips of Thomas Harkness in a moment of distraction. Nevertheless Jane could not rest, but set out all the way to her sister's house in Glen Gorar, in Crawford Muir, and arrived there at eleven o'clock on a Sabbath evening. The family being at prayers when she went, and the house dark, she stood still behind the hallan, and all the time was convinced that the voice of the man that prayed was the voice of her husband, John Weir. All the time that fervent prayer lasted, the tears of joy ran from her eyes, and her heart beat with gratitude to her Maker as she drank into her soul every sentence of the petitions and thanksgiving. Accordingly, when worship was ended, and the candle lighted, she went forward with a light heart and joyful countenance: her sister embraced her, though manifestly embarrassed and troubled at seeing her there at such a time. From her she flew to embrace her husband, but he stood still like a statue, and did not meet her embrace. She gazed at him—she grew pale, and, sitting down, she covered her face with her apron. This man was one of her husband's brothers, likewise in hiding, whom she had never before seen; but the tones of his voice, and even the devotional expressions that he used were so like her husband's that she mistook them for his.

All was now grief and consternation, for John Weir had not been seen or heard of there since Wednesday evening, when he had gone to warn his friends of some impending danger; but they all tried to comfort each other as well as they could,

and, in particular, by saying they were all in the Lord's hand, and it behoved him to do with them as seemed to him good; with many other expressions of piety and submission. But the next morning, when the two sisters were about to part, the one says to the other, "Jane, I cannot help telling you a strange confused dream that I had just afore ye wakened me. Ye ken I pit nae faith in dreams, and I dinna want you to regard it; but it is as good for friends to tell them to ane anither, and then, if ought turn out like it in the course o' Providence, it may bring it to baith their minds that their spirits had been conversing with God."

"Na, na, Aggie, I want nane o' your confused dreams. I hae other things to think o', and mony's the time and aft ye hae deaved me wi' them, an' sometimes made me angry."

"I never bade ye believe them, Jeanie, but I likit aye to tell them to you, and this I daresay rase out o' our conversation yestreen. But I thought I was away, ye see, I dinna ken where I was; and I was fear'd an' confused, thinking I had lost my way. And then I came to an auld man, an' he says to me, 'Is it the road to heaven that you are seeking, Aggie?' An' I said, 'Ay,' for I didna like to deny't.

"'Then I'll tell you where ye maun gang,' said he, 'ye maun gang up by the head of yon dark, mossy cleuch, an' you will find ane there that will show you the road to heaven;' and I said, 'Ay,' for I didna like to refuse, although it was an uncouth-looking road, and ane that I didna like to gang. But when I gangs to the cleuch-head, wha does I see sitting there but your ain goodman, John Weir, and I thought I never saw him look sae weel; and when I gaed close up to him, there I sees another John Weir, lying strippit to the sark, an' a' beddit in blood. He was cauld dead, and his head turned to the ae side; and when I saw siccan a sight, I was terrified, and held wide off him. But I gangs up to the living John Weir, and says to him, 'Gudeman, how's this?'

"'Dinna ye see how it is, sister Aggie?' says he, 'I'm just set to herd this poor man that's lying here.'

"'Then I think ye'll no hae a sair post, John,' says I, 'for he disna look as he wad rin far away.' It was a very unreverend speak o' me, sister, but these were the words that I thought I said; an' as it is but a dream, ye ken ye needna heed it.

"'Alas, poor Aggie!' says he, 'ye are still in the gall o' bitterness yet. Look o'er your right shoulder, an' you will see what I hae to do.' An' sae I looks o'er my right shoulder, an' there I sees a haill drove o' foxes an' wulcats, an' fumarts, an' martins, an' corbey craws, an' a hunder vile beasts, a' stannin round wi' glarin een, eager to be at the corpse o' the dead John Weir; an' then I was terribly astoundit, an' I says to him, 'Gudeman, how's this?'

"'I am commissioned to keep these awa,' says he. 'Do ye think these een that are yet to open in the light o' heaven, and that tongue that has to syllable the praises of a Redeemer far within yon sky, should be left to become the prey o' siccan vermin as these?'

"'Will it make sae verra muckle difference, John Weir,' says I, 'whether the carcase is eaten up by these or by the worms?'

"'Ah, Aggie, Aggie! worms are worms; but ye little wat what these are,' says he. 'But John Weir has warred with them a' his life, an' that to some purpose, and they maunna get the advantage o' him now.'

"'But which is the right John Weir?' says I, 'for here is ane lying stiff and lappered in his blood, and another in health and strength and sound mind.'

"'I am the right John Weir,' says he. 'Did you ever think the goodman o' Garrick could die! Na, na, Aggie; Clavers can only kill the body, an' that's but the poorest part of the man. But where are ye gaun this wild gate?'

"'I was directed this way on my road to heaven,' says I.

"'Ay, an' ye were directed right then,' says he. 'For this is the direct path to heaven, and there is no other.'

"'That is very extraordinary,' says I. 'And, pray, what is the name of this place, that I may direct my sister Jane, your wife, and all my friends, by the same way?'

"'This is Faith's Hope,' says he."

But behold, at the mention of this place, Jane Kilpatrick of Garrick arose slowly up to her feet and held up both her hands. "Hold, hold, sister Aggie," cried she, "you have told enough. Was it in the head of Faith's Hope that you saw this vision of my dead husband."

"Yes; but at the same time I saw your husband alive."

"Then I fear your dream has a double meaning," said she. "For though it appears like a religious allegory, you do not know that there really is such a place, and that not very far from our house. I have often laughed at your dreams, sister, but this one hurries me from you to-day with a heavy and a trembling heart."

Jane left Glen Gorar by the break of day, and took her way through the wild ranges of Crawford Muir, straight for the head of Faith's Hope. She had some bread in her lap, and a little Bible that she always carried with her, and without one to assist or comfort her she went in search of her lost husband. Before she reached the head of that wild glen, the day was far spent, and the sun wearing down. The valley of the Nith lay spread far below her, in all its beauty, but around her there was nothing but darkness, dread, and desolation. The mist hovered on the hills, and on the skirts of the mist the ravens sailed about in circles, croaking

furiously, which had a most ominous effect on the heart of poor Jane. As she advanced farther up, she perceived a fox and an eagle sitting over against each other, watching something which yet they seemed terrified to approach; and right between them, in a little green hollow, surrounded by black haggs, she found the corpse of her husband, in the same manner as described by her sister. He was stripped of his coat and vest, which, it was thought, he had thrown from him when fleeing from the soldiers, to enable him to effect his escape. He was shot through the heart with two bullets, but nothing relating to his death was ever known, whether he died praying, or was shot as he fled; but there was he found lying, bathed in his blood, in the wilderness, and none of the wild beasts of the forest had dared to touch his lifeless form.

The bitterness of death was now past with poor Jane. Her staff and shield was taken from her right hand, and laid down low in death, by the violence of wicked men. True, she had still a home to go to, although that home was robbed and spoiled; but she found that without *him* it was no home, and that where his beloved form reposed, that was the home of her rest. She washed all his wounds, and the stains of blood from his body, tied her napkin round his face, covered him with her apron, and sat down and watched beside him all the live-long night, praying to the Almighty, and singing hymns and spiritual songs alternately. The next day she warned her friends and neighbours, who went with her on the following night, and buried him privately in the north-west corner of the churchyard of Morton. The following verses are merely some of her own words versified, as she was sitting by his corpse in the wild glen, or rather the thoughts that she described as having passed through her heart:—

JOHN WEIR, A BALLAD.

I canna greet for thee, my John Weir,
Oh, I canna greet for thee;
For the hand o' heaven lies heavy here,
And this sair weird I maun dree.
They harried us first o' cow and ewe,
With curses and cruelty,
And now they hae shed thy dear life blood,
An' what's to become o' me?
I am left a helpless widow here;
Oh, what's to become o' me?

I hae born thee seven sons, John Weir,
And nursed them upon my knee;
But two are fled to their father's hame
Frae the evils awaiting thee;
Their little green graves lie side by side,
Like twins in fond ally,
But in beside thy children dear
Thy dust maun never lie –
Like an outcast o' the earth, John Weir,
In the moorland thou maun lie.

But though thou lie at the back o' the dyke,
Or in hagg o' the mountain hee,
Wherever thy loved dust remains,
It is sacred ground to me.
And there will I watch, and there will I pray,
For tears I now hae nane,
For the injuries done by wicked men
Have sear'd my simple brain.
Even over thy pale corpse, John Weir,
I try to weep in vain.

But soon shall our oppressors' sway
In desolation lie;
Like autumn flowers it shall decay,
And in its foulness die.
The tyrant's reign, the tyrant's name,
Whose rule hath never thriven,
The blood of saints hath blotted out
Both from the earth and heaven—
For this dear blood of thine, John Weir,
Can never be forgiven.

ADAM SCOTT.

On a fine summer evening, about the beginning of July, on a year which must have been about the latter end of the reign of Queen Anne, or some years subsequent to that, as Adam Scott, farmer of Kildouglas, was sitting in a small public-house on North Tyne, refreshing himself on brown bread and English béer, and his hungry horse tearing up the grass about the kail-yard dike, he was accosted by a tall ungainly fellow, who entered the hut, and in the broadest Northumberland tongue, inquired if he was bound for Scotland. "What gars ye speer that, an it be your will?" said Scott, with the characteristic caution of his countrymen.

"Because a neighbour and I are agoing that way to-night," said the stranger, "and we knaw neything at all about the rwoad; and mwore than that, we carry soomthing reyther ower valuable to risk the losing of; and as we saw your horse rooging and reyving with the saddle on him, I made bould to call, thinking you might direct us on this coorsed rwoad."

"An' what will you gie me if I guide you safely into Scotland, an' set ye aince mair upon a hee road?" said Scott.

"Woy, man, we'll give thee as mooch bread as thou canst eat, and as mooch beer as thou canst drink—and mwore we cannot have in this moorland," said the man.

"It is a fair offer," said Adam Scott; "but I'll no pit ye to that expense, as I am gaun o'er the fells the night at ony rate; sae, if ye'll wait my bijune, for my horse is plaguit weary, and amaist jaded to death, then we shall ride thegither, and I ken the country weel; but road ye will find nane."

The two men then fastened their horses, and came in and joined Scott; so they called for ale, drank one another's healths at every pull, and seemed quite delighted that they were to travel in company. The tall man, who came in first, was loquacious and outspoken, though one part of his story often did not tally with the other; but his neighbour was sullen and retired, seldom speaking, and as seldom looking one in the face. Scott had at first a confused recollection of having seen him, but in what circumstances he could not remember, and he soon gave up the idea as a false one.

They mounted at length, and there being no path up the North Tyne then nor till very lately, their way lay over ridges and moors, and sometimes by the margin of the wild river. The tall man had been very communicative, and frankly told Scott that they were going into Scotland to try to purchase sheep and cattle, where they expected to get them for next to nothing, and that they had brought gold with them for that purpose. This led on Scott to tell him of his own adventures in that line. He had come to Stagshawbank fair, the only market then for Scots sheep and cattle in the north of England, with a great number of sheep for sale, but finding no demand, he bought up all the sheep from his countrymen for which he could get credit, and drove on to the Yorkshire markets, where he hawked them off in the best manner he could, and was now in fact returning to Scotland literally laden with money to pay his obligations.

After this communication the tall man always rode before Adam Scott, and the short thick-set sullen fellow behind him, a position which, the moment it was altered, was resumed, and at which Scott began to be a little uneasy. It was still light, though wearing late, for there is little night at that season, when the travellers came to a wild glen called Bell's Burn, a considerable way on the English side of the Border. The tall man was still riding before, and considerably ahead, and as he was mounting the ridge on the north side of Bell's Burn, Adam Scott turned off all at once to the right. The hindermost man drew bridle on seeing this, and asked Scott, "where now?"

"This way, lads. This way," was the reply.

The tall man then fell a swearing that that could never be the road to Liddisdale, to which he had promised to accompany them.

"The straight road, honest man—the straight road. Follow me," said Scott.

The tall man then rode in before him and said, "Whoy, man, thou'st either drunk, or gone stooped with sleep, for wilt thou tell me that the road up by Blakehope Shiel, and down the Burnmouth rigg, is nwot the rwoad into Liddisdale?"

"Ay, man!—ay, man! How comes this?" said Scott. "Sae it seems ye are nae sic strangers to the road as ye pretendit? Weel, weel, since ye ken that road sae particularly weel, gang your gates, an' take that road. For me, I'm gaun by the Fair Lone, an' if Willie Jardine's at hame, I'll no gang muckle farther the night."

"The devil of such a rwoad thou shalt go, friend, let me tell thee that," said the tall fellow, offering to lay hold of Scott's bridle. "It is of the greatest consequence to us to get safely over the fell, and

since we have put ourselves under thuyne care, thou shalt either go with us, or do worse."

"Dare not for your soul to lay your hand on my bridle, sir," said Scott; "for, if you touch either my horse or myself with but one of your fingers, I'll give you a mark to know you by." The other swore by a terrible oath that he would touch both him and it if he would not act reasonably, and seized the horse rudely by the bridle. Scott threw himself from his horse in a moment, and prepared for action, for his horse was stiff and unwieldy; and he durst not trust himself on his back between two others, both horses of mettle. He was armed with a cudgel alone, and as his strength and courage were unequalled at that time, there is little doubt that the tall Englishman would have come down, had not the other, at the moment the bridle was seized, rushed forward and seized his companion by the arm—"Fool! madman!" cried he; "What do you mean? has not the honest man a right to go what way he pleases, and what business have you to stop him? Thou wert a rash idiot all the days of thy life, and thou wilt die one, or be hangit for thy mad pranks. Let go!—for here, I swear, thou shalt neither touch the honest man nor his horse as long as I can hinder thee, and I thinks I should be as good a man as thee. Let us go all by the Fair Lone, since it is so, and mayhap Mr. Jardine will take us all in for the night."

"Whoy, Bill, thou sayest true after all," said the tall man succumbing; "I'm a passionate fool; but a man cannot help his temper. I beg Mr. Scwott's pardon, for I was in the wrong. Come, then, let us go by the Fair Lone with one consent."

Scott was now grieved and ashamed of his jealousy and dread of the men's motives, and that moment, if they had again desired him to have accompanied them over the fell, he would have done it; but away they all rode on the road towards the Fair Lone, the tall man before as usual, Adam Scott in the middle, and the gruff but friendly fellow behind.

They had not rode above five minutes in this way, Scott being quite reassured of the integrity of his companions, perfectly at his ease, and letting them ride and approach him as they listed, when the hindermost man struck him over the crown with a loaded whip such a tremendous blow as would have felled an ox, yet, as circumstances happened to be, it had not much effect on the bullet head of Adam Scott. When the man made the blow, his horse started and wheeled, and Scott, with a readiness scarcely natural to our countrymen, the moment that he received the blow, knocked down the foremost rider, who fell from his horse like lead. The short stout man had by this time brought round his horse, and Adam Scott and he struck each other at the same moment. At this stroke he cut Adam's cheek and temple very sore; and Adam in return brought down his horse, which fell to the earth with a groan. A desperate combat now ensued, the Englishman with his long loaded whip, and the Scot with his thorn staff. At the second or third stroke, Adam Scott knocked off his antagonist's wig, and then at once knew him for a highwayman, or common robber and murderer, whom he had seen at his trials both at Carlisle and Jeddart. This incident opened Scott's eyes to the sort of company he had fallen into, and despising the rogue's cowardice, who durst not attack him before, two to one, but thought to murder him at one blow behind his back, he laid on without mercy, and in about a minute and a half left him for dead. By this time the tall fellow had got up on one knee and foot, but was pale and bloody, on which Scott lent him another knoit, which again laid him flat; and then, without touching anything that belonged to them, Adam mounted his sorry horse, and made the best of his way homewards.

As ill-luck would have it, our farmer did not call at Fair Lone. Indeed, his calling there was only a pretence to try his suspicious companions; for William Jardine and he were but little acquainted. and that little was the reverse of kindness for one another. At that time the Borders were in much disorder, owing to the discontents regarding the late Union, which were particularly cherished there; and there were many bickerings and heart-burnings between the natives on each side of the Marches. To restrain these as much as possible, there were keepers, as they were called, placed all along the Border line, who were vested with powers to examine and detain any suspicious person from either side till further trial. Of these keepers, or marchmen, Jardine was one; and he being placed in the very entry of that wild pass which leads from Liddisdale and the Highlands of Teviotdale into North Tyne, he often found his hands full. He was an intrepid and severe fellow; and having received a valuable present from some English noblemen for his integrity, from that time forth it was noted that he was most severe on the Scots, and blamed them for everything.

Now Scott ought, by all means, to have called there, and laid his case before the keeper, and have gone with him to the maimed or killed men, and then he would have been safe. He did neither, but passed by on the other side, and posted on straight over moss and moor for Kildouglas. He seems to have been astounded at the imminent danger he had escaped; and after having, as he believed, killed two men, durst not face the stern keeper, and that keeper his enemy; and as a great part of the treasure he carried belonged to others, and not to himself, he was anxious about it, and made all the haste home that he could, that so he might get honestly quit of it.

But alas! our brave farmer got not so soon home as he intended. There is a part of the thread of the narrative here which I remember but confusedly. But it seems, that immediately after Scott left the prostrate robbers, some more passengers from the

fair came riding up, and found the one man speechless and the other grievously mauled; and on inquiring what had happened, the tall man told them in a feeble voice that they had been murdered and robbed by a rascally Scot called Adam Scott of Kildouglas. As the matter looked so ill, some of the men galloped straight to Fair-Lone, and apprized the marchman, who instantly took horse and pursued; and having a privilege of calling one man out of each house, his company increased rapidly. Jardine, well knowing the wild tract that Scott would take, came up with him about midnight at a place called Langside, and there took him prisoner.

It was in vain that our honest yeoman told the keeper the truth of the story—he gained no credit. For the keeper told him, that *he* had no right to *try* the cause; only he, Adam Scott, had been accused to him of robbery and murder, and it was his office to secure him till the matter was inquired into. He assured Scott further, that his cause looked very ill; for had he been an honest man, and attacked by robbers, he would have called in passing, and told him so. Scott pleaded hard to be taken before the Sheriff of Teviotdale; but the alleged crime having been committed in England, he was carried to Carlisle. When Scott heard that such a hard fate awaited him, he is said to have expressed himself thus:—"Ay, man, an' am I really to be tried for my life by Englishmen for felling twa English robbers? If that be the case, I hae nae mair chance for my life than a Scots fox has amang an English pack o' hounds. But had I kend half an hour ago what I ken now, you an' a' your menzies should never hae taen Aidie Scott alive."

To Carlisle he was taken and examined, and all his money taken from him, and given in keeping to the mayor, in order to be restored to the rightful owners; and witnesses gathered in all the way from Yorkshire, such as the tall man named—for as to all that Adam told in his own defence, his English judges only laughed at it, regarding it no more than the barking of a dog. Indeed, from the time he heard the tall man's evidence, whom he felled first, he lost hope of life. That scoundrel swore that Scott had knocked them both down and robbed them, when they were neither touching him nor harming him in any manner of way. And it seemed to be a curious fact, that the fellow really never knew that Scott had been attacked at all. He had neither heard nor seen when his companion struck the blow, and that instant having been knocked down himself, he was quite justifiable in believing that, at all events, Scott had meant to despatch them both. When Adam related how this happened, his accuser said he knew that was an arrant lie; for had his companion once struck, there was not a head which he would not have split.

"Aha! it is a' that ye ken about it, lad," said Adam; "I faund it nae mair than a rattan's tail; I had baith my night-cap an' a flannen sark in the crown o' my bannet. But will ye just be sae good as tell the gentlemen wha that companion o' yours was; for if ye dinna do it, I can do it for you. It was nae other than Ned Thom, the greatest thief in a' England."

The sheriff here looked a little suspicious at the witnesses; but the allegation was soon repelled by the oaths of two, who, it was afterwards proven, both perjured themselves. The mayor told Scott to be making provision for his latter end; but, in the meantime, he would delay passing sentence for eight days, to see if he could bring forward any exculpatory proof. Alas! lying bound in Carlisle prison as he was, how could he bring forward proof! For in those days, without a special messenger, there was no possibility of communication; and the only proofs Adam could have brought forward were, that the men forced themselves into his company, and that he had as many sheep in his possession as accounted for the whole of the money. He asked in court if any person would go a message for him, but none accepted or seemed to care for him. He believed seriously that they wanted to hang him for the sake of his money, and gave up hope.

Always as Adam sold one drove of sheep after another in Yorkshire, he despatched his drivers home to Scotland, and with the last that returned he sent word of the very day on which he would be home, when all his creditors were to meet him at his own house, and receive their money. However, by the manœuvres of one rascal (now one of his accusers), he was detained in England three days longer. The farmers came all on the appointed day, and found the gudewife had the muckle pat on, but no Adam Scott came with his pockets full of English gold to them, though many a long look was cast to the head of the Black Swire. They came the next day, and the next again, and then began to fear that some misfortune very serious had befallen their friend.

There was an elderly female lived in the house with Scott, called Kitty Cairns, who was aunt either to the goodman or the goodwife, I have forgot which: but Auntie Kitty was her common denomination. On the morning after Adam Scott was taken prisoner, this old woman arose early, went to her niece's bedside, and said, "Meggification, hinny! sic a dream as I hae had about Aidie!—an' it's a true dream, too! I could tak my aith to every sentence o't—aye, an' to ilka person connectit wi't, gin I saw him atween the een."

"Oh, auntie, for mercy's sake haud your tongue, for you are garring a' my heart quake! Ower weel do I ken how true your dreams are at certain times!"

"Ay, hinny! an' did you ever hear me say that sic an' sic a dream was true when it turned out to be otherwise? Na, never i' your life. An' as for folk to say that there's nae truth in dreams, ye ken that's a mere meggification. Weel, ye shall hear, for I'm no gaun to tell ye a dream, ye see, nor ought

like ane; but an even-down true story. Our Aidie was sair pinched to sell the hinderend o' his sheep, till up comes a braw dashing gentleman, and bids him a third mair than they were worth, wi' the intention o' paying the poor simple Scotchman in base money. But, aha! let our Aidie alane! He begoud to poize the guineas on his tongue, an' feint a ane o' them he wad hae till they were a' fairly weighed afore a magistrate; and sae the grand villain had to pay the hale in good sterling gowd. This angered him sae sair that he hired twa o' his ruffians to follow our poor Aidie, and tak a' the money frae him. I saw the haill o't, an' I could ken the twa chaps weel if confrontit wi' them. They cam to him drinkin' his ale. They rade on an' rade on wi' him, till they partit roads, an' then they fell on him, an' a sair battle it was; but Aidie wan, and felled them baith. Then he fled for hame, but the English pursued, an' took him away to Carlisle prison; an' if nae relief come in eight days, he'll be hanged."

This strange story threw the poor goodwife of Kildouglas into the deepest distress; and the very first creditor who came that morning, she made Auntie Kitty repeat it over to him. This was one Thomas Linton, and she could not have repeated it to a fitter man; for, though a religious and devout man, he was very superstitious, and believed in all auntie's visions most thoroughly. Indeed, he believed further; for he believed she was a witch, or one who had a familiar spirit, and knew everything almost either beneath or beyond the moon. And Linton and his brother being both heavy creditors, the former undertook at once to ride to the south, in order, if possible, to learn something of Adam Scott and the money; and, if he heard nothing by the way, to go as far as Carlisle, and even, if he found him not there, into Yorkshire. Accordingly he sent a message to his brother, and proceeded southward; and at a village called Stanegirthside, he first heard an account that a man called Scott was carried through that place, on the Friday before, to Carlisle jail, accused of robbery and murder. This was astounding news; and, in the utmost anxiety, Linton pressed on, and reached Carlisle before the examination concluded of which mention was formerly made; and when Adam Scott asked through the crowded court if any present would go a message for him into Scotland for a fair reward, and all had declined it, then Thomas Linton stepped forward within the crowd, and said, "Ay, here is ane, Adam, that will ride to ony part in a' Scotland or England for ye—ride up to Lunnon to your chief in the House o' Lords—afore thae English loons shall dare to lay a foul finger on ye! An' I can tell you, Mr. Shirra, or Mr. Provice, or whatever ye be, that you are gaun to get yoursel into a grand scrape, for there never was an honester man breathed the breath o' life than Aidie Scott."

The judge smiled, and said he would be glad to have proofs of that! and, for Linton's encouragement, made the town-clerk read over the worst part of the evidence, which was very bad indeed, only not one word of it true. But Linton told them he cared nothing for *their* evidence against a Scot; "for it was weel kend that the Englishers was a' grit leears, an' wad swear to ony thing that suited them; but let him aince get Adam Scott's plain story, an' *then* he wad ken how matters stood."

He was indulged with a private interview, and greatly were the two friends puzzled how to proceed. The swindler, who really had bought the last ewes from Scott, had put a private mark upon all his good gold to distinguish it from his base metal, and made oath that all that gold was his; and that he had given it to his servant, whom Scott had robbed, to buy cattle for him in Scotland. The mark was evident, and that had a bad look; but when Scott told the true story, Linton insisted on the magistrate being summoned to court who saw that gold weighed over to his friend. "And I will mysel tak in hand," said he, "not only to bring forward all the farmers from whom Scott bought the sheep, but all the Englishmen to whom he sold them; an' gin I dinna prove him an honest man, if ye gie me time, I sall gie you leave to hang me in his place."

The swindler and robber now began to look rather blank, but pretended to laugh at the allegations of Thomas Linton; but the Scot set up his birses, and told the former that "he could prove, by the evidence of two English aldermen, who saw the gold weighed, that he had paid to his friend the exact sum which he had here claimed; and that, either dead or alive, he should be obliged to produce the body of the other robber, or he who pretended to have been robbed, to show what sort of servants he employed. "I'll bring baith noblemen and lawyers frae Scotland," added he, "who will see justice done to so brave and so worthy a man; an' if they dinna gar you skemps take his place, never credit a Scot again."

Adam Scott's chief being in London, and his own laird a man of no consequence, Linton rode straight off to his own laird, the Earl of Traquair, travelling night and day till he reached him. The earl, being in Edinburgh, sent for a remarkably clever and shrewd lawyer, one David Williamson, and also for Alexander Murray, sheriff of Selkirkshire, and to these three Linton told his story, assuring them that he could vouch for the truth of it in every particular; and after Williamson had questioned him backwards and forwards, it was resolved that something should instantly be done for the safety of Scott. Accordingly, Williamson wrote a letter to the mayor, which was signed by the earl, and the sheriff of Scott's county, which letter charged the mayor to take good heed what he was about, and not to move in the matter of Scott till quarter-session day, which was not distant, and then counsel would attend to see justice done to a man who had always been so highly esteemed. And that by all

means he (the mayor) was to secure Scott's three accusers, and not suffer them in any case to escape, as he should answer for it. The letter also bore a list of the English witnesses who behoved to be there. Linton hastened back with it, and that letter changed the face of affairs mightily. The grand swindler and the tall robber were both seized and laid in irons, and the other also was found with great trouble. From that time forth there remained little doubt of the truth of Scott's narrative; for this man was no other than the notorious Edward Thom, who had eluded the sentence of the law, both in Scotland and England, in the most wonderful manner, and it was well known that he belonged to a notable gang of robbers.

It is a pity that the history of that interesting trial is far too long and minute for a tale such as this, though I have often heard it all gone over—how Williamson astonished the natives with his cross questions, his speeches, and his evidences—how confounded the mayor and aldermen were, that they had not discerned these circumstances before—how Thom at last turned king's evidence, and confessed the whole—how the head swindler was condemned and executed, and the tall robber whipped and dismissed, because he had in fact only intended a robbery, but had no hand in it—and finally, how Scott was released with the highest approbation; while both magistrates and burgesses of ancient Carlisle strove with one another how to heap most favours on him and his friend Thomas Linton. There were upwards of 200 Scottish yeomen accompanied the two friends up the Esk, who had all been drawn to Carlisle to hear the trial; and there is little doubt that, if matters had gone otherwise than they did, a rescue was intended.

Why should anybody despise a dream, or anything whatever in which one seriously believes!

THE BARON ST. GIO.

I HAVE often wondered if it was possible that a person could exist without a conscience. I think not, if he be a reasonable being. Yet there certainly are many of whom you would judge by their actions that they had none; or, if they have, that conscience is not a mirror to be trusted. In such cases we may suppose that conscience exists in the soul of such a man as well as others, but that it is an erroneous one, not being rightly informed of what sin is, and consequently unable to judge fairly of his actions, by comparing them with the law of God. It is a sad state to be in; for surely there is no condition of soul more wretched than that of the senseless obdurate sinner, the faculties of whose soul seem to be in a state of numbness, and void of that true feeling of sensibility which is her most vital quality.

I was led into this kind of mood to-night by reading a sort of Memoir of the life of Jasper Kendale, *alias* the Baron St. Gio, written by himself, which, if at all consistent with truth, unfolds a scene of unparalleled barbarity, and an instance of that numbness of soul of which we have been speaking, scarcely to be excelled.

Jasper says he was born at bonny Dalkerran, in the parish of Leeswald; but whether that is in England, Scotland, or Wales, he does not inform us, judging in his own simplicity of heart that every one knows where bonny Dalkerran is as well as he does. For my part I never heard either of such a place or of such a parish; but from many of his expressions I should draw the conclusion that he comes from some district in the west of Scotland.

"My father and mother were unco good religious focks," says he, "but very poor. At least I think sae, for we were very ragged and duddy in our claes, and often didna get muckle to eat." This is manifestly Scottish, and in the same style the best parts of the narrative are written; but for the sake of shortening it two-thirds at least, I must take a style more concise.

When I was about twelve years of age, my uncle got me in to be stable-boy at Castle-Meldin, and a happy man I was at this change; for whereas before I got only peel-an-eat potatoes and a little salt twice a-day at home, here I feasted like a gentleman, and had plenty of good meat to take or to leave every day as I listed, and as suited my appetite, for it suited my constitution wonderfully. I was very thankful for this, and resolved to be a good, diligent, and obedient servant; and so I was, for I took care of everything intrusted to me, and, as far as I could see, everybody liked me.

Before I had been a year there the old laird died, and as I had hardly ever seen him, that did not affect me much; but I suspected that all things would go wrong about the house when the head of it was taken away; that there would be nothing but fasting and mourning, and everything that was disagreeable. I was never more agreeably mistaken, for the feasting and fun never began about the house

till then. The ladies, to be sure, were dressed in black, and beautiful they looked, so that wooers flocked about them every day. But there was one that far outdid the rest in beauty. Her name was Fanny, the second or third daughter of the family, I am not sure which, but she was the most beautiful woman I ever saw in the world. There was a luxuriance of beauty about her that is quite indescribable, which drew all hearts and all eyes to her. She was courted by lovers of every age and description, but I only know what the maids told me about these things. They said her behaviour was rather lightsome with the gentlemen; for that she was constantly teazing them, which provoked them always to fasten on her for a romp, and that her sisters were often ill-pleased with her, because she got the most part of the fun to herself. I know nothing about these things; but this I know, that before the days of mourning were over Miss Fanny vanished—was lost—and her name was said never to have been mentioned up stairs; but with us she was the constant subject of discourse, and one of the maids always put on wise looks, and pretended to know where she was. Time passed on for some months, until one day I was ordered to take my uncle's pair, and drive a gentleman to a certain great market town. (Jasper names the town plain out, which I deem improper.) I did as I was ordered, and my uncle giving the gentleman some charges about me, closed the door, and off we drove. The man was very kind to me all the way, and good to the horses; but yet I could not endure to look at him. He had a still, round, whitish face, and eyes as if he had been half-sleeping, but when they glimmered up they were horribly disagreeable.

We remained in the town two nights, and on the following morning I was ordered to drive through the town by his direction. He kept the window open at my back, and directed me, by many turnings, to a neat elegant house rather in the suburbs. He went in. I waited long at the door, and often heard a noise within as of weeping and complaining, and at length my gentleman came out leading Miss Fanny with both hands, and put her into the coach. She was weeping violently, and much altered, and my heart bled at seeing her. There was no one came to the door to see her into the chaise, but I saw two ladies on the stair inside the house. He then ordered me to drive by such a way, which I did, driving the whole day by his direction; and the horses being in excellent keeping, we made great speed; I thought we drove on from twenty to thirty miles, and I knew by the sun that we were going to the eastward, and of course not on the road home. We had for a good while been on a sort of a country road; and at length on a broad common road covered with furze, I was ordered to draw up, which I did. The gentleman stepped first out, and then handed out Miss Fanny; but still not with that sort of respect which I weened to be her due. They only walked a few steps from the carriage, when he stopped, and looked first at one whin bush, then at another, as if looking for something of which he was uncertain. He then led her up to one, and holding her fast by the wrist with one hand, with the other he pulled a dead body covered with blood out of the midst of the bush, and asked the lady if she knew who that was? Such a shriek, I think, was never uttered by a human creature as that hapless being uttered at that moment, and such may my ears never hear again! But in one instant after, and even I think before she could utter a second, he shot her through the head, and she fell.

I was so dreadfully shocked, and amazed at such atrocity, that I leaped from the seat and ran for it; but my knees had no strength, and the boots hampering me, the ruffian caught me before I had run fifty paces, and dragged me back to the scene of horror. He then assured me, that if I offered again to stir from my horses, he would send me the same way with these culprits whom I saw lying there; and perceiving escape to be impossible I kneeled, and prayed him not to shoot me, and I would stay and do anything that he desired of me. He then re-loaded his pistol, and taking a ready cocked one in each hand, he ordered me to drag the bodies away and tumble them into an old coal-pit, which I was forced to do, taking first the one and then the other. My young mistress was not quite dead, for I saw her lift her eyes, and as she descended the void, I heard a slight moan, then a great plunge, and all was over.

I wonder to this day that he did not send me after them. I expected nothing else; and I am sure if it had not been for the driving of the chaise by himself, which on some account or other he durst not attempt, my fate had been sealed.

He did not go into the chaise, but mounted on the seat beside me, and we drove and drove on by quite another road than that we went, until the horses were completely forespent, and would not raise a trot. I was so terrified for the fellow, that I durst not ask him to stop and corn the horses, but I said several times that the horses were quite done up. His answer was always, "Whip on."

When it began to grow dark, he asked my name, my country, and all about my relations; and in particular about the old coachman at Castle-Meldin. I told him the plain truth on every point, on which he bade me be of good cheer and keep myself free of all suspicions, for as long as I made no mention of what I had seen no evil should happen to me; and he added, "I daresay you would be a little astonished at what you saw to-day. But I hope you will say, God forgive you!"

"I'll be unco laith to say ony sic thing, man," quo' I, "for I wad be very sorry if he did. I hope to see you burning in hell yet for what ye hae done the day." (These are Jasper's own words.)

"What! *you* hope to see me there, do you? Then

it bespeaks that you hope to go there yourself," said he.

"If I do not see you there, some will," said I; for by this time I saw plenty of human faces around us, and lost all fear, so I said what I thought.

"If you have any value for your life," said he, "be a wise boy, and say nothing about it. Can't you perceive that there is no atrocity in the deed—at least not one hundredth part of the sum which you seem to calculate on? Do you think it was reasonable that a whole family of beautiful and virtuous sisters of the highest rank should all have been ruined by the indiscretion of one?"

"That is no reason at all, sir, for the taking away of life," said I. "The law of God did not condemn her for aught she had done; and where lay your right to lift up your hand against her life? You might have sent her abroad, if she had in any way disgraced the family, which I never will believe she did."

"True," said he, "I could have secured her person, but who could have secured her pen? All would have come out, and shame and ruin would have been the consequence. Though I lament with all my heart that such a deed was necessary, yet there was no alternative. Now, tell me this, for you have told me the plain truth hitherto—did or did you not recognize the body of the dead gentleman?"

"Yes, I did," said I frankly. "I knew it for the body of a young nobleman whom I have often seen much caressed at Castle-Meldin."

He shook his head and gave an inward growl, and then said, "Since you say so, I must take care of *you!* You are wrong; that is certain; and you had better not say such a thing again. But nevertheless, since you *have* said it, and *may* say it again, I must take care of *you.*"

He spoke no more. We were now driving through a large town; but whether or not it was the one we left in the morning, I could not tell, and he would not inform me. We drew up on the quay where a fine barge with eight rowers, all leaning on their oars, stood ready to receive us. My fine gentleman then desired me to alight, and go across the water with him, for a short space. I refused positively, saying, that I would not leave my horses for any man's pleasure. He said he had a lad there to take care of the horses, and I knew it behoved me to accompany him across. "I'll not leave my horses; that's flat. And you had better not insist on it. I'm not in the humour to be teased much further," said I.

That word sealed my fate. I was that moment pulled from my seat, gagged by a fellow's great hand, and hurled into the boat by I know not how many scoundrels. There I was bound, and kept gagged by the sailors, to their great amusement. We reached a great ship in the offing, into which I was carried, and cast into a dungeon, bound hands and feet. We sailed next morning, and for three days I was kept bound and gagged, but fed regularly. My spirit was quite broken, and even my resolution of being avenged for the death of the lovely Fanny began to die away. On the fourth day, to my inexpressible horror, the murderer himself came down to my place of confinement, and addressed me to the following purport.

"Kendale, you are a good boy—a truthful, honourable, and innocent boy. I know you are; and I do not like to see you kept in durance this way. We are now far at sea on our way to a foreign country. You must be sensible that you are now entirely in my power, and at my disposal, and that all your dependence must be on me. Swear then to me that you will never divulge the rueful scene, which you witnessed on the broad common among the furze, and I will instantly set you at liberty, and be kind to you. And to dispose you to comply, let me assure you that the day you disclose my secret is your last, and no power on earth can save you, even though I were at the distance of a thousand miles. I have ventured a dreadful stake, and must go through with it, cost what it will."

I perceived that all he had said was true, and that I had no safety but in compliance; and yearning to be above deck to behold the sun and the blue heavens, I there, in that dismal hole, took a dreadful oath never to mention it, or divulge it in any way, either on board, or in the country to which we were going. He appeared satisfied, and glad at my compliance, and loosed me with his own hand, telling me to wait on him at table, and appear as his confidential servant, which I promised, and performed as well as I could. But I had no happiness, for the secret of the double murder preyed on my heart, and I looked on myself as an accomplice. There was one thing in which my belief was fixed: that we never would reach any coast, for the ship would to a certainty be cast away, and every gale that we encountered I prepared for the last.

My master, for so I must now denominate him, seemed to have no fears of that nature. He drank and sung, and appeared as happy and merry as a man so gloomy of countenance could be. He was called Mr. Southman, and appeared the proprietor of the ship. We saw no land for seven weeks, but at length it appeared on our starboard side, and when I asked what country it was, I was told it was Carolina. I asked if it was near Jerusalem or Egypt, and the sailors laughed at me, and said that it was just to Jerusalem that I was going, and I think my heart never was so overjoyed in my life.

Honest Jasper has nearly as many chapters describing this voyage as I have lines, and I must still hurry on in order to bring his narrative into the compass of an ordinary tale, for though I have offered the manuscript complete to several booksellers, it has been uniformly rejected. And yet it is exceedingly amusing, and if not truth, tells very

like it. Among other things, he mentions a Mr. M'Kenzie from Ross-shire, as having been on board, and from some things he mentions relating to him I am sure I have met with him.

Suffice it to say, that they landed at what Jasper calls a grand city, named Savannah, which the sailors made him believe was Jerusalem; and when undeceived by his master, he wept. The captain and steward took their orders from Mr. Southman, hat in hand, and then he and his retinue sailed up the river in a small vessel, and latterly in a barge, until they came to a fine house on a level plain, so extensive that Jasper Kendale says, with great simplicity, "it looked to me to be bigger nor the whole world."

Here they settled; and here Jasper remained seven years as a sort of half idle servant, yet he never knew whether his master was proprietor of, or steward on, the estates. There is little interesting in this part of the work, save some comical amours with the slave girls, to which Jasper was a little subject, and his master ten times worse, by his account. There is one summing up of his character which is singular. It is in these emphatic words—"In short, I never saw a better master, nor a worse man."

But there is one thing asserted here which I do not believe. He avers that the one half of all the people in that country are slaves! Absolute slaves, and bought and sold in the market like sheep and cattle! "Then said the high-priest, Are these things so?"

At the end of seven years or thereby, there was one day that I was in the tobacco plantation with forty workers, when a gentleman came up to me from the river, and asked for Mr. Southman. My heart flew to my throat, and I could scarcely contain myself, for I knew him at once to be Mr. Thomas B——, the second son at Castle-Meldin. There were only two brothers in the family, and this was the youngest and the best. We having only exchanged a few words he did not in the least recognize me, and indeed it was impossible he could, so I said nothing to draw his attention, but knowing what I knew, I could not conceive what his mission to my master could import. I never more saw him alive; but the following morning, I knew by the countenance of my master that there was some infernal plot brewing within, for he had that look which I had never seen him wear but once before. There was no mistaking it. It was the cloven foot of Satan, and indicated certain destruction to some one. I had reason to suspect it would be myself, and so well convinced was I of this that I had resolved to fly, and try to get on board some ship. But I was mistaken. The bolt of hell struck elsewhere. The young stranger disappeared, after staying and being mightily caressed two days and nights; and shortly thereafter his body was thrown on the shore of the Savannah by the reflux of the tide, not far below the boundary of my master's estate. I went, with many others, and saw the body, and knew it well, and it was acknowledged both by my master and the house servants to have been a stranger gentleman that was in that country wanting to purchase land—that he had been entertained by Mr. Southman; but none could tell his name. He had been murdered and robbed, and his body thrown into the river, and no light whatever was cast on the circumstances of the crime by the investigation. The Georgians seemed greatly indifferent about the matter. I was never called or examined at all; and if I had, I know not what I would have said. I knew nothing of his death further than suspicion dictated, but of the identity of his person I was certain.

Immediately on this I was sent to an estate far up the country, on the fine table-lands, to assist a Mr. Courteny in managing it. I took a letter from my master to him, and was kindly received, and made superintendent of everything under Mr. Courteny. He was a delightful man, and held as delightful a place; but neither did he know whether Mr. Southman was the proprietor of these estates, or steward over them with a power of attorney. He knew they were purchased by one bearing quite another name; but he had exercised all the powers of a proprietor for a number of years, and had been sundry voyages over to Britain. It was a lucrative property, and he was held as a very great man.

Here I remained for three years. Among others of my master's satellites who attended me to that place there was a German called Allanstein. That man had come with us from England, and was one of them who bound and gagged me in the boat. But he was a pleasant old fellow, and I liked him, and was always kind to him. He was taken very ill; and on his deathbed he sent for me, and told me that he and another, whom he would not name, had orders to watch all my motions, and in nowise to suffer me to leave the country, but to shoot me. He said he would never see his master again, and he thought it best to warn me to be on my guard, and remain quietly where I was. He likewise told me that Mr. Southman had left America for some time, and he believed for ever. After giving me the charge of his concerns, and a handsome present, poor Allanstein died.

As long as I had no knowledge of this circumstance, I had no desire to leave the country, but the moment I knew I was watched like a wild beast, and liable to be murdered on mere suspicion, I grew impatient to be gone. There was one fellow, named Arnotti, whom I suspected, but had no means of learning the truth. I turned him out of our employment, but he remained on the estate, and lingered constantly near me. He had likewise come with us from England, and appeared to have plenty of money at command. I contrived however to give him the slip; and, escaping into South Carolina, I scarcely

stinted night or day till I was at Charlestown, where I got on board the *Elizabeth* sloop, bound for Liverpool. Then I breathed freely, accounting myself safe; and then also I was free from my oath, and at liberty to tell all that I had seen. The vessel, however, had not got her loading on board, and we lay in the harbour at the confluence of the rivers two days; but what was my astonishment to perceive, after we had heaved anchor, the wretch Arnotti on board along with me, brown with fatigue in the pursuit, and covered with dust. I was now certain that he was the remaining person who was sworn to take my life if I should offer to leave the state, and knew not what to do, as I was persuaded he would perform it at the risk of his own life. I had paid my freight to Britain, nevertheless I went on shore on Sullivan's Island, and suffered the vessel to proceed without me, and was now certain that I was quite safe, my enemy having gone on with the *Elizabeth*. I waited here long before a vessel passed to a right port, but at length I got one going to the Clyde, and took my passage in her; and after we were fairly out to sea, behold there my old friend Arnotti popped his head once more out of the forecastle, and eyed me with a delighted and malicious grin! I was quite confounded at again seeing this destroying angel haunting my motions, and said, "What is that murdering villain seeking here?"

The seamen stared; but he replied sharply, "Vat you say, Monsieur Ken-dale? You say me de moorderour? Vat you den? You help de moorderour, and keep him secret. Dat is de vay, is it?"

I then took the captain of the ship by himself, and told him what I suspected, and that I was certain the villain would find means of assassinating me. He at first laughed at me, and said he could not think I was so much of a coward as to be afraid of any single man; but perceiving me so earnest, he consented to disarm all the passengers, beginning with myself, and on none of them were any arms found save Arnotti, who had two loaded pistols and a dagger neatly concealed in his clothes. He was deprived of these, and put under a partial confinement, and then I had peace and rest.

For all this severity the unaccountable wretch tried to strangle Jasper by night just as they began to approach Ireland; he was however baffled, wounded, and tossed overboard, a circumstance afterwards deeply regretted. But Jasper makes such a long story that I am obliged to pass it over by the mere mention of it.

Jasper found his mother still alive, and very frail, his father dead, and his brethren and sisters all scattered; and he could find no one to whom to unburden his mind. He went next to Castle-Meldin, and there also found the young squire dead, and his brother Thomas *lost abroad!* whither he had gone to claim an estate, and the extensive domains were now held by Lord William E——le in right of his wife. The other ladies were likewise all married to men of rank. Old coachee, Jasper's mother's brother, was still living at the castle on the superannuated list, and to him Jasper unfolded by degrees his revolting and mysterious tale. The old man could not fathom or comprehend it. The remaining capabilities of his mind were inadequate to the grasp. He forgot one end of it ere he got half way to the other; and though at times he seemed to take deep interest in the incidents, before one could have noted any change in his countenance they had vanished altogether from his mind.

The two friends agreed on the propriety of acquainting Lord William with the circumstances, and after watching an opportunity for some time, they got him by himself in the shrubbery. I must give this in Jasper's own words.

"When the lord saw my uncle's white head, and the old laced hat held out afore him as if to beg for a bawbee, he kend by the motion that he wantit to speak till him. So he turns to us, and he says, 'Well, old coachee, what has your stupid head conceived it necessary to say to me to-day? Is the beer of the hall too weak?'

"'Wod, ye see, my lord, ye see that's no the thing. But this wee callant here, he tells me sic a story, ye see, that, wod, ye see, I canna believe't, 'at can I nae. He's a sister's son o' mine. Ye'll maybe mind o' him when ye were courtin' here. Oogh!'

"'What boy do you speak of, Andrew! Is it this boardly young man?'

"'Ay, to be sure. Him? hout! a mere kittlin, ye see. He's my sister Nanny's son, that was married to Joseph Kendale, ye ken. A very honest, upright man he was. But this callant has been abroad, ye see, my lord, and— What was this I was gaun to say?'

"'Some story you were talking of.'

"'Ay, wod, that's very true, my lord, an' weel mindit. Ye'll mind your eldest brother weel enough. Did ye ever ken what oord o' him?'

"'No; I am sorry to say I never did.'

"'And do you mind your sister-in-law, Miss Fanny, the bonniest o' them a'? Oogh! Or did ye ever ken what came o' her? (Lord William shook his head.) There's a chap can tell ye then. Lord forgie us, my lord, didna he murder them baith, an' then trail them away, first the tane and then the tither, and fling them intil a hole fifty faddom deep, ye see! Oogh! Wasna that the gate o't, callant?'

"Lord William burst out in laughter at the old man's ridiculous accusation; but I stopped him, assuring him that although my uncle's mind was unstable and wandering on a subject that affected him so much, I nevertheless had, nearly twelve years before, on the 7th day of October, seen that young lady murdered. Ay, led far away out to a wild common, like a lamb to the slaughter, and cruelly butchered in one instant, without having time given her to ask pardon of Heaven. And though I had

not seen his brother slain, I had seen him lying slain on the same spot, and was compelled, by a charged pistol held to my head, to carry both the bodies, and throw them into a pit.

"I never saw such a picture as the countenance of Lord William displayed. Consternation, horror, and mental pain were portrayed on it alternately, and it was at once manifest that at all events he had no hand nor foreknowledge of the foul transaction. He asked at first if I was not raving—if I was in my sound mind, and then made me recite the circumstances all over again, which I did, in the same way and order that I have set them down here. I told him also of the murder of his brother-in-law in the country of the Savannah, and that I was almost certain it was by the same hand. That I knew the city from which the young lady was abstracted, and thought I could know the house if taken to it; but I neither knew the way we went, the way by which we returned, nor what town it was at which I was forced aboard in the dark, so that the finding out the remains of the hapless pair appeared scarcely practicable. My identity was proven to Lord William's satisfaction, as well as my disappearance from the castle at the date specified; but no one, not even my old uncle, could remember in what way. The impression entertained was, that I had got drunk at the town, and been pressed aboard or persuaded on board one of his majesty's ships.

"Lord William charged me not to speak of it to any other about the castle, lest the story should reach the ears of his lady, on whom the effects might be dreadful at that period. So, taking me with him in the carriage, we proceeded to the chief town of the county—the one above mentioned—where he had me examined by the public authorities; but there my story did not gain implicit credit, and I found it would pass as an infamous romance unless I could point out the house from which the lady was taken, and the spot where the remains were deposited. The house I could not point out, though I perambulated the suburbs of the town over and over again. Everything was altered, and whole streets built where there were only straggling houses. Mr. Southman's name as an American planter was not known; so that these horrid murders, committed in open day in this land of freedom, were likely to be passed over without further investigation.

"I traversed the country day after day and week after week, searching for the broad common covered with furze, and the old open coal-pit into which I had cast the bodies of the comely pair. I searched till I became known to the shepherds and miners on those wastes, but all to no purpose—I could not find even the slightest resemblance in the outlines of the country, which still remained impressed on my memory—till one day I came to an old man casting turf whose face I thought I knew, with whom I entered into conversation, when he at once asked what I was looking for, for he had seen me, he said, traversing these commons so often without dog or gun that he wondered what I wanted. I told him all, day and date, and what I was looking for. The old fellow was never weary of listening to the tale of horror, but the impression it made on his feelings scattered his powers of recollection. He had never heard of the lady's name, but he guessed that of the gentleman of his own accord, remembering of his disappearance in that very way. It was understood by his family that he had been called out to fight a duel that morning, he said; but the circumstances were so confused in his memory that he intreated me to meet him at the same place the following day, and by that time, from his own recollection and that of others, he would be able to tell me something more distinctly.

"The next day I came as appointed, when he said he suspected that I was looking for the fatal spot at least thirty miles distant from where it was, for he had learned the place where Lord Richard E——le had been last seen, and by the direction in which he then rode it was evident the spot where he met his death could not be in that quarter; and that, moreover, if I would pay him well, he thought he could take me to the place, or near it, for he had heard of a spot where a great deal of blood had been shed which was never accounted for, and where the cries of a woman's ghost had been heard by night.

"I said I would give him five shillings a day as long as I detained him, which offer he accepted, and away we went, chatting about the 'terrible job,' as he called it. Lord Richard had been seen riding out very early in the morning at full speed with a gentleman, whose description tallied pretty closely with that of the assassin, even at that distance of time. We did not reach the spot that night, after travelling a whole day, but the next morning I began to perceive the landmarks so long remembered and so eagerly looked for. I was confounded at my stupidity, and never will comprehend it while I live. I now at once recognized the place. The common was partly inclosed and improven, but that part on which the open pits were situated remained the same. I knew the very bush from which I saw the body of the young nobleman drawn, and the spot where the next moment his betrothed fell dead across his breast. The traces of the streams of blood were still distinguishable by a darker green, and the yawning pit that received their remains stood open as at that day. I despatched the old hind in one direction, and I posted off in another to bring Lord William and all the connections of the two families together, to examine the remains and try to identify them. I had hard work to find him, for he had been to all the great trading houses in the west of England to find out the assassin's name. It occurred in none of their books. But there was one merchant who, after much consideration and search, found a letter, in which was the following sentence:—'My neighbour, Mr. Southman, has a large store of the articles,

which I could buy at such and such prices.' A list followed, and this was all. That gentleman engaged to write to his correspondent forthwith, as did many others; and in this state matters stood when I found him.

"A great number repaired to the spot. There were noblemen, knights, surgeons, and divines, and gaping peasants without number; there were pulleys, windlasses, baskets, coffins, and everything in complete preparation, both for a search, and the preservation of such remains as might be discovered. I went down with the first to a great depth. It was a mineral pit, and had a strong smell, as of sulphur mixed with turpentine; and I confess I was far from being at my ease. I was afraid the foul air would take flame; and, moreover, it was a frightsome thing to be descending into the bowels of the earth in search of the bones of murdered human beings. I expected to see some shadowy ghosts; and when the bats came buffing out of their holes, and put out our lights, I was almost beside myself. We had, however, a lamp of burning charcoal with us, and at length reached the water in safety. It was rather a sort of puddle than water, at that season, and little more than waist-deep. We soon found the bodies, fresh and whole as when flung in, but they were so laden with mire as not to be recognizable until taken to a stream and washed, and then the identity was acknowledged by every one to whom they were formerly known. The freshness of the bodies was remarkable, and viewed by the country people as miraculous; but I am persuaded, that if they had lain a century in that mineral puddle, they would have been the same. The bodies were pure, fair, and soft; but when handled, the marks of the fingers remained.

"It was now manifest that Lord Richard E——le had been murdered. He had been shot in the back by two pistol-bullets, both of which were extracted from the region of the heart. And—woe is my heart to relate it!—it appeared but *too* manifestly that the young lady had lived for some time in that frightful dungeon!

"Every effort was now made to discover the assassin. Officers were despatched to Savannah, with full powers from government; high rewards were offered for apprehending him, his person described, and these were published through all Europe; but the culprit could nowhere be found. A singular scene of villany was, however, elucidated, all transacted by that arch-villain, known by the name of Southman in Georgia, but nowhere else."

The part that follows this, in Mr. Kendale's narrative, I do not understand, nor am I aware that it is at all founded on facts. He says, that some rich merchants of Germany got an extensive grant of lands from King Charles the First, on the left bank of the Savannah, on condition of furnishing him with a set number of troops; that these merchants sent a strong colony of Germans as settlers to cultivate the district; and that after a long struggle with the natives, and other difficulties, they succeeded in making it a fine country and a lucrative speculation; but the original holders of the grant having made nothing but loss of it, and their successors disregarding it, the whole fell into the hands of the trustees, and ultimately into the hands of this infamous rascal, who first sold the whole colony to a company of British gentlemen, received the payment and returned as their manager, and shortly after sold it to the British government, and absconded. I cannot pretend to clear up this transaction, as I know nothing about the settlement of that colony, nor where to find it; so I must pass on to some other notable events in Jasper's life.

He was now established at Castle-Meldin as housesteward and butler, and, if we take his own account of it, he must have been an excellent servant. "I watched every wish and want of my lord and lady," he says, "both of whom I loved as myself, and I would generally present them with things they wanted before they asked for them. Indeed, I knew the commands of my lady's eye as well as those of her tongue, and rather better." Jasper must have been a most valuable servant, and no one can wonder that he was a favourite. "I had likewise learned to keep books and accounts of all kinds with Mr. Courteny, and that with so great accurateness, that at the end of the year I could have made ends meet in the castle expenses to the matter of a few pounds." What must the world think of such *accurateness* as this? I have known a gentleman in business go over the whole of his books for a twelvemonth, because they did not balance by threepence. That man Jasper would have taken for a fool, knowing that it is easier to discover that such a sum is wanting than how to make it up.

"I grew more and more into favour, until at length I was treated like a friend, and no more like a menial servant, and the mysterious, but certain circumstances of the murders, which it was impossible to keep concealed, reaching my lady's ear, so much affected her health, which before was delicate, that her physicians strongly recommended a change of climate. Preparations were accordingly made for our departure into the south of Europe, and it was arranged that I should travel with them as a companion, but subordinate so far as to take the charge of everything; pay all accounts, hire horses, furnish the table, acting as steward and secretary both. I was to sit at table with my lord, be called Mr. Kendale, and introduced to his friends."

The journey through France I must leave out, it being merely a tourist's journal, and not very intelligible. They tarried for some time at Paris, then at Lyons, at both of which places Mr. Kendale met with some capital adventures. They then crossed into Tuscany; but Mr. Kendale seems to have had little taste for the sublime or beautiful, for he only says of the Alps, "It is an horrid country, and the

roads very badly laid out." And of the valley of the Arno—"The climate was so good here, and the sky so pure, that my lord resolved to remain in the country till his lady got quite better, as she was coming round every day." At Florence Lord E——le had an introduction to a Count Sonnini, who showed them all manner of kindness, and gave many great entertainments on their account. He was a confidant of the grand-duke's, and a man of great power both in the city and country, and Mr. Kendale is never weary of describing his bounty and munificence. But now comes the catastrophe.

"One day the count had been showing my lord through the grand cathedral, which is a fine old kirk; and then through the gallery of the medicines (the Medicis perhaps), filled with pictures and statutes (qu.?) many of them a shame to be seen, but which my gentlemen liked the best. The Count Sonnini, perceiving that I did not know where to look, put his arm within mine, and leading me forward, said in his broken English, 'Tell me now, Mashi Kendale, vat you do tink of dis Venus?'—'She is a soncy, thriving-like quean, my lord count,' said I, 'and does not look as she wanted either her health or her meat; it is a pity she should be in want of clothes.'

"But the next scene was of a different description. On turning from the duke's palazzo about a gunshot, the count says to us, 'I can show you a scene here that the like is not perhaps to be seen in the world. There are none admitted but members, and such as members introduce; and as I have been admitted, I will claim a privilege which they dare not refuse me.' He then led us through a long gallery paved with marble, and down some flights of steps, I do not know how far, till, coming to a large door, he rung for admittance. A small iron shutter was opened in the door, and a porter demanded the names and qualities of the guests. 'The Count Sonnini and two friends foreigners,' was the reply. The iron shutter sprung again into its place, and we waited long. The count lost patience and rung again, when the shutter again opened, and a person, apparently of high consequence, addressing the count politely, reminded him that he was asking a privilege which it was out of the society's power to grant; and intreating him to rest satisfied till some future day, that he and his friends could be introduced in the usual form. My lord intreated to be gone, but the count was a proud man and aware of his power and influence, and go he would not, but requested to see the Marquis Piombino. The marquis came, when the count requested him, in a tone that scarcely manifested the brooking of a refusal, to introduce him and his two friends. The marquis hesitated—returned again to consult the authorities, and finally we were admitted, though with apparent reluctance. This was a gambling house on a large scale, in which hundreds of people were engaged at all manner of games, while the money was going like slate stones.

"I cannot describe it, nor will I attempt it. It was splendidly lighted up, for it had no windows, and the beams of the sun had never entered there. There were boxes all around, and a great open space in the middle for billiards and a promenade. My lord and the count began betting at once, to be like others, but my attention was soon fixed on one object, and that alone; for at one of the banking tables I perceived the identical Mr. Southman, seated on high as a judge and governor. I saw his eyes following my lord through the hall with looks of manifest doubt and trepidation, but when the count and he vanished into one of the distant boxes, and the villain's looks dropped upon me almost close beside him, I shall never forget the fiendish expression of horror legible in his countenance. With the deep determined look, indicative of self-interest, and that alone, in despite of all other emotions of the soul, there was at this time one of alarm, of which I had never witnessed a trait before. It was that of the arch-fiend when discovered in the garden of Eden.

"He could attend no further to the banking business, for I saw that he dreaded I would go that instant and give him up. So, deputing another in his place, he descended from his seat, and putting his arm in mine, he led me into an antechamber. I had no reason to be afraid of any danger, for no arms of any kind are allowed within that temple of vice and extravagance. But I have something cowardly in my constitution, else I know not how it happened, but I *was* afraid. I was awed before that monster of iniquity, and incapable of acting up to the principles which I cherished in my heart.

"He began by testifying his surprise at seeing me in that country; and at once inquired in what capacity I had come. I answered ingenuously, that I had come as the friend and travelling companion of Lord William E——le. 'That is to say, you were informed of my retreat, and are come in order to have me apprehended?' said he.

"I declared that we had no such information, and came with no such intent; and was proceeding to relate to him the import of our journey, when he interrupted me. 'I know of all that has taken place in England,' said he, 'relating to that old and unfortunate affair, and have read the high rewards offered for my apprehension. You have been the cause of all this, and have banished me from society. Yet you know I preserved your life when it was in my power and very natural for me to have taken it. Yea, for the space of seven years your life was in my power every day and every hour.'

"'I beg pardon, sir,' said I, 'my life was never in your power further than it was in the power of every other assassin. As long as I do nothing that warrants the taking of my life, I deny that my life is in any man's power, or in that of any court on earth.'

"'Very well,' said he, 'we shall not attempt to settle this problematical point at present. But I

have showed you much kindness in my time. Will you promise me this, that for forty-eight hours you will not give me up to justice? I have many important things to settle. But it would be unfair to deprive you of your reward, which would be a fortune to you. Therefore, all that I request of you is to grant me forty-eight hours before you deliver me up to justice. After that period I care not how soon. I shall deliver up myself, and take my chance for that part of it. Will you promise me this?'

"'I will,' said I. 'There is my hand on it.' I was conscious I was doing wrong, but I *could* not help it. He thanked me, shook my hand, and squeezed it, and said he expected as much from my generous nature, adding, 'It is highly ungenerous of the E——les this procedure; infamously ungenerous of them and their friends. But they do not know all. I wish they did, which they never will, nor ever can now.'

"'No,' said I, 'they do not know that you robbed and murdered their kinsman and brother, Mr. Thomas of Castle Meldin.'

"'He stared me in the face—his lip quivered—his shrivelled cheek turned into a ghastly paleness, and his bloodshot eye darted backward as it were into the ventricles of the brain. 'Hold your peace, sir; I never robbed the person of man or woman in my life!' said he, vehemently.

"'True, the dead body might have been robbed, though not by your hands, yet by your orders,' said I. 'And that you murdered him, or caused him to be murdered, I know as well as that I now see you standing before me.'

"'It will haply puzzle you to prove that,' said he; 'but no more of it. Here is a sealed note, which you may open and peruse at your leisure. It will convince you more of my innocence than anything I can say.'—And so saying, he went up to his deputy at the bank, and conferred with him a few minutes, and then went as if into one of the back boxes, and I saw no more of him.

"I was sensible I had done wrong, but yet knew not well how I could have done otherwise, being ignorant of the mode of arresting culprits in that strange country. I resolved, however, to keep my word, and at the same time take measures for the fulfilment of my duty. But the first thing I did was to open the note, which was to convince me of my old master's innocence; and behold it was a blank, only inclosing a cheque on a house in Leghorn for a thousand gold ducats.

"I was quite affronted at this. It was such a quiz on my honesty as I had never experienced. But what could I do! I could do nothing with it but put it up in my pocket, and while I was standing in deep meditation how to proceed, I was accosted by an old gentleman, who inquired if I had been a former acquaintance of the baron's?

"'Of the baron's? what baron?' said I.

"'De Iskar,' said he, 'Baron Guillaume de Iskar, the gentleman who addressed you so familiarly just now?'

"I replied that I was an old acquaintance, having known him many years in a distant quarter of the world.

"'That will be viewed as a singular incident here,' said he; 'and will excite intense curiosity, as you are the only gentleman that ever entered Florence who knows anything where he has sojourned, or to what country he belongs. And I do assure you, he does not miss to lie under dark suspicions; for, though he has the riches of an empire, none knows from whence they flow, and he is never seen save in this hall; for as to his own house, no stranger was ever known to enter it.'

"'I am engaged to be there, however,' said I; 'and, supposing that every one would know his direction, I forgot to take it from himself.'

"'His house is not a hundred yards from where we stand,' said he; 'and has a private entrance to this suite of rooms; but as for his outer gate, it is never opened.

"This being the very information I wanted, I left the garrulous old gentleman abruptly, and went in search of my master, to whom I related the fact, that I had discovered the mysterious assassin of his three relatives, and requested him to lose no time in procuring a legal warrant from the grand-duke and the other authorities for his apprehension. The interest of the Count Sonnini easily procured us all that was required, and what assistance we judged requisite for securing the delinquent; but yet, before the forms were all gone through, it was the evening of the next day. In the meantime, the count set spies on the premises to prevent the baron's escape, for he seemed the most intent of all for securing him, and engaged all who hired horses and carriages in the city, to send him information of every one engaged for thirty successive hours, for I was still intent on redeeming my pledge. At midnight, we were informed that two coaches were engaged from the Bridge Hotel, at two in the morning, but where they were to take up the passengers was not known. I had four policemen well mounted, and four horsemen of the guard, and myself was the ninth. Signor Veccia, the head of the police, had the command, but was obliged to act by my directions. At the hour appointed the carriages started from the hotel. We dogged them to the corner of the duke's palazzo, where a party of gentlemen, muffled up in cloaks, entered hastily, and the carriages drove off in different directions, one towards Costello, and the other towards Leghorn. We knew not what to do. Veccia got into a great rage at me, and swore most fearfully, for he wanted to take up the whole party at once on suspicion, but I would not consent to it; for I always acted wrong, although at present I believed myself to be standing on a point of high honour.

"'I must follow this one,' said Veccia; 'because

it will soon be out of the duke's territories; and if the party once reach the church's dominions, I dare not touch one of them. Take you four horsemen; I'll take three; and do you follow that carriage till you ascertain, at least, who is in it. I shall keep close sight of this, for here the offender is sure to be, though I do not know him.'

"We then galloped off, in order to keep within hearing of the carriage-wheels, but it was with the greatest difficulty we could trace them, short as their start had been; for they had crossed at the lowest bridge, and then turned up a lane at a right angle; and this circuitous way of setting out almost convinced me that the baron was in that carriage. At a place called Empoli, on the left bank of the Arno, a long stage from Florence, we missed them, and rode on. They had turned abruptly into a court, and alighted to change the horses, while we kept on the road towards Leghorn for four miles, before we learned that no carriage had passed that way. This was a terrible rebuff. We had nothing for it but to take a short refreshment and return to Empoli, where we learned that the carriage with two muffled gentlemen in it, had set out to the southward with fresh horses, and was an hour and a half a-head of us. A clean pursuit now ensued, but not for twenty miles did we come again in sight of the carriage, and then it was going on again with fresh horses, at the rate of from ten to twelve miles an hour. My time was now expired, and I was at full liberty to give one of the greatest wretches who ever breathed the breath of life up to justice. But how to reach him, there lay the difficulty; for the guardsmen would not leave their own horses, and were beginning to get rather cross at so long and so vain a pursuit.

"I gave each of our horses a bottle of wine, which recruited their spirits remarkably; and neither did I spare the best of wine upon their riders. After a run of I daresay seventy and odd miles (considering the round-about ways we took), we fairly run the old fox to earth, at an old town called Peombyna, or some such name; and just as he and his friend stepped out of the carriage, there were the guards, policemen, and I, entering the court. He rushed into the hotel. I gave the word and followed; but at the very first entry to the house, the number of entries confused me, and I lost him. Not so the policemen; inured to their trade, they kept watch outside, and it was not long till one of them gave the alarm in the back settlements, the baron having escaped by a window. I was with the policemen in a minute, for I flew out of the same window; and the back of the hotel being toward the cliff that surrounds the town all toward the island of Elba, he had no other retreat but into that. I think he was not aware of what was before him, for he was at least a hundred and fifty yards before us; but when he came to the point of the promontory he looked hastily all about, and perceiving no egress, he faced round, presenting a large horse pistol in each hand. We were armed with a pistol each, and sabres. I would nevertheless gladly have waited for the coming up of our assistants, now when we had him at bay. But whether from fondness of the high reward, or mere temerity, I know not, only certain it is Cesario the policeman would not be restrained. I rather drew back, not caring to rush on a desperate man with two cocked pistols presented, and pistols of such length, too, that they would have shot any man through the body at thirty yards' distance, while ours were mere crackers. But Cesario mocked me, and ran forward, so that I was fain to accompany him. Mr. Southman, *alias* Guillaume Suddermens Baron de Iskar, stood there undaunted, with a derisive grin, presenting his two huge pistols. We held out our two little ones, still advancing. Luckily I was on the right hand, as behoved the commander of the expedition, and of course opposed to his left hand pistol, which lessened my chance of being shot. For all that, I could not for my life help sidling half behind Cesario the policeman. When we came, as far as I remember, close upon him, even so close as seven or eight yards, he and Cesario fired both at the same instant. The latter fell. I rushed onward; and, not having time to change hands, he fired his pistol almost close on my face. As the Lord graciously decreed, he missed. 'Now, wretch, I have you!' cried I; 'therefore yield, and atone for all your horrid crimes!'

"My three armed assistants came running along the verge of the cliff which draws to a point; and escape being impossible, he, without so much as shrinking, took a race, and leaped from the top of that fearful precipice. I believe he entertained a last hope of clearing the rock and plunging into the tide; but I being close upon him, even so close as to have stretched out my hand to lay hold of him, saw his descent. He had not well begun to descend, ere he uttered a loud scream; yet it was a scream more of derision than terror. We perceived that he had taken a wrong direction, and that he had not cleared the whole cliff. A jutting point touched him, and, as I thought, scarcely touched him, ere he plunged head foremost into the sea.

"He made no effort to swim or move, but floated seaward with his head down below water. I cried to my assistants to save his life, for the sake of all that was dear to the relations of the murdered persons. But they were long in finding their way behind those fearful rocks, for though there was a cut stair, they did not know of it, and before they got him to land, he was 'past speaking;' for his left loin was out of joint, and his back-bone broken. We carried him to the hotel, and took all the pains of him we could, for I had great hopes of a last confession, explaining his motives for putting so many innocent persons of high rank to death. The satisfaction was, however, denied me. As long as he knew me, he only showed a ferocity indicative of

hatred and revenge. The next morning he died, and the motives which urged him on to the murders he committed must in part remain a mystery till the day of doom.

"It was said in England that the circumstance of his having got a carriage, horses, and servant from Castle Meldin, indicated a commission from one or another of that family. I think differently; and that he got these on false pretences. That he was a wooer of Miss Fanny's, and the favoured one by the family, I afterwards satisfactorily ascertained; but on what account he exacted so dreadful a retribution, both of the lady herself and the favoured lover, it is in vain endeavouring to calculate with any degree of certainty, for the moving principles of his dark soul were inscrutable.

"That the young and gallant Lord E——le was foully betrayed to his death was afterwards sufficiently proved. A stranger, suiting Mr. Southman's description, called on him and spent the greater part of the day with him, and the two seemed on the most friendly terms. Toward evening a gentleman called with a note to Lord E——le, and requested an answer. This was a challenge—a forged one, doubtless—signed Ashley or Aspley, it could not be distinguished which, requesting a meeting at an early hour of the morning on some pretended point of honour. The young lord instantly accepted the challenge, and naturally asked his associate to accompany him as second; so the two continued at the wine overnight, and rode out together at break of day. So that it is quite apparent he had taken the opportunity of shooting him behind his back while waiting in vain on the common for their opponents. The death of the lovely Fanny and that of her amiable brother, as they exceed other acts in cruelty, so they do in mystery. But it became probable that all these murders formed only a modicum of what that unaccountable wretch had perpetrated.

"His body, and that of poor Cesario, the too brave policeman, we took back with us in the carriage to Florence, but what became of the gentleman who fled along with the baron was never known. He was probably an accomplice, but we were too long in thinking of him.

"The story, which I was called to relate before the grand-duke, created a horrible interest in Florence, while every circumstance was corroborated by my lord and lady. The travelling trunk belonging to the deceased was opened. It contained great riches, which were claimed by the arch-duke as the property of the state. I thought my assistants and I had the best right to them, but I said little, having secured a thousand gold ducats before. We however got a share of this likewise.

"In his house was found a young lady of great beauty, whom he had brought up and educated, and two female domestics; but they only knew him as the Baron de Iskar (or rather Ischel, as they pronounced it), and little could be elicited from them save that there were often nightly meetings in his house. But when his strong box was opened, the keys of which were found in his trunk, such store of riches and jewels of all descriptions never before appeared in Florence. It had been the depository of all the brigands in Italy, if not of Europe, for there were trinkets in it of every nation. Among other things there were twenty-seven English gold watches, and a diamond necklace which had once belonged to the Queen of France, valued at £500,000. The state of Tuscany was enriched, and a more overjoyed man than Duke Ferdinand I never saw. And it having been wholly in and through my agency that he obtained all this treasure, his commendations of me were without bounds. He indeed gave me some rich presents, but rather, as I thought, with a grudge, and a sparing hand; but, to make amends for his parsimony, he created me a peer of the ducky, by the title of Baron St. Gio, with the heritage of an old fortalice of that name.

"It would not do for me to serve any more my beloved lord and lady, for it would have been laughable to have heard them calling 'Sir Baron,' or 'My Lord St. Gio, bring me so and so,' therefore was I obliged to hire a separate house of my own wherein to see my friends, although I lived most with my benefactors. I had besides another motive for this, which was to marry the beautiful young ward of the late Baron de Iskar, whom I conceived to be now left destitute. Her name was Rose Weiland, of Flemish extract, and natural qualities far above common; so we were married with great feasting and rejoicing about a month before we left Florence."

It turned out that this lovely Fleming, Rose Weiland, now Lady St. Gio, who was thus left destitute, proved herself to have had some good natural qualities. She had helped herself liberally of the robber's store, for she had one casket of jewels alone which her husband admits to have been worth an earldom. Riches now flowed on our new baron: for, besides all that he amassed at Florence, and all that his spouse brought him, he exacted the full of the offered reward from his benefactors, which amounted to a great sum. He brought his lady to Lancashire, but she disliked the country, and they retired to Flanders, and there purchased an estate. She was living so late as 1736, for she was visited in the summer of that year by Lady Helen Douglas and the Honourable Mrs. Murray, at her villa on the Seine, above Brussels. Into their hands she put several curiosities of former days, and among others her deceased husband's MS., from which I have extracted these eventful incidents.

THE MYSTERIOUS BRIDE.

A GREAT number of people now-a-days are beginning broadly to insinuate that there are no such things as ghosts, or spiritual beings visible to mortal sight. Even Sir Walter Scott is turned renegade, and, with his stories made up of half and half, like Nathaniel Gow's toddy, is trying to throw cold water on the most certain, though most impalpable phenomena of human nature. The bodies are daft. Heaven mend their wits! Before they had ventured to assert such things I wish they had been where I have often been, or in particular where the Laird of Birkendelly was on St. Lawrence's Eve, in the year 1777, and sundry times subsequent to that.

Be it known then to every reader of this relation of facts that happened in my own remembrance, that the road from Birkendelly to the great muckle village of Balmawhapple (commonly called the muckle town, in opposition to the little town that stood on the other side of the burn)—that road, I say, lay between two thorn hedges, so well kept by the laird's hedger, so close and so high, that a rabbit could not have escaped from the highway into any of the adjoining fields. Along this road was the laird riding on the eve of St. Lawrence in a careless, indifferent manner, with his hat to one side and his cane dancing a hornpipe on the crutch of the saddle before him. He was moreover chanting a song to himself, and I have heard people tell what song it was too. There was once a certain, or rather uncertain bard, yclept Robert Burns, who made a number of good songs; but this that the laird sung was an amorous song of great antiquity, which, like all the said bard's best songs, was sung one hundred and fifty years before he was born. It began thus:—

"I am the Laird of Windy-wa's,
I cam nae here without a cause
An' I hae gotten forty fa's
In coming o'er the knowe, Joe.
The night it is baith wind and weet;
The morn it will be snaw and sleet;
My shoon are frozen to my feet;
Oh, rise an' let me in, Joe!
Let me in this ae night," &c. &c.

This song was the laird singing, while, at the same time, he was smudging and laughing at the catastrophe, when, ere ever aware, he beheld a short way before him an uncommonly elegant and beautiful girl walking in the same direction with him. "Ay," said the laird to himself, "here is something very attractive indeed! Where the deuce can she have sprung from? She must have risen out of the earth, for I never saw her till this breath. Well, I declare I have not seen such a female figure. I wish I had such an assignation with her as the Laird of Windy-wa's had with his sweetheart."

As the laird was half-thinking half-speaking this to himself, the enchanting creature looked back at him with a motion of intelligence that she knew what he was half-saying half-thinking, and then vanished over the summit of the rising ground before him, called the Birky Brow. "Ay, go your ways!" said the laird, "I see by you you'll not be very hard to overtake. You cannot get off the road, and I'll have a chat with you before you make the Deer's Den."

The laird jogged on. He did not sing the "Laird of Windy-wa's" any more, for he felt a sort of stifling about his heart; but he often repeated to himself, "She's a very fine woman! a very fine woman indeed; and to be walking here by herself! I cannot comprehend it."

When he reached the summit of the Birky Brow he did not see her, although he had a longer view of the road than before. He thought this very singular, and began to suspect that she wanted to escape him, although apparently rather lingering on him before. "I shall have another look at her, however," thought the laird, and off he set at a flying trot. No; he came first to one turn, then another;—there was nothing of the young lady to be seen. "Unless she take wings and fly away I shall be up with her," quoth the laird, and off he set at the full gallop.

In the middle of his career he met with Mr. M'Murdie of Aulton, who hailed him with, "Hilloa, Birkendelly! where the deuce are you fleeing at that rate?"

"I was riding after a woman," said the laird with great simplicity, reining in his steed.

"Then I am sure no woman on earth can long escape you, unless she be in an air-balloon."

"I don't know that. Is she far gone?"

"In which way do you mean?

"In this."

"Aha-ha-ha! Hee-hee-hee!" nichered M'Murdie, misconstruing the laird's meaning.

"What do you laugh at, my dear sir? Do you know her, then?"

"Ho-ho-ho! Hee-hee-hee! How should I, or how can I know her, Birkendelly, unless you inform me who she is?"

"Why, that is the very thing I want to know of you. I mean the young lady whom you met just now."

"You are raving, Birkendelly. I met no young lady, nor is there a single person on the road I have come by, while you know that for a mile and a half forward your way, she could not get out of it."

"I know that," said the laird, biting his lip and looking greatly puzzled; "but confound me if I understand this, for I was within speech of her just now on the top of the Birky Brow there; and, when I think of it, she could not have been even thus far as yet. She had on a pure white gauze frock, a small green bonnet and feathers, and a green veil, which, flung back over her left shoulder, hung below her waist, and was altogether such an engaging figure that no man could have passed her on the road without taking some note of her. Are you not making game of me? Did you not really meet with her?"

"On my word of truth and honour, I did not. Come, ride back with me and we shall meet her still, depend on it. She has given you the go-by on the road. Let us go; I am only going to call at the mill about some barley for the distillery, and will return with you to the big town."

Birkendelly returned with his friend. The sun was not yet set, yet M'Murdie could not help observing that the laird looked thoughtful and confused, and not a word could he speak about anything save this lovely apparition with the white frock and the green veil; and lo, when they reached the top of the Birky Brow, there was the maiden again before them, and exactly at the same spot where the laird first saw her before, only walking in the contrary direction.

"Well, this is the most extraordinary thing that I ever knew!" exclaimed the laird.

"What is it, sir?" said M'Murdie.

"How that young lady could have eluded me," returned the laird; "see, here she is still."

"I beg your pardon, sir, I don't see her. Where is she?"

"There, on the other side of the angle; but you are short-sighted. See, there she is ascending the other eminence in her white frock and green veil, as I told you. What a lovely creature!"

"Well, well, we have her fairly before us now, and shall see what she is like at all events," said M'Murdie.

Between the Birky Brow and this other slight eminence, there is an obtuse angle of the road at the part where it is lowest, and, in passing this, the two friends necessarily lost sight of the object of their curiosity. They pushed on at a quick pace—cleared the low angle—the maiden was not there! They rode full speed to the top of the eminence from whence a long extent of road was visible before them—there was no human creature in view. M'Murdie laughed aloud; but the laird turned pale as death, and bit his lip. His friend asked at him good-humouredly, why he was so much affected. He said, because he could not comprehend the meaning of this singular apparition or illusion: and it troubled him the more, as he now remembered a dream of the same nature which he had had, and which terminated in a dreadful manner.

"Why, man, you are dreaming still," said M'Murdie; "but never mind. It is quite common for men of your complexion to dream of beautiful maidens, with white frocks and green veils, bonnets, feathers, and slender waists. It is a lovely image, the creation of your own sanguine imagination, and you may worship it without any blame. Were her shoes black or green? And her stockings, did you note them? The symmetry of the limbs I am sure you did! Good-bye; I see you are not disposed to leave the spot. Perhaps she will appear to you again."

So saying, M'Murdie rode on towards the mill, and Birkendelly, after musing for some time, turned his beast's head slowly round, and began to move towards the great muckle village.

The laird's feelings were now in terrible commotion. He was taken beyond measure with the beauty and elegance of the figure he had seen; but he remembered, with a mixture of admiration and horror, that a dream of the same enchanting object had haunted his slumbers all the days of his life: yet, how singular that he should never have recollected the circumstance till now! But further, with the dream there were connected some painful circumstances, which, though terrible in their issue, he could not recollect so as to form them into any degree of arrangement.

As he was considering deeply of these things, and riding slowly down the declivity, neither dancing his cane, nor singing the "Laird of Windy-wa's," he lifted up his eyes, and there was the girl on the same spot where he saw her first, walking deliberately up the Birky Brow. The sun was down: but it was the month of August, and a fine evening, and the laird, seized with an unconquerable desire to see and speak with that incomparable creature, could restrain himself no longer, but shouted out to her to stop till he came up. She beckoned acquiescence, and slackened her pace into a slow movement. The laird turned the corner quickly, but when he had rounded it, the maiden was still there, though on the summit of the Brow. She turned round, and, with an ineffable smile and curtsy, saluted him, and again moved slowly on. She vanished gradually beyond the summit, and while the green feathers were still nodding in view, and so nigh that the laird could have touched them with a fishing-rod, he reached the top of the Brow himself. There was no living soul there, nor onward, as far as his view reached. He now trembled every limb, and, without knowing what he did, rode straight on to the big town, not daring well to return and see what he had seen for three several times; and, certain he would see it again when the shades of evening were deepening, he deemed it proper and prudent to decline the pursuit of such a phantom any further.

He alighted at the Queen's Head, called for some brandy and water, and quite forgot what was his errand to the great muckle town that afternoon, there being nothing visible to his mental sight but lovely fairy images, with white gauze frocks and green veils. His friend, Mr. M'Murdie, joined him; they drank deep, bantered, reasoned, got angry, reasoned themselves calm again, and still all would not do. The laird was conscious that he had seen the beautiful apparition, and, moreover, that she was the very maiden, or the resemblance of her, who, in the irrevocable decrees of Providence, was destined to be his. It was in vain that M'Murdie reasoned of impressions on the imagination, and

> "Of fancy moulding in the mind,
> Light visions on the passing wind."

Vain also was a story that he told him of a relation of his own, who was greatly harassed by the apparition of an officer in a red uniform, that haunted him day and night, and had very nigh put him quite distracted several times; till at length his physician found out the nature of this illusion so well, that he knew, from the state of his pulse, to an hour when the ghost of the officer would appear; and by bleeding, low diet, and emollients, contrived to keep the apparition away altogether.

The laird admitted the singularity of this incident, but not that it was one in point; for the one, he said, was imaginary, and the other real; and that no conclusions could convince him in opposition to the authority of his own senses. He accepted of an invitation to spend a few days with M'Murdie and his family; but they all acknowledged afterwards that the laird was very much like one bewitched.

As soon as he reached home, he went straight to the Birky Brow, certain of seeing once more the angelic phantom; but she was not there. He took each of his former positions again and again, but the desired vision would in nowise make its appearance. He tried every day, and every hour of the day, all with the same effect, till he grew absolutely desperate, and had the audacity to kneel on the spot, and intreat of Heaven to see her. Yes, he called on Heaven to see her once more, whatever she was, whether a being of earth, heaven, or hell!

He was now in such a state of excitement that he could not exist; he grew listless, impatient, and sickly; took to his bed, and sent for M'Murdie and the doctor; and the issue of the consultation was, that Birkendelly consented to leave the country for a season, on a visit to his only sister in Ireland, whither we must accompany him for a short space.

His sister was married to Captain Bryan, younger of Scoresby, and they two lived in a cottage on the estate, and the captain's parents and sisters at Scoresby Hall. Great was the stir and preparation when the gallant young Laird of Birkendelly arrived at the cottage, it never being doubted that he came to forward a second bond of connection with the family, which still contained seven dashing sisters, all unmarried, and all alike willing to change that solitary and helpless state for the envied one of matrimony—a state highly popular among the young women of Ireland. Some of the Misses Bryan had now reached the years of womanhood, several of them scarcely; but these small disqualifications made no difference in the estimation of the young ladies themselves; each and all of them brushed up for the competition, with high hopes and unflinching resolutions. True, the elder ones tried to check the younger in their good-natured, forthright, Irish way; but they retorted, and persisted in their superior pretensions. Then there was such shopping in the county-town! It was so boundless, that the credit of the Hall was finally exhausted, and the old squire was driven to remark, that "Och and to be sure it was a dreadful and tirrabell concussion, to be put upon the equipment of seven daughters all at the same moment, as if the young gentleman could marry them all! Och, then, poor dear shoul, he would be after finding that one was sufficient, if not one too many. And therefore, there was no occasion, none at all, at all, and that there was not, for any of them to rig out more than one."

It was hinted that the laird had some reason for complaint at this time; but as the lady sided with her daughters, he had no chance. One of the items of his account was, thirty-seven buckling-combs, then greatly in vogue. There were black combs, pale combs, yellow combs, and gilt ones, all to suit or set off various complexions; and if other articles bore any proportion at all to these, it had been better for the laird and all his family that Birkendelly had never set foot in Ireland.

The plan was all concocted. There was to be a grand dinner at the Hall, at which the damsels were to appear in all their finery. A ball was to follow, and note be taken which of the young ladies was their guest's choice, and measures taken accordingly. The dinner and the ball took place; and what a pity I may not describe that entertainment, the dresses, and the dancers, for they were all exquisite in their way, and *outré* beyond measure. But such details only serve to derange a winter evening's tale such as this.

Birkendelly having at this time but one model for his choice among womankind, all that ever he did while in the presence of ladies, was to look out for some resemblance to her, the angel of his fancy; and it so happened, that in one of old Bryan's daughters named Luna, or more familiarly, Loony, he perceived, or thought he perceived, some imaginary similarity in form and air to the lovely apparition. This was the sole reason why he was incapable of taking his eyes off from her the whole of that night; and this incident settled the point, not only with the old people, but even the young ladies were forced, after every exertion on their own parts, to "yild the pint to their sister Loony, who cer-

tainly was not the most genteelest nor most handsomest of that good-looking fimily."

The next day Lady Luna was despatched off to the cottage in grand style, there to live hand and glove with her supposed lover. There was no standing all this. There were the two parrocked together, like a ewe and a lamb, early and late; and though the laird really appeared to have, and probably had, some delight in her company, it was only in contemplating that certain indefinable air of resemblance which she bore to the sole image impressed on his heart. He bought her a white gauze frock, a green bonnet and feathers, with a veil, which she was obliged to wear thrown over her left shoulder; and every day after, six times a day, was she obliged to walk over a certain eminence at a certain distance before her lover. She was delighted to oblige him; but still when he came up, he looked disappointed, and never said, "Luna, I love you; when are we to be married?" No, he never said any such thing, for all her looks and expressions of fondest love; for, alas, in all this dalliance, he was only feeding a mysterious flame, that preyed upon his vitals, and proved too severe for the powers either of reason or religion to extinguish. Still time flew lighter and lighter by, his health was restored, the bloom of his cheek returned, and the frank and simple confidence of Luna had a certain charm with it, that reconciled him to his sister's Irish economy. But a strange incident now happened to him which deranged all his immediate plans.

He was returning from angling one evening, a little before sunset, when he saw Lady Luna awaiting him on his way home. But instead of brushing up to meet him as usual, she turned, and walked up the rising ground before him. "Poor sweet girl! how condescending she is," said he to himself, "and how like she is in reality to the angelic being whose form and features are so deeply impressed on my heart! I now see it is no fond or fancied resemblance. It is real! real! real! How I long to clasp her in my arms, and tell her how I love her; for, after all, that is the girl that is to be mine, and the former a vision to impress this the more on my heart."

He posted up the ascent to overtake her. When at the top she turned, smiled, and curtsied. Good heavens! it was the identical lady of his fondest adoration herself, but lovelier, far lovelier than ever. He expected every moment that she would vanish as was her wont; but she did not—she awaited him, and received his embraces with open arms. She was a being of real flesh and blood, courteous, elegant, and affectionate. He kissed her hand, he kissed her glowing cheek, and blessed all the powers of love who had thus restored her to him again, after undergoing pangs of love such as man never suffered.

"But, dearest heart, here we are standing in the middle of the highway," said he; "suffer me to conduct you to my sister's house, where you shall have an apartment with a child of nature having some slight resemblance to yourself." She smiled, and said, "No; I will not sleep with Lady Luna to-night. Will you please to look round you, and see where you are." He did so, and behold they were standing on the Birky Brow—on the only spot where he had ever seen her. She smiled at his embarrassed look, and asked if he did not remember aught of his coming over from Ireland. He said he thought he did remember something of it, but love with him had long absorbed every other sense. He then asked her to his own house, which she declined, saying she could only meet him on that spot till after their marriage, which could not be before St. Lawrence's Eve come three years. "And now," said she, "we must part. My name is Jane Ogilvie, and you were betrothed to me before you were born. But I am come to release you this evening, if you have the slightest objection."

He declared he had none, and kneeling swore the most solemn oath to be hers for ever, and to meet her there on St. Lawrence's Eve next, and every St. Lawrence's Eve until that blessed day on which she had consented to make him happy by becoming his own for ever. She then asked him affectionately to exchange rings with her, in pledge of their faith and truth, in which he joyfully acquiesced; for she could not have then asked any conditions which, in the fulness of his heart's love, he would not have granted; and after one fond and affectionate kiss, and repeating all their engagements over again, they parted.

Birkendelly's heart was now melted within him, and all his senses overpowered by one overwhelming passion. On leaving his fair and kind one he got bewildered, and could not find the road to his own house, believing sometimes that he was going there, and sometimes to his sister's, till at length he came, as he thought, upon the Liffey at its junction with Loch Allan; and there, in attempting to call for a boat, he awoke from a profound sleep, and found himself lying in his bed within his sister's house, and the day sky just breaking.

If he was puzzled to account for some things in the course of his dream, he was much more puzzled to account for them now that he was wide awake. He was sensible that he had met his love, had embraced, kissed, and exchanged vows and rings with her, and, in token of the truth and reality of all these, her emerald ring was on his finger and his own away; so there was no doubt that they had met—by what means it was beyond the power of man to calculate.

There was then living with Mrs. Bryan an old Scotswoman, commonly styled Lucky Black. She had nursed Birkendelly's mother, and been dry nurse to himself and sister; and having more than a mother's attachment for the latter, when she was married old Lucky left her country to spend the last of her days in the house of her beloved young lady.

When the laird entered the breakfast parlour that morning, she was sitting in her black velvet hood as usual reading *The Fourfold State of Man*, and being paralytic and somewhat deaf, she seldom regarded those who went out or came in. But chancing to hear him say something about the 9th of August, she quitted reading, turned round her head to listen, and then asked in a hoarse, tremulous voice, "What's that he's saying? What's the unlucky callant saying about the 9th of August? Aih? To be sure it is St. Lawrence's Eve, although the 10th be his day. It's ower true, ower true! ower true for him an' a' his kin, poor man! Aih? What was he saying then?"

The men smiled at her incoherent earnestness, but the lady, with true feminine condescension, informed her in a loud voice that Allan had an engagement in Scotland on St. Lawrence's Eve. She then started up, extended her shrivelled hands that shook like the aspen, and panted out, "Aih, aih? Lord preserve us! whaten an engagement has he on St. Lawrence Eve? Bind him! bind him! shackle him wi' bands of steel, and of brass, and of iron! Oh, may He whose blessed will was pleased to leave him an orphan sae soon, preserve him from the fate which I tremble to think on!"

She then tottered round the table, as with supernatural energy, and seizing the laird's right hand she drew it close to her unstable eyes, and then perceiving the emerald ring chased in blood, she threw up her arms with a jerk, opened her skinny jaws with a fearful gape, and uttering a shriek that made all the house yell and every one within it to tremble, she fell back lifeless and rigid on the floor. The gentlemen both fled out of sheer terror; but a woman never deserts her friends in extremity. The lady called her maids about her, and had her old nurse conveyed to bed, where every means were used to restore animation. But, alas, life was extinct! The vital spark had fled for ever, which filled all their hearts with grief, disappointment, and horror, as some dreadful tale of mystery was now sealed up from their knowledge which, in all likelihood, no other could reveal. But, to say the truth, the laird did not seem greatly disposed to probe it to the bottom.

Not all the arguments of Captain Bryan and his lady, nor the simple intreaties of Lady Luna, could induce Birkendelly to put off his engagement to meet his love on the Birky Brow on the evening of the 9th of August; but he promised soon to return, pretending that some business of the utmost importance called him away. Before he went, however, he asked his sister if ever she had heard of such a lady in Scotland as Jane Ogilvie. Mrs. Bryan repeated the name many times to herself, and said that name undoubtedly was once familiar to her, although she thought not for good, but at that moment she did not recollect one single individual of the name. He then showed her the emerald ring that had been the death of old Lucky Black; but the moment the lady looked at it, she made a grasp at it to take it off by force, which she had very nearly effected. "Oh, burn it, burn it!" cried she; "it is not a right ring! Burn it!"

"My dear sister, what fault is in the ring?" said he. "It is a very pretty ring, and one that I set great value by."

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, burn it, and renounce the giver!" cried she. "If you have any regard for your peace here or your soul's welfare hereafter, burn that ring! If you saw with your own eyes you would easily perceive that that is not a ring befitting a Christian to wear."

This speech confounded Birkendelly a good deal. He retired by himself and examined the ring, and could see nothing in it unbecoming a Christian to wear. It was a chased gold ring, with a bright emerald, which last had a red foil, in some lights giving it a purple gleam, and inside was engraven "*Elegit*," much defaced; but that his sister could not see, therefore he could not comprehend her vehement injunctions concerning it. But that it might no more give offence to her, or any other, he sewed it within his vest, opposite his heart, judging that there was something in it which his eyes were withholden from discerning.

Thus he left Ireland with his mind in great confusion, groping his way as it were in a hole of mystery, yet with the passion that preyed on his heart and vitals more intense than ever. He seems to have had an impression all his life that some mysterious fate awaited him, which the correspondence of his dreams and day visions tended to confirm. And though he gave himself wholly up to the sway of one overpowering passion, it was not without some yearnings of soul, manifestations of terror, and so much earthly shame that he never more mentioned his love, or his engagements to any human being—not even to his friend M'Murdie, whose company he forthwith shunned.

It is on this account that I am unable to relate what passed between the lovers thenceforward. It is certain they met at the Birky Brow on that St. Lawrence's Eve, for they were seen in company together; but of the engagements, vows, or dalliance that passed between them I can say nothing, nor of all their future meetings until the beginning of August, 1781, when the laird began decidedly to make preparations for his approaching marriage, yet not as if he and his betrothed had been to reside at Birkendelly, all his provisions rather bespeaking a meditated journey.

On the morning of the 9th he wrote to his sister, and then arraying himself in his new wedding suit, and putting the emerald ring on his finger, he appeared all impatience until towards evening, when he sallied out on horseback to his appointment. It seems that his mysterious inamorata had met him, for he was seen riding through the big town before

sunset, with a young lady behind him dressed in white and green, and the villagers affirmed that they were riding at the rate of fifty miles an hour! They were seen to pass a cottage called Mosskilt, ten miles farther on, where there was no highway, at the same tremendous speed; and I could never hear that they were any more seen until the following morning, when Birkendelly's fine bay horse was found lying dead at his own stable door, and shortly after his master was likewise discovered lying a blackened corpse on the Birky Brow, at the very spot where the mysterious but lovely dame had always appeared to him. There was neither wound, bruise, nor dislocation in his whole frame, but his skin was of a livid colour, and his features terribly distorted.

This woeful catastrophe struck the neighbourhood with great consternation, so that nothing else was talked of. Every ancient tradition and modern incident were raked together, compared, and combined; and certainly a most rare concatenation of misfortunes was elicited. It was authenticated that his father had died on the same spot that day twenty years, and his grandfather that day forty years, the former, as was supposed, by a fall from his horse when in liquor, and the latter, nobody knew how; and now this Allan was the last of his race, for Mrs. Bryan had no children.

It was moreover now remembered by many, and among the rest by the Rev. Joseph Taylor, that he had frequently observed a young lady in white and green sauntering about the spot on a St. Lawrence's Eve.

When Captain Bryan and his lady arrived to take possession of the premises, they instituted a strict inquiry into every circumstance; but nothing further than what was related to them by Mr. M'Murdie could be learned of this Mysterious Bride besides what the laird's own letter bore. It ran thus:—

"Dearest Sister,—I shall before this time to-morrow be the most happy or most miserable of mankind, having solemnly engaged myself this night to wed a young and beautiful lady, named Jane Ogilvie, to whom it seems I was betrothed before I was born. Our correspondence has been of a most private and mysterious nature; but my troth is pledged, and my resolution fixed. We set out on a far journey to the place of her abode on the nuptial eve, so that it will be long before I see you again. Yours till death, Allan George Sandison.

"*Birkendelly, August* 8*th*, 1731."

That very same year an old woman, named Marion Haw, was returned upon that, her native parish, from Glasgow. She had led a migratory life with her son—who was what he called a bell-hanger, but in fact a tinker of the worst grade—for many years, and was at last returned to the muckle town in a state of great destitution. She gave the parishioners a history of the mysterious bride so plausibly correct but withal so romantic that everybody said of it (as is often said of my narratives, with the same narrow-minded prejudice and injustice), that it was a *made story*. There were, however, some strong testimonies of its veracity.

She said the first Allan Sandison, who married the great heiress of Birkendelly, was previously engaged to a beautiful young lady, named Jane Ogilvie, to whom he gave anything but fair play; and, as she believed, either murdered her, or caused her to be murdered, in the midst of a thicket of birch and broom, at a spot which she mentioned; that she had good reasons for believing so, as she had seen the red blood and the new grave, when she was a little girl, and ran home and mentioned it to her grandfather, who charged her as she valued her life never to mention that again, as it was only the nombles and hide of a deer, which he himself had buried there. But when twenty years subsequent to that, the wicked and unhappy Allan Sandison was found dead on that very spot, and lying across the green mound, then nearly level with the surface, which she had once seen a new grave, she then for the first time ever thought of a Divine Providence: and she added, "For my grandfather, Neddy Haw, he dee'd too; there's naebody kens how, nor ever shall."

As they were quite incapable of conceiving, from Marion's description, anything of the spot, Mr. M'Murdie caused her to be taken out to the Birky Brow in a cart, accompanied by Mr. Taylor, and some hundreds of the townsfolks; but whenever she saw it, she said, "Aha, birkies! the haill kintra's altered now. There was nae road here then; it gaed straight ower the tap o' the hill. An' let me see—there's the thorn where the cushats biggit; an' there's the auld birk that I ance fell aff an' left my shoe sticking i' the cleft. I can tell ye, birkies, either the deer's grave, or bonny Jane Ogilvie's, is no twa yards aff the place where that horse's hind feet are standin'; sae ye may howk, an' see if there be ony remains."

The minister, and M'Murdie, and all the people, stared at one another, for they had purposely caused the horse to stand still on the very spot where both the father and son had been found dead. They digged, and deep, deep below the road, they found part of the slender bones and skull of a young female, which they deposited decently in the churchyard. The family of the Sandisons is extinct—the Mysterious Bride appears no more on the eve of St. Lawrence—and the wicked people of the great muckle village have got a lesson on divine justice written to them in lines of blood.

NATURE'S MAGIC LANTERN.

It is well known, that, in warm summer mornings. the valleys among our mountains are generally filled with a dense white fog, so that, when the sun rises, the upper parts of the hills are all bathed in yellow sheen, looking like golden islands in a sea of silver. After one ascends through the mist to within a certain distance of the sunshine, a halo of glory is thrown round his head, something like a rainbow, but brighter and paler. It is upright or slanting, as the sun is lower or higher; but it uniformly attends one for a considerable space before he reaches the sunshine. One morning, at the time when I was about nineteen years of age, I was ascending a hill-side towards the ewe-buchts, deeply absorbed in admiration of the halo around me, when suddenly my eyes fell upon a huge dark semblance of the human figure, which stood at a very small distance from me, and at first appeared to my affrighted imagination as the enemy of mankind. Without taking a moment to consider, I rushed from the spot, and never drew breath till I had got safe amongst the ewe-milkers. All that day, I felt very ill at ease; but next morning, being obliged to go past the same spot at the same hour, I resolved to exert, if possible, a little more courage, and put the phenomenon fairly to the proof. The fog was more dense than on the preceding morning, and when the sun arose, his brilliancy and fervour were more bright above. The lovely halo was thrown around me, and at length I reached the haunted spot without diverging a step from my usual little footpath; and at the very place there arose the same terrible apparition which had frightened me so much the morning before. It was a giant blackamoor, at least thirty feet high, and equally proportioned, and very near me. I was actually struck powerless with astonishment and terror. My first resolution was, if I could keep the power of my limbs, to run home and hide myself below the blankets, with the Bible beneath my head. But then again, I thought it was hard to let my master's 700 ewes go eild for fear of the de'il. In this perplexity (and I rather think I was crying) I took off my bonnet, and scratched my head bitterly with both hands; when, to my astonishment and delight, the de'il also took off his bonnet, and scratched his head with both hands—but in such a style: Oh, there's no man can describe it! His arms and his fingers were like trees and branches without the leaves. I laughed at him till I actually fell down upon the sward; the de'il also fell down and laughed at me. I then noted for the first time that he had two collie dogs at his foot, bigger than buffaloes. I arose, and made him a most graceful bow, which he returned at the same moment—but such a bow for awkwardness I never saw! It was as if the Tron Kirk steeple had bowed to me. I turned my cheek to the sun as well as I could, that I might see the de'il's profile properly defined in the cloud. It was capital! His nose was about half a yard long, and his face at least three yards; and then he was gaping and laughing so, that one would have thought he might have swallowed the biggest man in the country.

It was quite a scene of enchantment. I could not leave it. On going five or six steps onward, it vanished; but, on returning to the same spot, there he stood, and I could cause him to make a fool of himself as much as I liked; but always as the sun rose higher, he grew shorter, so that, I think, could I have staid, he might have come into a respectable size of a de'il at the last.

I have seen this gigantic apparition several times since, but never half so well defined as that morning. It requires a certain kind of background which really I cannot describe; for, though I visited the place by day a hundred times, there was so little difference between the formation of that spot and the rest of the hill, that it is impossible to define it without taking a mathematical survey. The halo accompanies one always, but the gigantic apparition very seldom. I have seen it six or seven times in my life, always in a fog, and at sun-rising; but, saving these two times, never well defined, part being always light, and part dark.

One-and-twenty years subsequent to this, I was delighted to read the following note, translated, I think, from a German paper, concerning the Bogle of the Broken, an aërial figure of the very same description with mine, which is occasionally seen on one particular spot among the Hartz Mountains, in Hanover. It was taken from the diary of a Mr. Hawe, and I kept a copy of it for the remembrance of auld lang syne. I shall transcribe a sentence or two from it here; and really it is so like mine, that one would almost be tempted to think the one was copied from the other.

"Having ascended the Broken for the thirtieth time, I was at length so fortunate as to have the pleasure of seeing the phenomenon. The sun rose about four o'clock, and the atmosphere being quite serene toward the east, his rays could pass without any obstruction over the Hinrichshohe. In the

south-west, however, a brisk wind carried before it thin transparent vapours. About a quarter past four, I looked round to see if the atmosphere would permit me to have a free prospect to the south-west, when I observed, at a very great distance, a human figure, of a monstrous size. A violent gust of wind having nearly carried away my hat, I clapped my hand to it, by moving my arm towards my head, and the colossal figure did the same, on which the pleasure that I felt cannot be described; for I had made already many a weary step, in the hopes of seeing this shadowy image, without being able to gratify my curiosity.

"I then called the landlord of the Broken (the neighbouring inn), and having both taken the same position which I had taken alone, we looked, but saw nothing. We had not, however, stood long, when two such colossal figures were formed over the above eminence. We retained our position, kept our eyes fixed on the same spot, and in a little time the two figures again stood before us, and were joined by a third. Every movement that we made these figures imitated, but with this difference, that the phenomenon was sometimes weak and faintly defined, and sometimes strong and dark."

I can easily account for the latter part of the phenomenon; for it could only be when the clouds of haze, or, as he calls them, "thin transparent vapours," were passing, that the shadows in the cloud could possibly be seen. But how there should have been *three* of them, and not either four, or only two, surpasses my comprehension altogether. It is quite out of nature; and I am obliged to doubt either Mr. Hawe's word or the accuracy of his optics.

Among the other strange sights which I have seen among the hills, I reckon one of the most curious to have been a double shadow of myself, at a moment when only the real sun was above the horizon. One morning, in April, 1785, I was walking on the Moor Brae of Berry Knowe, gathering the ewes, when, to my utter astonishment, I perceived that I had two shadows. I immediately looked to the east, where the sun had just risen above the horizon, expecting to see two suns. But no—there was but one. There was not even one of those mock suns called by us weather-gaws. Yet there was I going to a certainty with two shadows—the one upright, and well defined, and the other tall, dim, and leaning backward, something like a very tall awkward servant waiting upon and walking behind a little spruce master. The tall one soon vanished, as I turned the hill into a glen called Carsen's Cleuch; but I never forgot the circumstance; and after I became an old man, I visited the very spot, as nearly as I could remember, again and again, thinking that the reflection of the sun from some pool or lake which I had not perceived, might have caused it; but there was no such thing. I never mentioned the circumstance to any living being before, save to Sir D. Brewster, who, of all men I ever met with, is the fondest of investigating everything relating to natural phenomena: he pretended to account for it by some law of dioptrical refraction, which I did not understand.

But what I am now going to relate will scarcely procure credit, though, on the word of an honest man, it is literally true. I once saw about two hundred natural apparitions at one time, and altogether. One fine summer morning, as I was coming along the Hawkshaw rigg of Blackhouse, I perceived on the other side of Douglas Burn, in a little rich glen called Brakehope, a whole drove of Highland cattle, which I thought could not be fewer than ten scores. I saw them distinctly—I never saw any beasts more distinctly in my life. I saw the black ones, and the red ones, some with white faces, and four or five spotted ones. I saw three men driving them, and turning them quietly in at corners. They were on each side of the burn of Brakehope, and quite from the drove road. I was once thinking of going to them myself, but I wanted my breakfast, was very hungry, and had no charge of that part of the farm: so I hastened home, and sent off the shepherd who had charge of it, to drive the drove of cattle from his best land. His name was Robert Borthwick. He seized a staff in high chagrin at the drivers, and ran off; and Messrs. William and George Laidlaw both accompanied him, with good cudgels in their hands. They were both alive and well to testify the truth of my report: at least, when they went to Brakehope there were no cattle there, nor man, nor dogs, nor even sheep! There was not a living creature in the bottom of the glen where I had seen the drove, nor the mark of a cow's hoof. I was of course laughed at as a dreamer and seer of visions; for, in fact, after inquiring at our neighbours, we found that there was not a drove of Highland cattle at that time in the district. I was neither a dreamer nor a seer of visions. I was in the highest health and spirits. It was between eight and nine o'clock on a fine summer morning of mingled clouds and sunshine. I was chanting a song to myself, or perhaps making one, when I first came in view of the drove. I was rather more than half a mile from it, but not three quarters of a mile; and as there never was a man had clearer sight than I had, I could not be mistaken in the appearance. In justification of myself, I must here copy two or three sentences from my note-book; but from whence taken, I do not know.

"On Sunday evening, the 28th ultimo, while Anthony Jackson, farmer, aged forty-five, and Matthew Turner, the son of William Turner, farmer, aged fifteen years, were engaged in inspecting their cattle grazing in Havarah Park, near Ripley, part of the estate of Sir John Ingleby, Bart., they were suddenly surprised by a most extraordinary appearance in the park. Turner, whose attention was first drawn to the spectacle, said, 'Look, Anthony, what

a quantity of beasts!' 'Beasts!' cried Anthony; 'Lord bless us, they are not beasts, they are men!'

"By this time the body was in motion, and the spectators discovered that it was an army of soldiers dressed in a white military uniform, and that in the centre stood a personage of commanding aspect, clothed in scarlet. After performing a number of evolutions, the corps began to march in perfect order to the summit of a hill, passing the spectators only at the distance of about one hundred yards. No sooner had the first detachment, which seemed to consist of several hundreds, and extended four deep over an inclosure of thirty acres, attained the hill, than another assemblage of men, far more numerous than the former, arose and marched without any apparent hostility after the military spectres. These were dressed in a dark uniform, and, at the top of the hill, both parties joined, and formed what the spectators called an L, and, passing down the opposite side of the hill, disappeared. At this time a volume of smoke, like that vomited by a park of artillery, spread over the plain, and was so impervious as for two minutes to hide the cattle from Jackson and Turner. They were both men of character and respectability, and the impression made on their minds was never erased."

In addition to this, I may mention, that, during the last continental war, all the military and volunteers in Ireland were hurried to the north to defend the country against a spectre fleet, which had no existence in those seas. And I find likewise, in my note-book, the following extraordinary account, which I think was copied long ago from a book called *A Guide to the Lakes of Cumberland.* I was always so fond of those romantic and visionary subjects, that I have added thousands of *lees* to them, but in this I shall not deviate one word from the original writer's narrative.

"Souter Fell is nearly nine hundred yards high, barricaded on the north and west sides with precipitous rocks, but somewhat more open on the east, and easier of access. On this mountain occurred the extraordinary phenomena, that, towards the middle of the last century, excited so much consternation and alarm—I mean the visionary appearances of armed men, and other figures, the causes of which have never in the smallest degree received a satisfactory solution, though, from the circumstances hereafter mentioned, there seems reason to believe that they are not entirely inexplicable.

"On a summer's morning of 1743, as David Stricket, then servant to J. Wren of Wilton Hall, the next house to Blakehills, was sitting at the door with his master, they saw the figure of a man with a dog, pursuing some horses along the side of Souter Fell, a place so steep that no horse can travel on it. They appeared to run at an amazing pace till they got out of sight at the lower end of the fell.

"The next morning, Stricket and his master ascended the steep side of the mountain, in full expectation that they should find the man lying dead, as they were persuaded that the swiftness with which he ran must have killed him. They expected likewise to find several dead horses, and a number of horse-shoes among the rocks, which they were sure the horses could not but throw, galloping at such a furious rate. They were, however, disappointed, for there appeared not the least vestige of either man or horse; not so much as the mark of a horse's hoof on the turf, or among the small stones on the steep. Astonishment, and a degree of fear perhaps, for some time induced them to conceal the circumstances; but they at length disclosed them, and as well might be supposed, were only laughed at for their credulity.

"The following year, 1744, on the 23d of June, as the same David Stricket, who at the time lived with Mr. William Lancaster's father, of Blakehills, was walking a little above the house, about seven in the evening, he saw a troop of horsemen riding on the side of Souter Fell, in pretty close ranks, and at a brisk pace. Mindful of the ridicule which had been excited against him the preceding year, he continued to observe them in silence for some time; but being at last convinced that the appearance was real, he went into the house, and informed Mr. Lancaster that he had something curious to show him. They went out together, but before Stricket had either spoken or pointed out the place, his master's son had himself discovered the aërial troopers; and when conscious that the same appearances were visible to both, they informed the family, and the phenomena were alike seen by all.

"These visionary horsemen seemed to come from the lower part of Souter Fell, and became visible at a place called Knott. They then moved in regular troops along the side of the Fell, till they came opposite to Blakehills, when they went over the mountain. Thus they described a kind of curvilineal path, and both their first and last appearances were bounded by the top of the mountain.

"The pace at which these shadowy forms proceeded, was a regular swift walk, and the whole time of the continuance of their appearance was upwards of two hours; but further observation was then precluded by the approach of darkness. Many troops were seen in succession; and frequently the last, or the last but one, in a troop, would quit his position, gallop to the front, and then observe the same pace with the others. The same changes were visible to all the spectators, and the view of the phenomena was not confined to Blakehills only, but was seen by every person at every cottage within the distance of a mile. The number of persons who witnessed the march of these aërial travellers was twenty-six."

It would therefore appear that my vision of a drove of Highland cattle, with their drivers, was not altogether an isolated instance of the same phenomena. It is quite evident that we must attribute these ap-

pearances to particular states of the atmosphere, and suppose them to be shadows of realities; the airy resemblance of scenes passing in distant parts of the country, and by some singular operation of natural causes thus expressively imaged on the acclivities of the mountains.

THE PRIVATE MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS OF A FANATIC:

WITH A DETAIL OF CURIOUS TRADITIONARY FACTS, AND OTHER EVIDENCE, BY THE EDITOR. [J. H.]

THE EDITOR'S NARRATIVE.

It appears from tradition, as well as some parish registers still extant, that the lands of Dalcastle (or Dalchastel, as it is often spelled) were possessed by a family of the name of Colwan, about one hundred and fifty years ago, and for at least a century previous to that period. That family was supposed to have been a branch of the ancient family of Colquhoun, and it is certain that from it spring the Cowans, who spread towards the Border. I find, that in the year 1687, George Colwan succeeded his uncle of the same name, in the lands of Dalchastel and Balgrennan; and this being all I can gather of the family from history, to tradition I must appeal for the remainder of the motley adventures of that house. But of the matter furnished by the latter of these powerful monitors I have no reason to complain: it has been handed down to the world in unlimited abundance; and I am certain, that in recording the hideous events which follow, I am only relating to the greater part of the inhabitants of at least four counties of Scotland, matters of which they were before perfectly well informed.

This George was a rich man, or supposed to be so, and was married, when considerably advanced in life, to the sole heiress and reputed daughter of a Baillie Orde, of Glasgow. This proved a conjunction anything but agreeable to the parties contracting. It is well known that the Reformation principles had long before that time taken a powerful hold of the hearts and affections of the people of Scotland, although the feeling was by no means general, or in equal degrees; and it so happened that this married couple felt completely at variance on the subject. Granting it to have been so, one would have thought that the laird, owing to his retired situation, would have been the one that inclined to the stern doctrines of the reformers; and that the young and gay dame from the city would have adhered to the free principles cherished by the court party, and indulged in rather to extremity, in opposition to their severe and carping contemporaries.

The contrary, however, happened to be the case. The laird was what his country neighbours called "a droll, careless chap," with a very limited proportion of the fear of God in his heart, and very nearly as little of the fear of man. The laird had not intentionally wronged or offended either of the parties, and perceived not the necessity of deprecating their vengeance. He had hitherto believed that he was living in most cordial terms with the greater part of the inhabitants of the earth, and with the powers above in particular: but woe be unto him if he was not soon convinced of the fallacy of such heedless security! for his lady was the most severe and gloomy of all bigots to the principles of the Reformation. Hers were not the tenets of the great reformers, but theirs mightily overstrained and deformed. Theirs was an unguent hard to be swallowed; but hers was that unguent embittered and overheated until nature could not longer bear it. She had imbibed her ideas from the doctrines of one flaming predestinarian divine alone; and these were so rigid, that they became a stumbling-block to many of his brethren, and a mighty handle for the enemies of his party to turn the machine of the state against them.

The wedding festivities at Dalcastle partook of all the gaiety, not of that stern age, but of one previous to it. There were feasting, dancing, piping, and singing: the liquors were handed around in great fulness, the ale in large wooden bickers, and the brandy in capacious horns of oxen. The laird gave full scope to his homely glee. He danced—he snapped his fingers to the music—clapped his hands and shouted at the turn of the tune. He saluted every girl in the hall whose appearance was anything tolerable, and requested of their sweethearts to take the same freedom with his bride, by way of

retaliation. But there she sat at the head of the hall in still and blooming beauty, absolutely refusing to tread a single measure with any gentleman there. The only enjoyment in which she appeared to partake, was in now and then stealing a word of sweet conversation with her favourite pastor about divine things; for he had accompanied her home, after marrying her to her husband, to see her fairly settled in her new dwelling. He addressed her several times by her new name, Mrs. Colwan; but she turned away her head disgusted, and looked with pity and contempt towards the old inadvertent sinner, capering away in the height of his unregenerate mirth. The minister perceived the workings of her pious mind, and thenceforward addressed her by the courteous title of Lady Dalcastle, which sounded somewhat better, as not coupling her name with one of the wicked; and there is too great reason to believe, that for all the solemn vows she had come under, and these were of no ordinary binding, particularly on the laird's part, she at that time despised, if not abhorred him, in her heart.

The good parson again blessed her, and went away. She took leave of him with tears in her eyes, intreating him often to visit her in that heathen land of the Amorite, the Hittite, and the Girgashite: to which he assented, on many solemn and qualifying conditions—and then the comely bride retired to her chamber.

It was customary, in those days, for the bride's-man and maiden, and a few select friends, to visit the new married couple after they had retired to rest, and drink a cup to their healths, their happiness, and a numerous posterity. But the laird delighted not in this: he wished to have his jewel to himself; and, slipping away quietly from his jovial party, he retired to his chamber to his beloved, and bolted the door. He found her engaged with the writings of the Evangelists, and terribly demure. The laird went up to caress her; but she turned away her head, and spoke of the follies of aged men, and something of the broad way that leadeth to destruction. The laird did not thoroughly comprehend this allusion; but being considerably flustered by drinking, and disposed to take all in good part, he only remarked, as he took off his shoes and stockings, "that whether the way was broad or narrow, it was time that they were in their bed."

"Sure, Mr. Colwan, you won't go to bed to-night, at such an important period of your life, without first saying prayers for yourself and me."

When she said this, the laird had his head down almost to the ground, loosing his shoe-buckle; but when he heard of *prayers*, on such a night, he raised his face suddenly up, which was all over as flushed and red as a rose, and answered—

"Prayers, mistress! Lord help your crazed head, is this a night for prayers!"

He had better have held his peace. There was such a torrent of profound divinity poured out upon him, that the laird became ashamed, both of himself and his new-made spouse, and wist not what to say; but the brandy helped him out.

"It strikes me, my dear, that religious devotion would be somewhat out of place to-night," said he. "Allowing that it is ever so beautiful, and ever so beneficial, were we to ride on the rigging of it at all times, would we not be constantly making a farce of it: it would be like reading the Bible and the jest-book, verse about, and would render the life of man a medley of absurdity and confusion."

But against the cant of the bigot or the hypocrite, no reasoning can aught avail. If you would argue until the end of life, the infallible creature must alone be right. So it proved with the laird. One Scripture text followed another, not in the least connected, and one sentence of the profound Mr. Wringhim's sermons after another, proving the duty of family worship, till the laird lost patience, and, tossing himself into bed, said, carelessly, that he would leave that duty upon her shoulders for one night.

The meek mind of Lady Dalcastle was somewhat disarranged by this sudden evolution. She felt that she was left rather in an awkward situation. However, to show her unconscionable spouse that she was resolved to hold fast her integrity, she kneeled down and prayed in terms so potent, that she deemed she was sure of making an impression on him. She did so; for in a short time the laird began to utter a response so fervent, that she was utterly astounded, and fairly driven from the chain of her orisons. He began, in truth, to sound a nasal bugle of no ordinary calibre—the notes being little inferior to those of a military trumpet. The lady tried to proceed, but every returning note from the bed burst on her ear with a louder twang, and a longer peal, till the concord of sweet sounds became so truly pathetic, that the meek spirit of the dame was quite overcome; and after shedding a flood of tears, she arose from her knees, and retired to the chimney-corner with her Bible in her lap, there to spend the hours in holy meditation till such time as the inebriated trumpeter should awaken to a sense of propriety.

The laird did not awake in any reasonable time; for, being overcome with fatigue and wassail, his sleep became sounder, and his Morphean measures more intense. These varied a little in their structure; but the general run of the bars sounded something in this way—"Hic-hoc wheew!" It was most profoundly ludicrous; and could not have missed exciting risibility in any one, save a pious, a disappointed, and humbled bride.

The good dame wept bitterly. She could not for her life go and awaken the monster, and request him to make room for her: but she retired somewhere; for the laird, on awaking next morning, found that he was still lying alone. His sleep had been of the deepest and most genuine sort; and all

the time that it lasted, he had never once thought of either wives, children, or sweethearts, save in the way of dreaming about them; but as his spirit began again by slow degrees to verge towards the boundaries of reason, it became lighter and more buoyant from the effects of deep repose, and his dreams partook of that buoyancy, yea, to a degree hardly expressible. He dreamed of the reel, the jig, the strathspey, and the corant; and the elasticity of his frame was such, that he was bounding over the heads of the maidens, and making his feet skimmer against the ceiling, enjoying, the while, the most ecstatic emotions. These grew too fervent for the shackles of the drowsy god to restrain. The nasal bugle ceased its prolonged sounds in one moment, and a sort of hectic laugh took its place. "Keep it going—play up, you devils!" cried the laird, without changing his position on the pillow. But this exertion to hold the fiddlers at their work fairly awakened the delighted dreamer; and though he could not refrain from continuing his laugh, he at length, by tracing out a regular chain of facts, came to be sensible of his real situation. "Rabina, where are you? What's become of you, my dear?" cried the laird. But there was no voice, nor any one that answered or regarded. He flung open the curtains, thinking to find her still on her knees, as he had seen her; but she was not there, either sleeping or waking. "Rabina! Mrs. Colwan!" shouted he, as loud as he could call, and then added, in the same breath, "God save the king—I have lost my wife!"

He sprung up and opened the casement: the daylight was beginning to streak the east, for it was spring, and the nights were short, and the mornings very long. The laird half dressed himself in an instant, and strode through every room in the house, opening the windows as he went, and scrutinizing every bed and every corner. He came into the hall where the wedding festival had been held; and, as he opened the various window-boards, loving couples flew off like hares surprised too late in the morning among the early braird. "Hoo-boo! Fie, be frightened!" cried the laird. "Fie, rin like fools, as if ye were caught in an ill turn!"—His bride was not among them; so he was obliged to betake himself to further search. "She will be praying in some corner, poor woman," said he to himself. "But, for my part, I fear I have behaved very ill; and I must endeavour to make amends."

The laird continued his search, and at length found his beloved in the same bed with her Glasgow cousin, who had acted as bride's-maid. "You sly and malevolent imp," said the laird; "you have played me such a trick when I was fast asleep! I have not known a frolic so clever, and, at the same time, so severe. Come along, you baggage, you!"

"Sir, I will let you know that I detest your principles and your person alike," said she. "It shall never be said, sir, that my person was at the control of a heathenish man of Belial—a dangler among the daughters of women—a promiscuous dancer, and a player at unlawful games. Forego your rudeness, sir, I say, and depart away from my presence and that of my kinswoman."

"Come along, I say, my charming Rab. If you were the pink of all Puritans, and the saint of all saints, you are my wife, and must do as I command you."

"Sir, I will sooner lay down my life than be subjected to your godless will; therefore, I say, desist, and begone with you."

But the laird regarded none of these testy sayings: he rolled her in a blanket, and bore her triumphantly away to his chamber, taking care to keep a fold or two of the blanket always rather near to her mouth, in case of any outrageous forthcoming of noise.

The next day at breakfast the bride was long in making her appearance. Her maid asked to see her; but George did not choose that anybody should see her but himself: he paid her several visits, and always turned the key as he came out. At length breakfast was served; and during the time of refreshment the laird tried to break several jokes; but it was remarked that they wanted their accustomed brilliancy, and that his nose was particularly red at the top.

Matters, without all doubt, had been very bad between the new-married couple; for in the course of the day the lady deserted her quarters, and returned to her father's house in Glasgow, and after having been a night on the road; stage-coaches and steam-boats having then no existence in that quarter. Though Baillie Orde had acquiesced in his wife's asseveration regarding the likeness of their only daughter to her father, he never loved or admired her greatly; therefore this behaviour nothing astounded him. He questioned her strictly as to the grievous offence committed against her: and could discover nothing that warranted a procedure so fraught with disagreeable consequences. So after mature deliberation the baillie addressed her as follows:—

"Ay, ay, Raby! An' sae I find that Dalcastle has actually refused to say prayers with you when you ordered him; an' has guidit you in a rude indelicate manner, outstepping the respect due to my daughter—as my daughter. But wi' regard to what is due to his own wife, of that he's a better judge nor me. However, since he has behaved in that manner to *my daughter*, I shall be revenged on him for aince; for I shall return the obligation to ane nearer to him: that is, I shall take pennyworths of his wife, an' let him lick at that."

"What do you mean, sir?" said the astonished damsel.

"I mean to be revenged on that villain Dalcastle," said he, "for what he has done to my daughter.

Come hither, Mrs. Colwan, you shall pay for this."

So saying, the baillie began to inflict corporeal punishment on the runaway wife. His strokes were not indeed very deadly, but he made a mighty flourish in the infliction, pretending to be in a great rage only at the Laird of Dalcastle. "Villain that he is!" exclaimed he, "I shall teach him to behave in such a manner to a child of mine, be she as she may; since I cannot get at himself, I shall lounder her that is nearest to him in life. Take you that, and that, Mrs. Colwan, for your husband's impertinence!"

The poor afflicted woman wept and prayed, but the baillie would not abate aught of his severity. After fuming, and beating her with many stripes, far drawn, and lightly laid down, he took her up to her chamber, five stories high, locked her in, and there he fed her on bread and water, all to be revenged on the presumptuous Laird of Dalcastle; but ever and anon, as the baillie came down the stair from carrying his daughter's meal, he said to himself, "I shall make the sight of the laird the blithest she ever saw in her life."

Lady Dalcastle got plenty of time to read, and pray, and meditate; but she was at a great loss for one to dispute with about religious tenets; for she found, that without this advantage, about which there was a perfect rage at that time, her reading, and learning of Scripture texts, and sentences of intricate doctrine, availed her naught; so she was often driven to sit at her casement and look out for the approach of the heathenish Laird of Dalcastle.

That hero, after a considerable lapse of time, at length made his appearance. Matters were not hard to adjust; for his lady found that there was no refuge for her in her father's house; and so, after some sighs and tears, she accompanied her husband home. For all that had passed, things went on no better. She *would* convert the laird in spite of his teeth; the laird would not be converted. She *would* have the laird to say family prayers, both morning and evening: the laird would neither pray morning nor evening. He would not even sing psalms, and kneel beside her, while she performed the exercise; neither would he converse at all times, and in all places, about the sacred mysteries of religion, although his lady took occasion to contradict flatly every assertion that he made, in order that she might spiritualize him by drawing him into argument.

The laird kept his temper a long while, but at length his patience wore out; he cut her short in all her futile attempts at spiritualization, and mocked at her wire-drawn degrees of faith, hope, and repentance. He also dared to doubt of the great standard doctrine of absolute predestination, which put the crown on the lady's Christian resentment. She declared her helpmate to be a limb of Antichrist, and one with whom no regenerated person could associate. She therefore bespoke a separate establishment, and before the expiry of the first six months, the arrangements of the separation were amicably adjusted. The upper, or third story of the old mansion-house, was awarded to the lady for her residence. She had a separate door, a separate stair, a separate garden, and walks that in no instance intersected the laird's; so that one would have thought the separation complete. They had each their own parties, selected from their own sort of people; and though the laird never once chafed himself about the lady's companies, it was not long before she began to intermeddle about some of his.

"Who is that fat bouncing dame that visits the laird so often, and always by herself?" said she to her maid Martha one day.

"O dear, mem, how can I ken? We're banished frae our acquaintances here, as weel as frae the sweet gospel ordinances."

"Find me out who that jolly dame is, Martha. You, who hold communion with the household of this ungodly man, can be at no loss to attain this information. I observe that she always casts her eye up toward our windows, both in coming and going; and I suspect that she seldom departs from the house empty-handed."

That same evening Martha came with the information, that this august visitor was a Miss Logan, an old and intimate acquaintance of the laird's, and a very worthy respectable lady, of good connections, whose parents had lost their patrimony in the civil wars.

"Ha! very well!" said the lady; "very well, Martha! But nevertheless, go thou and watch this respectable lady's motions and behaviour the next time she comes to visit the laird—and the next after that. You will not, I see, lack opportunities."

Martha's information turned out of such nature, that prayers were said in the uppermost story of Dalcastle-house against the Canaanitish woman, every night and every morning; and great discontent prevailed there, even to anathemas and tears. Letter after letter was despatched to Glasgow; and at length, to the lady's great consolation, the Rev. Mr. Wringhim arrived safely and devoutly in her elevated sanctuary. Marvellous was the conversation between these gifted people. Wringhim had held in his doctrines that there were eight different kinds of FAITH, all perfectly distinct in their operations and effects. But the lady in her secluded state had discovered other five—making thirteen in all: the adjusting of the existence or fallacy of these five faiths served for a most enlightened discussion of nearly seventeen hours; in the course of which the two got warm in their arguments, always in proportion as they receded from nature, utility, and common sense. Wringhim at length got into unwonted fervour about some disputed point between one of these faiths and TRUST; when the lady, fearing that zeal was getting beyond its wonted barrier, broke in on his vehement asseverations with the

following abrupt discomfiture:—"But, sir, as long as I remember, what is to be done with this case of open and avowed iniquity?"

The minister was struck dumb. He leaned him back on his chair, stroked his beard, hemmed—considered, and hemmed again; and then said, in an altered and softened tone—"Why, that is a secondary consideration; you mean the case between your husband and Miss Logan?"

"The same, sir. I am scandalized at such intimacies going on under my nose. The sufferance of it is a great and crying evil."

"Evil, madam, may be either operative or passive. To them it is an evil, but to us none. We have no more to do with the sins of the wicked and unconverted here than with those of an infidel Turk; for all earthly bonds and fellowships are absorbed and swallowed up in the holy community of the Reformed Church. However, if it is your wish, I shall take him to task, and reprimand and humble him in such a manner that *he* shall be ashamed of his doings, and renounce such deeds for ever, out of mere self-respect, though all unsanctified the heart as well as the deed may be. To the wicked all things are wicked; but to the just all things are just and right."

"Ah, that is a sweet and comfortable saying, Mr. Wringhim! How delightful to think that a justified person can do no wrong! Who would not envy the liberty wherewith we are made free? Go to my husband, that poor unfortunate, blindfolded person, and open his eyes to his degenerate and sinful state; for well are you fitted to the task."

"Yea, I will go in unto him, and confound him. I will lay the strongholds of sin and Satan as flat before my face as the dung that is spread out to fatten the land."

* * * * * * *

"Master, there's a gentleman at the fore-door wants a private word o' ye."

"Tell him I'm engaged: I can't see any gentleman to-night. But I shall attend on him to-morrow as soon as he pleases."

"He's coming straight in, sir.———Stop a wee bit, sir, my master is engaged. He cannot see you at present, sir."

"Stand aside, thou Moabite! my mission admits of no delay. I come to save him from the jaws of destruction!"

"An that be the case, sir, it maks a wide difference; an', as the danger may threaten us a', I fancy I may as weel let ye gang by as fight wi' ye, sin' ye seem sae intent on't.———The man says he's comin' to save ye, an' canna stop, sir.—Here he is."

The laird was going to break out into a volley of wrath against Waters, his servant; but before he got a word pronounced, the Rev. Mr. Wringhim had stepped inside the room, and Waters had retired, shutting the door behind him.

No introduction could be more *mal-a-propos:* it is impossible; for at that very moment the laird and Arabella Logan were both sitting on one seat, and both looking on one book, when the door opened. "What is it, sir?" said the laird fiercely.

"A message of the greatest importance, sir," said the divine, striding unceremoniously up to the chimney—turning his back to the fire, and his face to the culprits. "I think you should know me, sir?" continued he, looking displeasedly at the laird, with his face half turned round.

"I think I should," returned the laird. "You are a Mr. How'-tey-ca'-him, of Glasgow, who did me the worst turn ever I got done to me in my life. You gentry are always ready to do a man such a turn. Pray, sir, did you ever do a good job for any one to counterbalance that? for, if you have not, you ought to be ———."

"Hold, sir, I say! None of your profanity before me. If I do evil to any one on such occasions, it is because he will have it so; therefore, the evil is not of my doing. I ask you, sir—before God and this witness, I ask you, have you kept solemnly and inviolate the vows which I laid upon you that day? Answer me."

"Has the partner whom you bound me to kept hers inviolate? Answer me that, sir. None can better do so than you, Mr. How'-tey-ca'-him."

"So, then, you confess your backslidings, and avow the profligacy of your life. And this person here is, I suppose, the partner of your iniquity—she whose beauty hath caused you to err! Stand up, both of you, till I rebuke you, and show you what you are in the eyes of God and man."

"In the first place, stand you still there, till I tell you what *you* are in the eyes of God and man. You are, sir, a presumptuous, self-conceited pedagogue, a stirrer up of strife and commotion in church, in state, in families, and communities. You are one, sir, whose righteousness consists in splitting the doctrines of Calvin into thousands of undistinguishable films, and in setting up a system of justifying grace against all breaches of all laws, moral or divine. In short, sir, you are a mildew—a canker-worm in the bosom of the Reformed Church, generating a disease of which she will never be purged but by the shedding of blood. Go thou in peace, and do these abominations no more; but humble thyself, lest a worse reproof come upon thee."

Wringhim heard all this without flinching. He now and then twisted his mouth in disdain, treasuring up, meantime, his vengeance against the two aggressors; for he felt that he had them on the hip, and resolved to pour out his vengeance and indignation upon them. Sorry am I, that the shackles of modern decorum restrain me from penning that famous rebuke; fragments of which have been attributed to every divine of old notoriety throughout Scotland. But I have it by heart; and a glorious morsel it is to put into the hands of certain incendiaries. The metaphors were so strong, and so appalling,

that Miss Logan could only stand them a very short time: she was obliged to withdraw in confusion. The laird stood his ground with much ado, though his face was often crimsoned over with the hues of shame and anger. Several times he was on the point of turning the officious sycophant to the door; but good manners, and an inherent respect that he entertained for the clergy, as the immediate servants of the Supreme Being, restrained him.

Wringhim, perceiving these symptoms of resentment, took them for marks of shame and contrition, and pushed his reproaches further than ever divine ventured to do in a similar case. When he had finished, to prevent further discussion, he walked slowly and majestically out of the apartment, making his robes to swing behind him in a most magisterial manner; he being without doubt elated with his high conquest. He went to the upper story, and related to his metaphysical associate his wonderful success; how he had driven the dame from the house in tears and deep confusion, and left the backsliding laird in such a quandary of shame and repentance, that he could neither articulate a word nor lift up his countenance. The dame thanked him most cordially, lauding his friendly zeal and powerful eloquence; and then the two again set keenly to the splitting of hairs, and making distinctions in religion where none existed.

They being both children of adoption, and secured from falling into snares, or any way under the power of the wicked one, it was their custom, on each visit, to sit up a night in the same apartment, for the sake of sweet spiritual converse; but that time, in the course of the night, they differed so materially on a small point, somewhere between justification and final election, that the minister, in the heat of his zeal, sprung from his seat, paced the floor, and maintained his point with so much ardour, that Martha was alarmed, and thinking they were going to fight, and that the minister would be a hard match for her mistress, she put on some clothes, and twice left her bed and stood listening at the back of the door, ready to burst in should need require it. Should any one think this picture overstrained, I can assure him that it is taken from nature and from truth; but I will not likewise aver that the theologist was neither crazed nor inebriated. If the listener's words were to be relied on, there was no love, no accommodating principle manifested between the two, but a fiery burning zeal, relating to points of such minor importance, that a true Christian would blush to hear them mentioned, and the infidel and profane make a handle of them to turn our religion to scorn.

Great was the dame's exultation at the triumph of her beloved pastor over her sinful neighbours in the lower parts of the house; and she boasted of it to Martha in high-sounding terms. But it was of short duration; for, in five weeks after that, Arabella Logan came to reside with the laird as his house-keeper, sitting at his table, and carrying the keys as mistress-substitute of the mansion. The lady's grief and indignation were now raised to a higher pitch than ever; and she set every agent to work, with whom she had any power, to effect a separation between these two suspected ones. Remonstrance was of no avail; George laughed at them who tried such a course, and retained his house-keeper, while the lady gave herself up to utter despair; for, though she would not consort with her husband herself, she could not endure that any other should do so.

But, to countervail this grievous offence, our saintly and afflicted dame, in due time, was safely delivered of a fine boy, whom the laird acknowledged as his son and heir, and had him christened by his own name, and nursed in his own premises. He gave the nurse permission to take the boy to his mother's presence if ever she should desire to see him; but, strange as it may appear, she never once desired to see him from the day that he was born. The boy grew up, and was a healthful and happy child; and, in the course of another year, the lady presented him with a brother. A brother he certainly was, in the eye of the law, and it is more than probable that he was his brother in reality. But the laird thought otherwise; and, though he knew and acknowledged that he was obliged to support and provide for him, he refused to acknowledge him in other respects. He neither would countenance the banquet, nor take the baptismal vows on him in the child's name; of course, the poor boy had to live and remain an alien from the visible church for a year and a day; at which time, Mr. Wringhim out of pity and kindness, took the lady herself as sponsor for the boy, and baptized him by the name of Robert Wringhim—that being the noted divine's own name.

George was brought up with his father, and educated partly at the parish-school, and partly at home, by a tutor hired for the purpose. He was a generous and kind-hearted youth: always ready to oblige, and hardly ever dissatisfied with any body. Robert was brought up with Mr. Wringhim, the laird paying a certain allowance for him yearly; and there the boy was early inured to all the sternness and severity of his pastor's arbitrary and unyielding creed. He was taught to pray twice every day, and seven times on Sabbath-days; but he was only to pray for the elect, and doom all that were aliens from God to destruction. He had never, in that family into which he had been as it were adopted, heard ought but evil spoken of his reputed father and brother; consequently he held them in utter abhorrence, and prayed against them every day, often "that the old hoary sinner might be cut off in the full flush of his iniquity; and that the young stem of the corrupt trunk might also be taken from a world that he disgraced, but that his sins might be pardoned, because he knew no better."

Such were the tenets in which it would appear

young Robert was bred. He was an acute boy, an excellent learner, had ardent and ungovernable passions, and withal a sternness of demeanour from which other boys shrunk. He was the best grammarian, the best reader, writer, and accountant in the various classes he attended, and was fond of writing essays on controverted points of theology, for which he got prizes, and great praise from his guardian and mother. George was much behind him in scholastic acquirements, but greatly his superior in personal prowess, form, feature, and all that constitutes gentility in deportment and appearance. The laird had often manifested to Miss Logan an earnest wish that the two young men should never meet, or at all events that they should be as little conversant as possible; and Miss Logan, who was as much attached to George as if he had been her own son, took every precaution, while he was a boy, that he should never meet with his brother; but as they advanced towards manhood, this became impracticable. The lady was removed from her apartments in her husband's house to Glasgow, to her great content; and all to prevent the young laird being tainted with the company of her and her second son; for the laird had felt the effects of the principles they professed, and dreaded them more than persecution, fire, and sword. During all the dreadful times that had overpast, though the laird had been a moderate man, he had still leaned to the side of the kingly prerogative, and had escaped confiscation and fines, without ever taking any active hand in suppressing the Covenanters. But after experiencing a specimen of their tenets and manner in his wife, from a secret favourer of them and their doctrines, he grew alarmed at the prevalence of such stern and factious principles, now that there was no check nor restraint upon them; and from that time he began to set himself against them, joining with the cavalier party of that day in all their proceedings.

It so happened, that, under the influence of the Earls of Seafield and Tullibardine, he was returned member of parliament in the famous session that sat at Edinburgh, when the Duke of Queensberry was commissioner, and in which party spirit ran to such extremity. The young laird went with his father, and remained in town all the time that the session lasted, and as all interested people of both factions flocked to Edinburgh at that period, so the important Mr. Wringhim was there among the rest, during the greater part of the time, blowing the coal of revolutionary principles with all his might, in every society to which he could obtain admission. He was a great favourite with some of the west country gentlemen of that faction, by reason of his unbending impudence. No opposition could for a moment cause him either to blush, or retract one item that he had advanced. Therefore the Duke of Argyle and his friends made such use of him as sportsmen often do of terriers, to start the game, and make a great yelping noise to let them know whither the chase is proceeding. They often did this out of sport, in order to tease their opponent; for of all pesterers that ever fastened on man, he was the most insufferable: knowing that his coat protected him from manual chastisement, he spared no acrimony, and delighted in the chagrin and anger of those with whom he contended. But he was sometimes likewise *of real use* to the heads of the Presbyterian faction, and therefore was admitted to their tables, and of course conceived himself a very great man.

His ward accompanied him; and very shortly after their arrival in Edinburgh, Robert, for the first time, met with the young laird his brother, in a match at tennis. The prowess and agility of the young squire drew forth the loudest plaudits from his associates, and his own exertion alone carried the game every time on the one side, and that so far as all along to count three for their one. The hero's name soon ran round the circle, and when his brother Robert, who was an onlooker, learned who it was that was gaining so much applause, he came and stood close beside him all the time that the game lasted, always now and then putting in a cutting remark by way of mockery.

George could not help perceiving him, not only on account of his impertinent remarks, but he, moreover, stood so near him that he several times impeded him in his rapid evolutions, and of course got himself shoved aside in no very ceremonious way. Instead of making him keep his distance, these rude shocks and pushes, accompanied sometimes with hasty curses, only made him cling the closer to this king of the game. He seemed determined to maintain his right to his place as an onlooker, as well as any of those engaged in the game, and if they had tried him at an argument, he would have carried his point: or perhaps he wished to quarrel with this spark of his jealousy and aversion, and draw the attention of the gay crowd to himself by these means; for, like his guardian, he knew no other pleasure but what consisted in opposition. George took him for some impertinent student of divinity, rather set upon a joke than anything else. He perceived a lad with black clothes, and a methodistical face, whose countenance and eye he disliked exceedingly, several times in his way, and that was all the notice he took of him the first time they two met. But the next day, and every succeeding one, the same devilish-looking youth attended him as constantly as his shadow; was always in his way as with intention to impede him, and ever and anon his deep malignant eye met that of his elder brother with a glance so fierce that it sometimes startled him.

The very next time that George was engaged at tennis, he had not struck the ball above twice, till the same intrusive being was again in his way. The party played for considerable stakes that day, namely, a dinner and wine at the Black Bull tavern;

and George, as the hero and head of his party, was much interested in its honour; consequently, the sight of this moody and hellish-looking student affected him in no very pleasant manner. "Pray, sir, be so good as keep without the range of the ball," said he.

"Is there any law or enactment that can compel me to do so?" said the other, biting his lip with scorn.

"If there is not, they are here that shall compel you," returned George: "so, friend, I rede you to be on your guard."

As he said this, a flush of anger glowed in his handsome face, and flashed from his sparkling blue eye; but it was a stranger to both, and instantly took its departure. The black-coated youth set up his cap before, brought his heavy brows over his deep dark eyes, put his hands in the pockets of his black plush breeches, and stepped a little farther into the semi-circle, immediately on his brother's right hand, than he had ever ventured to do before. There he set himself firm on his legs, and, with a face as demure as death, seemed determined to keep his ground. He pretended to be following the ball with his eyes; but every moment they were glancing aside at George. One of the competitors chanced to say rashly, in the moment of exultation, "That's a d——d fine blow, George!" On which the intruder took up the word, as characteristic of the competitors, and repeated it every stroke that was given, making such a ludicrous use of it, that several of the onlookers were compelled to laugh immoderately; but the players were terribly nettled at it, as he really contrived, by dint of sliding in some canonical terms, to render the competitors and their game ridiculous.

But matters at length came to a crisis that put them beyond sport. George, in flying backward to gain the point at which the ball was going to light, came inadvertently so rudely in contact with this interloper, that he not only overthrew him, but also got a grievous fall over his legs; and, as he arose, the other made a spurn at him with his foot, which, if it had hit to its aim, would undoubtedly have finished the course of the young Laird of Dalcastle and Balgrennan. George, being irritated beyond measure, as may well be conceived, especially at the deadly stroke aimed at him, struck the assailant with his racket, rather slightly, but so that his mouth and nose gushed out blood; and, at the same time, he said, turning to his cronies, "Does any of you know who the infernal puppy is?"

"Do you not know, sir?" said one of the onlookers, a stranger: "the gentleman is your own brother, sir—Mr. Robert Wringhim Colwan!"

"No, not Colwan, sir," said Robert, putting his hands in his pockets, and setting himself still farther forward than before,—"not a Colwan, sir; henceforth I disclaim the name."

"No, certainly not," repeated George: "my mother's son you may be—but *not a Colwan!* There you are right." Then turning round to his informer, he said, "Mercy be about us, sir! is this the crazy minister's son from Glasgow?"

This question was put in the irritation of the moment; but it was too rude, and too far out of place, and no one deigned any answer to it. He felt the reproof, and felt it deeply; seeming anxious for some opportunity to make an acknowledgment, or some reparation.

In the meantime, young Wringhim was an object to all of the uttermost disgust. The blood flowing from his mouth and nose he took no pains to stem, neither did he so much as wipe it away. In that state did he take up his station in the middle of the competitors; and he did not now keep his place, but ran about, impeding every one who attempted to make at the ball. They loaded him with execrations, but it availed nothing; he seemed courting persecution and buffetings, and marred the game so completely, that, in spite of every effort on the part of the players, he forced them to stop and give it up. He was such a rueful-looking object, covered with blood, that none of them had the heart to kick him, although it appeared the only thing he wanted; and as for George, he said not another word to him, either in anger or reproof.

When the game was fairly given up, and the party were washing their hands in the stone fount, some of them besought Robert Wringhim to wash himself; but he mocked at them, and said he was much better as he was. George at length came forward abashedly toward him, and said,—"I have been greatly to blame, Robert, and am very sorry for what I have done. But, in the first instance, I erred through ignorance, not knowing you were my brother, which you certainly are; and, in the second, through a momentary irritation, for which I am ashamed. I pray you, therefore, to pardon me, and give me your hand."

As he said this, he held out his hand toward his polluted brother; but the froward predestinarian took not his from his breeches' pocket, but lifting his foot, he gave his brother's hand a kick. "I'll give you what will suit such a hand better than mine," said he, with a sneer. And then, turning lightly about, he added,—"Are there to be no more of these d——d fine blows, gentlemen? For shame, to give up such a profitable and edifying game!"

"This is too bad," said George. "But, since it is thus, I have the less to regret." And, having made this general remark, he took no more note of the uncouth aggressor. But the persecution of the latter terminated not on the playground; he ranked up among them, bloody and disgusting as he was, and, keeping close by his brother's side, he marched along with the party all the way to the Black Bull. Before they got there, a great number of boys and idle people had surrounded them, hooting and incommoding them exceedingly, so that they were

glad to get into the inn; and the unaccountable monster actually tried to get in along with them, to make one of the party at dinner. But the innkeeper and his men, getting the hint, by force prevented him from entering, although he attempted it again and again, both by telling lies and offering a bribe. Finding he could not prevail, he set to exciting the mob at the door to acts of violence; in which he had like to have succeeded. The landlord had no other shift, at last, but to send privately for two officers, and have him carried to the guard-house; and the hilarity and joy of the party of young gentlemen, for the evening, was quite spoiled, by the inauspicious termination of their game.

The Rev. Robert Wringhim was now to send for, to release his beloved ward. The messenger found him at table, with a number of the leaders of the Whig faction, the Marquis of Annandale being in the chair; and the prisoner's note being produced, Wringhim read it aloud, accompanying it with some explanatory remarks. The circumstances of the case being thus magnified and distorted, it excited the utmost abhorrence, both of the deed and the perpetrators, among the assembled faction. They declaimed against the act as an unnatural attempt on the character, and even the life, of an unfortunate brother, who had been expelled from his father's house. And, as party spirit was the order of the day, an attempt was made to lay the burden of it to that account. In short, the young culprit got some of the best blood of the land to enter as his securities, and was set at liberty. But when Wringhim perceived the plight that he was in, he took him, as he was, and presented him to his honourable patrons. This raised the indignation against the young laird and his associates a thousand fold, which actually roused the party to temporary madness. They were, perhaps, a little excited by the wine and spirits they had swallowed; else a casual quarrel between two young men at tennis could not have driven them to such extremes. But certain it is, that from one at first arising to address the party on the atrocity of the offence, both in a moral and political point of view, on a sudden there were six on their feet, at the same time, expatiating on it; and, in a very short time thereafter, every one in the room was up, talking with the utmost vociferation, all on the same subject, and all taking the same side in the debate.

In the midst of this confusion, some one or other issued from the house, which was at the back of the Canongate, calling out—"A plot, a plot! Treason, treason! Down with the bloody incendiaries at the Black Bull."

The concourse of people that were assembled in Edinburgh at that time was prodigious; and as they were all actuated by political motives, they wanted only a ready-blown coal to set the mountain on fire. The evening being fine and the streets thronged the cry ran from mouth to mouth through the whole city. More than that, the mob that had of late been gathered to the door of the Black Bull had, by degrees, dispersed; but, they being young men and idle vagrants, they had only spread themselves over the rest of the street to lounge in search of further amusement: consequently, a word was sufficient to send them back to their late rendezvous, where they had previously witnessed something they did not much approve of.

The master of the tavern was astonished at seeing the mob again assembling; and that with such hurry and noise. But his inmates being all of the highest respectability, he judged himself sure of protection, or, at least, of indemnity. He had two large parties in his house at the time; the largest of which was of the revolutionist faction. The other consisted of our young tennis-players and their associates, who were all of the Jacobite order; or, as at all events, leaned to the Episcopal side. The largest party were in a front room; and the attack of the mob fell first on their windows, though rather with fear and caution. Jingle went one pane; then a loud hurra; and that again was followed by a number of voices, endeavouring to restrain the indignation from venting itself in destroying the windows and to turn it on the inmates. The Whigs calling the landlord, inquired what the assault meant: he cunningly answered, that he suspected it was some of the youths of the Cavalier or High-church party, exciting the mob against them. The party consisted mostly of young gentlemen, by that time in a key to engage in any row; and, at all events, to suffer nothing from the other party, against whom their passions were mightily inflamed.

The landlord, therefore, had no sooner given them the spirit-rousing intelligence, than every one, as by instinct, swore his own natural oath, and grasped his own natural weapon. A few of those of the highest rank were armed with swords, which they boldly drew; those of the subordinate orders immediately flew to such weapons as the room, kitchen, and scullery afforded;—such as tongs, pokers, spits, racks, and shovels; and breathing vengeance on the prelatic party, the children of Antichrist and the heirs of perdition, the barterers of the liberties of their country, and betrayers of the most sacred trust—thus elevated, and thus armed, in the cause of right, justice, and liberty, our heroes rushed to the street, and attacked the mob with such violence, that they broke the mass in a moment, and dispersed its thousands like chaff before the wind. The other party of young Jacobites, who sat in a room further from the front, and were those against whom the fury of the mob was meant to have been directed, knew nothing of this second uproar, till the noise of the sally made by the Whigs assailed their ears; being then informed that the mob had attacked the house on account of the treatment they themselves had given to a young gentleman of the

adverse faction, and that another jovial party had issued from the house in their defence, and was now engaged in an unequal combat, the sparks likewise flew to the field to back their defenders with all their prowess, without troubling their heads about who they were.

A mob is like a spring tide in an eastern storm, that retires only to return with more overwhelming fury. The crowd was taken by surprise, when such a strong and well-armed party issued from the house with so great fury, laying all prostrate that came in their way. Those who were next to the door, and were, of course, the first whom the danger assailed, rushed backward among the crowd with their whole force. The Black Bull standing in a small square half way between the High Street and the Cowgate, and the entrance to it being by two closes, into these the pressure outward was simultaneous, and thousands were moved to an involuntary flight they knew not why.

But the High Street of Edinburgh, which they soon reached, is a dangerous place in which to make an open attack upon a mob. And it appears that the entrances to the tavern had been somewhere near to the Cross, on the south side of the street; for the crowd fled with great expedition, both to the east and west, and the conquerors, separating themselves as chance directed, pursued impetuously, wounding and maiming as they flew. But, it so chanced, that before either of the wings had followed the fleeing squadrons of their enemies for the space of a hundred yards each way, there was not an enemy to pursue! the multitude had vanished like so many thousands of phantoms! What could our heroes do?—Why, they faced about to return toward their citadel, the Black Bull. But that feat was not so easily, nor so readily accomplished, as they divined. The unnumbered alleys on each side of the street had swallowed up the multitude in a few seconds; but from these they were busy reconnoitring; and, perceiving the deficiency in the number of their assailants, the rush from both sides of the street was as rapid and as wonderful as the disappearance had been a few minutes before. Each close vomited out its levies, and these better armed with missiles than when they sought it for a temporary retreat. Woe then to our two columns of victorious Whigs! The mob actually closed around them as they would have swallowed them up; and, in the meanwhile, shower after shower of the most abominable weapons of offence were rained in upon them. If the gentlemen were irritated before, this inflamed them still further; but their danger was now so apparent, they could not shut their eyes on it, therefore, both parties, as if actuated by the same spirit, made a desperate effort to join, and the greater part effected it; but some were knocked down, and others were separated from their friends, and blithe to become silent members of the mob.

The battle now raged immediately in front of the closes leading to the Black Bull; the small body of Whig gentlemen was hardly bested, and it is likely would have been overcome and trampled down every man, had they not been then and there joined by the young Cavaliers; who fresh to arms, broke from the wynd, opened the head of the passage, laid about them manfully, and thus kept up the spirits of the exasperated Whigs, who were the men in fact that wrought the most deray among the populace.

The town-guard was now on the alert; and two companies of the Cameronian regiment, with the honourable Captain Douglas, rushed down from the castle to the scene of action; but, for all the noise and hubbub that these caused in the street, the combat had become so close and inveterate, that numbers of both sides were taken prisoners fighting hand to hand, and could scarcely be separated when the guardsmen and soldiers had them by the necks.

Great was the alarm and confusion that night in Edinburgh; for every one concluded that it was a party scuffle, and, the two parties being so equal in power, the most serious consequences were anticipated. The agitation was so prevailing that every party in the town, great and small, was broken up; and the lord-commissioner thought proper to go to the council-chamber himself, even at that late hour, accompanied by the sheriffs of Edinburgh and Linlithgow, with sundry noblemen besides, in order to learn something of the origin of the affray.

For a long time the court was completely puzzled. Every gentlemen brought in exclaimed against the treatment he had received in most bitter terms, blaming a mob set on him and his friends by the adverse party; and matters looked extremely ill, until at length they began to perceive that they were examining gentlemen of both parties, and that they had been doing so from the beginning, almost alternately, so equally had the prisoners been taken from both parties. Finally, it turned out, that a few gentlemen, two-thirds of whom were strenuous Whigs themselves, had joined in mauling the whole Whig population of Edinburgh. The investigation disclosed nothing the effect of which was not ludicrous; and the Duke of Queensberry, whose aim was at that time to conciliate the two factions, tried all that he could to turn the whole *fracas* into a joke—an unlucky frolic, where no ill was meant on either side, and which had yet been productive of a great deal.

The greater part of the people went home satisfied; but not so the Rev. Robert Wringhim. He did all that he could to inflame both judges and populace against the young Cavaliers, especially against the young laird of Dalcastle, whom he represented as an incendiary, set on by an unnatural parent to slander his mother, and make away with a hapless and only brother; and, in truth, that declaimer against all human merit had that sort of powerful, homely, and bitter eloquence, which seldom missed affecting his hearers; the consequence

at that time was, that he made the unfortunate affair between the two brothers appear in extremely bad colours, and the populace retired to their homes impressed with no very favourable opinion of either the Laird of Dalcastle or his son George, neither of whom were there present to speak for themselves.

As for Wringhim himself, he went home to his lodgings, filled with gall and with spite against the young laird, whom he was made to believe the aggressor, and that intentionally. But most of all was he filled with indignation against the father, whom he held in abhorrence at all times, and blamed solely for this unmannerly attack made on his favourite ward, namesake, and adopted son; and for the public imputation of a crime to his own reverence, in calling the lad *his* son, and thus charging him with a sin against which he was well known to have levelled all the arrows of church censure with unsparing might.

But, filled as his heart was with some portion of these bad feelings to which all flesh is subject, he never omitted any of the external duties of religion, and further than that man hath no power to pry. He lodged with the family of a Mr. Miller, whose lady was originally from Glasgow, and had been a hearer, and, of course, a great admirer of Mr. Wringhim. In that family he made public worship every evening; and that night, in his petitions at a throne of grace, he prayed for so many vials of wrath to be poured on the head of some particular sinner, that the hearers trembled, and stopped their ears. But that he might not proceed with so violent a measure, amounting to excommunication, without due Scripture warrant, he began the exercise of the evening by singing the following verses

Set thou the wicked over him,
And upon his right hand
Give thou his greatest enemy,
Even Satan, leave to stand.
And when by thee he shall be judged
Let him remembered be;
And let his prayer be turned to sin,
When he shall call on thee.

Few be his days; and in his room
His charge another take;
His children let be fatherless;
His wife a widow make;
Let God his father's wickedness
Still to remembrance call:
And never let his mother's sin
Be blotted out at all.

As he in cursing pleasure took,
So let it to him fall;
As he delighted not to bless,
So bless him not at all.
As cursing he like clothes put on,
Into his bowels so,
Like water, and into his bones
Like oil, down let it go.

Young Wringhim only knew the full purport of this spiritual song: and went to his bed better satisfied than ever that his father and brother were castaways, reprobates, aliens from the church and the true faith, and cursed in time and eternity.

The next day George and his companions met as usual—all who were not seriously wounded of them. But as they strolled about the city, the rancorous eye and the finger of scorn were pointed against them. None of them was at first aware of the reason; but it threw a damp over their spirits and enjoyments, which they could not master. They went to take a forenoon game at their old play of tennis, not on a match, but by way of improving themselves; but they had not well taken their places till young Wringhim appeared in his old station, at his brother's right hand, with looks more demure and determined than ever. His lips were primmed so close that his mouth was hardly discernible, and his dark deep eye flashed gleams of holy indignation on the godless set, but particularly on his brother. His presence acted as a mildew on all social intercourse or enjoyment; the game was marred, and ended ere it was well begun. There were whisperings apart—the company separated; and, in order to shake off the blighting influence of this dogged persecutor, they entered sundry houses of their acquaintances, with an understanding that they were to meet on the Links for a game at cricket.

They did so; and, stripping off part of their clothes, they began that violent and spirited game. They had not played five minutes, till Wringhim was talking in the midst of them, and totally impeding the play. A cry arose from all corners of "Oh, this will never do. Kick him out of the playground! Knock down the scoundrel; or bind him, and let him lie in peace."

"By no means," cried George: "it is evident he wants nothing else. Pray do not humour him so much as to touch him with either foot or finger." Then turning to a friend, he said in a whisper, "Speak to him, Gordon; he surely will not refuse to let us have the ground to ourselves, if you request it of him."

Gordon went up to him, and requested of him, civilly but ardently, "to retire to a certain distance, else none of them could or would be answerable, however sore he might be hurt."

He turned disdainfully on his heel, uttered a kind of pulpit hem! and then added, "I will take my chance of that; hurt me, any of you, at your peril."

The young gentlemen smiled, through spite and disdain of the dogged animal. Gordon followed him up, and tried to remonstrate with him; but he let him know that "it was his pleasure to be there at that time; and, unless he could demonstrate to him what superior right he and his party had to that ground, in preference to him, and to the exclusion of all others, he was determined to assert his right, and the rights of his fellow-citizens, by keeping possession of whatsoever part of that common field he chose."

"You are no gentleman, sir," said Gordon.

"Are you one, sir?" said the other.

"Yes, sir, I will let you know that I am, by G—!"

"Then, thanks be to Him whose name you have profaned, I am none. If *one* of the party be a gentleman, *I do hope in God I am not!*"

It was now apparent to them all that he was courting obloquy and manual chastisement from their hands, if by any means he could provoke them to the deed; and, apprehensive that he had some sinister and deep-laid design in hunting after such a singular favour, they wisely restrained one another from inflicting the punishment that each of them yearned to bestow personally, and which he so well deserved.

But the unpopularity of the younger George Colwan could no longer be concealed from his associates. It was manifested wherever the populace were assembled; and his young and intimate friend, Adam Gordon, was obliged to warn him of the circumstance, that he might not be surprised at the gentlemen of their acquaintance withdrawing themselves from his society, as they could not be seen with him without being insulted. George thanked him; and it was agreed between them, that the former should keep himself retired during the daytime while he remained in Edinburgh, and that at night they should always meet together, along with such of their companions as were disengaged.

George found it every day more and more necessary to adhere to this system of seclusion; for it was not alone the hisses of the boys and populace that pursued him—a fiend of more malignant aspect was ever at his elbow, in the form of his brother. To whatever place of amusement he betook himself, and however well he concealed his intentions of going there from all flesh living, there was his brother Wringhim also, and always within a few yards of him, generally about the same distance, and ever and anon darting looks at him that chilled his very soul. They were looks that cannot be described; but they were felt piercing to the bosom's deepest core. They affected even the onlookers in a very particular manner, for all whose eyes caught a glimpse of these hideous glances followed them to the object toward which they were darted; the gentlemanly and mild demeanour of that object generally calmed their startled apprehensions; for no one ever yet noted the glances of the young man's eye in the black coat, at the face of his brother, who did not at first manifest strong symptoms of alarm.

George became utterly confounded; not only at the import of this persecution, but how in the world it came to pass that this unaccountable being knew all his motions, and every intention of his heart, as it were intuitively. On consulting his own previous feelings and resolutions, he found that the circumstances of his going to such and such a place were often the most casual incidents in nature—the caprice of a moment had carried him there, and yet he had never sat or stood many minutes till there was the self-same being, always in the same position with regard to himself, as regularly as the shadow is cast from the substance, or the ray of light from the opposing denser medium.

For instance, he remembered one day of setting out with the intention of going to attend divine worship in the High Church, and when within a short space of its door, he was overtaken by young Kilpatrick of Closeburn, who was bound to the Greyfriars to see his sweetheart, as he said; "and if you will go with me, Colwan," said he, "I will let you see her too, and then you will be just as far forward as I am."

George assented at once, and went; and after taking his seat, he leaned his head forward on the pew to repeat over to himself a short ejaculatory prayer, as had always been his custom on entering the house of God. When he had done, he lifted his eyes naturally toward that point on his right hand where the fierce apparition of his brother had been wont to meet his view: there he was, in the same habit, form, demeanour, and precise point of distance, as usual! George again laid down his head, and his mind was so astounded, that he had nearly fallen into a swoon. He tried shortly after to muster up courage to look at the speaker, at the congregation, and at Captain Kilpatrick's sweetheart in particular; but the fiendish glances of the young man in the black clothes were too appalling to be withstood—his eye caught them whether he was looking that way or not: at length his courage was fairly mastered, and he was obliged to look down during the remainder of the service.

By night or by day it was the same. In the gallery of the Parliament House, in the boxes of the play-house, in the church, in the assembly, in the streets, suburbs, and the fields; and every day, and every hour, from the first rencounter of the two, the attendance became more and more constant, more inexplicable, and altogether more alarming and insufferable, until at last George was fairly driven from society, and forced to spend his days in his own and his father's lodgings with closed doors. Even there, he was constantly harassed with the idea, that the next time he lifted his eyes, he would to a certainty see that face, the most repulsive to all his feelings of aught the earth contained. The attendance of that brother was now become like the attendance of a demon on some devoted being that had sold himself to destruction; his approaches as undiscerned, and his looks as fraught with hideous malignity. It was seldom that he saw him either following him in the streets, or entering any house or church after him; he only appeared in his place, George wist not how, or whence; and, having sped so ill in his first friendly approaches, he had never spoken to his equivocal attendant a second time.

It came at length into George's head, as he was pondering by himself on the circumstances of this

extraordinary attendance, that perhaps his brother had relented, and, though of so sullen and unaccommodating a temper that he would not acknowledge it, or beg a reconciliation, it might be for that very purpose that he followed his steps night and day in that extraordinary manner. "I cannot for my life see for what other purpose it can be," thought he. "He never offers to attempt my life; nor dares he, if he had the inclination; therefore, although his manner is peculiarly repulsive to me, I shall not have my mind burdened with the reflection, that my own mother's son yearned for a reconciliation with me, and was repulsed by my haughty and insolent behaviour. The next time he comes to my hand I am resolved that I will accost him as one brother ought to address another, whatever it may cost me; and, if I am still flouted with disdain, then shall the blame rest with him.

After this generous resolution, it was a good while before his gratuitous attendant appeared at his side again; and George began to think that his visits were discontinued. The hope was a relief that could not be calculated; but still George had a feeling that it was too supreme to last. His enemy had been too pertinacious to abandon his design, whatever it was. He, however, began to indulge in a little more liberty, and for several days he enjoyed it with impunity.

George was, from infancy, of a stirring active disposition, and could not endure confinement; and having been of late much restrained in his youthful exercises by this singular persecutor, he grew uneasy under such restraint, and, one morning, chancing to awaken very early, he arose to make an excursion to the top of Arthur's Seat, to breathe the breeze of the dawning, and see the sun arise out of the eastern ocean. The morning was calm and serene; and as he walked down the south back of the Canongate, toward the Palace, the haze was so close around him that he could not see the houses on the opposite side of the way. As he passed the lord-commissioner's house, the guards were in attendance, who cautioned him not to go by the Palace, as all the gates would be shut and guarded for an hour to come, on which he went by the back of St. Anthony's gardens, and found his way into that little romantic glade adjoining to the saint's chapel and well. He was still involved in a blue haze, like a dense smoke, but yet in the midst of it the respiration was the most refreshing and delicious. The grass and the flowers were laden with dew; and, on taking off his hat to wipe his forehead. he perceived that the black glossy fur of which his chaperon was wrought, was all covered with a tissue of the most delicate silver —a fairy web, composed of little spheres, so minute that no eye could discern any one of them; yet there they were shining in lovely millions. Afraid of defacing so beautiful and so delicate a garnish, he replaced his hat with the greatest caution, and went on his way light of heart.

As he approached the swire at the head of the dell—that little delightful verge from which in one moment the eastern limits and shores of Lothian arise on the view—as he approached it, I say, and a little space from the height, he beheld, to his astonishment, a bright halo in the cloud of haze, that rose in a semicirele over his head like a pale rainbow. He was struck motionless at the view of the lovely vision; for it so chanced that he had never seen the same appearance before, though common at early morn. But he soon perceived the cause of the phenomenon, and that it proceeded from the rays of the sun from a pure unclouded morning sky striking upon this dense vapour which refracted them. George did admire this halo of glory, which still grew wider, and less defined, as he approached the surface of the cloud. But, to his utter amazement and supreme delight, he found, on reaching the top of Arthur's Seat, that this sublunary rainbow, this terrestrial glory, was spread in its most vivid hues beneath his feet. Still he could not perceive the body of the sun, although the light behind him was dazzling; but the cloud of haze lying dease in that deep dell that separates the hill from the rocks of Salisbury, and the dull shadow of the hill mingling with that cloud, made the dell a pit of darkness. On that shadowy cloud was the lovely rainbow formed, spreading itself on a horizontal plain, and having a slight and brilliant shade of all the colours of the heavenly bow, but all of them paler and less defined. But this terrestrial phenomenon of the early morn cannot be better delineated than by the name given of it by the shepherd boys, "The little wee ghost of the rainbow."

Such was the description of the morning, and the wild shades of the hill, that George gave to his father and Mr. Adam Gordon that same day on which he had witnessed them; and it is necessary that the reader should comprehend something of their nature to understand what follows.

He seated himself on the pinnacle of the rocky precipice, a little within the top of the hill to the westward, and, with a light and buoyant heart, viewed the beauties of the morning, and inhaled its salubrious breeze. "Here," thought he, "I can converse with nature without disturbance, and without being intruded on by any appalling or obnoxious visitor." The idea of his brother's dark and malevolent looks coming at that moment across his mind, he turned his eyes instinctively to the right, to the point where that unwelcome guest was wont to make his appearance. Gracious Heaven! What an apparition was there presented to his view! He saw, delineated in the cloud, the shoulders, arms, and features of a human being of the most dreadful aspect. The face was the face of his brother, but dilated to twenty times the natural size. Its dark eyes gleamed on him through the mist, while every furrow of its hideous brow frowned deep as the ravines on the brow of the hill. George started,

and his hair stood up in bristles as he gazed on this horrible monster. He saw every feature, and every line of the face distinctly, as it gazed on him with an intensity that was hardly endurable. Its eyes were fixed on him, in the same manner as those of some carnivorous animal fixed on its prey; and yet there was fear and trembling in these unearthly features, as plainly depicted as murderous malice. The giant apparition seemed sometimes to be cowering down as in terror, so that nothing but its brow and eyes were seen; still these never turned one moment from their object—again it rose imperceptibly up, and began to approach with great caution; and as it neared, the dimensions of its form lessened, still continuing, however, far above the natural size.

George conceived it to be a spirit. He could conceive it to be nothing else; and he took it for some horrid demon by which he was haunted, that had assumed the features of his brother in every lineament, but in taking on itself the human form, had miscalculated dreadfully on the size, and presented itself thus to him in a blown-up, dilated frame of embodied air, exhaled from the caverns of death or the regions of devouring fire. He was further confirmed in the belief that it was a malignant spirit, on perceiving that it approached him across the front of a precipice, where there was not a footing for thing of mortal frame. Still, what with terror and astonishment, he continued rivetted to the spot, till it approached, as he deemed, to within two yards of him; and then, perceiving that it was setting itself to make a violent spring on him, he started to his feet and fled distractedly in the opposite direction, keeping his eye cast behind him lest he should have been seized in that dangerous place. But the very first bolt that he made in his flight he came in contact with a *real* body of flesh and blood, and that with such violence that both went down among some scragged rocks, and George rolled over the other. The being called out "murder;" and, rising, fled precipitately. George then perceived that it was his brother; and, being confounded between the shadow and the substance, he knew not what he was doing or what he had done; and there being only one natural way of retreat from the brink of the rock, he likewise arose and pursued the affrighted culprit with all his speed towards the top of the hill. Wringhim was braying out "murder! murder!" at which George being disgusted, and his spirits all in a ferment from some hurried idea of intended harm, the moment he came up with the craven he seized him rudely by the shoulder, and clapped his hand on his mouth. "Murder, you beast!" said he; "what do you mean by roaring out murder in that way? Who is murdering you, or offering to murder you?"

Wringhim forced his mouth from under his brother's hand, and roared with redoubled energy, "Eh! Egh! murder! murder!" &c. George had felt resolute to put down this shocking alarm, lest some one might hear it and fly to the spot, or draw inferences widely different from the truth; and, perceiving the terror of Wringhim to be so great that expostulation was vain, he seized him by the mouth and nose with his left hand so strenuously that he sank his fingers into his cheeks. But the poltroon still attempting to bray out, George gave him such a stunning blow with his fist on the left temple, that he crumbled, as it were, to the ground, but more from the effects of terror than those of the blow. He then raised himself on his knees and hams, and lifting up his ghastly face, while the blood streamed over both ears, he besought his life of his brother, in the most abject whining manner, gaping and blubbering most piteously.

"Tell me then, sir," said George, resolved to make the most of the wretch's terror—"tell me for what purpose it is that you thus haunt my steps. Tell me plainly, and instantly, else I will throw you from the verge of that precipice."

"Oh, I will never do it again! I will never do it again! Spare my life, dear, good brother! Spare my life! Sure I never did you any hurt?"

"Swear to me, then, that you will never henceforth follow after me to torment me with your threatening looks; swear that you will never again come into my presence without being invited. Will you take an oath to this effect?"

"Oh yes! I will, I will!"

"But this is not all: you must tell me for what purpose you sought me out here this morning?"

"Oh, brother! for nothing but your good. I had nothing at heart but your unspeakable profit, and great and endless good."

"So then, you indeed knew that I was here?"

"I was told so by a friend, but I did not believe him; a—a—at least I did not know it was true till I saw you."

"Tell me this one thing, then, Robert, and all shall be forgotten and forgiven. Who was that friend?"

"You do not know him."

"How then does he know me?"

"I cannot tell."

"Was he here present with you to-day?"

"Yes; he was not far distant. He came to this hill with me."

"Where then is he now?"

"I cannot tell."

"Then, wretch, confess that the devil was that friend who told you I was here, and who came here with you. None else could possibly know of my being here."

"Ah! how little you know of him! Would you argue that there is neither man nor spirit endowed with so much foresight as to deduce natural conclusions from previous actions and incidents but the devil? Be assured of this, however, that I had no aim in seeking you *but your good!*"

"Well, Robert, I will believe it. I am disposed

to be hasty and passionate: it is a fault of my nature; but I never meant or wished you evil; and God is my witness that I would as soon stretch out my hand to my own life, or my father's, as to yours."———At these words, Wringhim uttered a hollow exulting laugh, put his hands in his pockets, and withdrew a space to his accustomed distance. George continued: "And now, once for all, I request that we may exchange forgiveness, and that we may part and remain friends."

"Would such a thing be expedient, think you? Or consistent with the glory of God? I doubt it."

"I can think of nothing that would be more so. Is it not consistent with every precept of the gospel? Come, brother, say that our reconciliation is complete."

"Oh yes, certainly! I tell you, brother, according to the flesh: it is just as complete as the lark's is with the adder; no more so, nor ever can. Reconciled, forsooth! To what would I be reconciled?"

As he said this, he strode indignantly away. From the moment that he heard his life was safe, he assumed his former insolence and revengeful looks—and never were they more dreadful than on parting with his brother that morning on the top of the hill. "Well, go thy ways," said George "some would despise, but I pity thee. If thou art not a limb of Satan, I never saw one."

The sun had now dispelled the vapours; and the morning being lovely beyond description, George sat himself down on the top of the hill, and pondered deeply on the unaccountable incident that had befallen him that morning. He could in nowise comprehend it; but, taking it with other previous circumstances, he could not get quit of a conviction that he was haunted by some evil genius in the shape of his brother, as well as by that dark and mysterious wretch himself. In no other way could he account for the apparition he saw that morning on the face of the rock, nor for several sudden appearances of the same being in places where there was no possibility of any foreknowledge that he himself was to be there, and as little that the same being, if he were flesh and blood like other men, could always start up in the same position with regard to him. He determined, therefore, on reaching home, to relate all that had happened, from beginning to end, to his father, asking his counsel and his assistance, although he knew full well that his father was not the fittest man in the world to solve such a problem. He was now involved in party politics, over head and ears; and, moreover, he could never hear the names of either of the Wringhims mentioned without getting into a quandary of disgust and anger; and all that he would deign to say of them was, to call them by all the opprobrious names he could invent.

It turned out as the young man from the first suggested: old Dalcastle would listen to nothing concerning them with any patience. George complained that his brother harassed him with his presence at all times, and in all places. Old Dal asked why he did not kick the dog out of his presence, whenever he felt him disagreeable? George said, he seemed to have some demon for a familiar. Dal answered, that he did not wonder a bit at that, for the young spark was the third in a direct line who had all been children of adultery; and it was well known that all such were born half deils themselves, and nothing was more likely than that they should hold intercourse with their fellows. In the same style did he sympathize with all his son's late sufferings and perplexities.

In Mr. Adam Gordon, however, George found a friend who entered into all his feelings, and had seen and knew everything about the matter. He tried to convince him that at all events there could be nothing supernatural in the circumstances; and that the vision he had seen on the rock, among the thick mist, was the shadow of his brother approaching behind him. George could not swallow this, for he had seen his own shadow on the cloud, and, instead of approaching to aught like his own figure, he perceived nothing but a halo of glory round a point of the cloud that was whiter and purer than the rest. Gordon said, if he would go with him to a mountain of his father's, which he named, in Aberdeenshire, he would show him a giant spirit of the same dimensions, any morning at the rising of the sun, provided he shone on that spot. This statement excited George's curiosity exceedingly; and, being disgusted with some things about Edinburgh, and glad to get out of the way, he consented to go with Gordon to the Highlands for a space. The day was accordingly set for their departure, the old laird's assent obtained; and the two young sparks parted in a state of great impatience for their excursion.

One of them found out another engagement, however, the instant after this last was determined on. Young Wringhim went off the hill that morning, and home to his upright guardian again, without washing the blood from his face and neck; and there he told a most woeful story indeed: how he had gone out to take a morning's walk on the hill, where he had encountered with his reprobate brother among the mist, who had knocked him down and very nearly murdered him; threatening dreadfully, and with horrid oaths, to throw him from the top of the cliff.

We cannot enter into the detail of the events that now occurred, without forestalling a part of the narrative of one who knew all the circumstances—was deeply interested in them, and whose relation is of higher value than anything that can be retailed out of the stores of tradition and old registers; but, his narrative being different from these, it was judged expedient to give the account as thus publicly handed down to us. Suffice it, that, before evening, George was apprehended, and lodged in jail, on a criminal

charge of an assault and battery to the shedding of blood, with the intent of committing fratricide. Then was the old laird in great consternation, and blamed himself for treating the thing so lightly, which seemed to have been gone about, from the beginning, so systematically, and with an intent which the villains were now going to realize; namely, to get the young laird disposed of; and then his brother, in spite of the old gentleman's teeth, would be laird himself.

Old Dal now set his whole interest to work among the noblemen and lawyers of his party. His son's case looked exceedingly ill, owing to the former assault before witnesses, and the unbecoming expressions made use of by him on that occasion, as well as from the present assault, which George did not deny, and for which no moving cause or motive could be made to appear..

On his first declaration before the sheriff, matters looked no better: but then the sheriff was a Whig. It is well known how differently the people of the present day, in Scotland, view the cases of their own party-men and those of opposite political principles. But this day is nothing to that in such matters, although they are still sometimes barefaced enough. It appeared, from all the witnesses in the first case, that the complainant was the first aggressor—that he refused to stand out of the way, though apprised of his danger; and when his brother came against him inadvertently, he had aimed a blow at him with his foot, which, if it had taken effect, would have killed him. But as to the story of the apparition in fair daylight—the flying from the face of it—the running foul of his brother—pursuing him, and knocking him down, why the judge smiled at the relation; and saying, "It was a very extraordinary story," he remanded George to prison, leaving the matter to the High Court of Justiciary.

When the case came before that court, matters took a different turn. The constant and sullen attendance of the one brother upon the other excited suspicions; and these were in some manner confirmed, when the guards at Queensberry-house deponed, that the prisoner went by them on his way to the hill that morning, about twenty minutes before the complainant, and when the latter passed, he asked if such a young man had passed before him, describing the prisoner's appearance to them; and that, on being answered in the affirmative, he mended his pace and fell a-running.

The lord-justice, on hearing this, asked the prisoner if he had any suspicions that his brother had a design on his life.

He answered, that all along, from the time of their first unfortunate meeting, his brother had dogged his steps so constantly, and so unaccountably, that he was convinced it was with some intent out of the ordinary course of events; and that if, as his lordship supposed, it was indeed his shadow that he had seen approaching him through the mist, then, from the cowering and cautious manner that it advanced, there was too little doubt that his brother's design had been to push him headlong from the cliff that morning.

A conversation then took place between the judge and the lord-advocate; and, in the meantime, a bustle was seen in the hall; on which the doors were ordered to be guarded—and, behold, the precious Mr. R. Wringhim was taken into custody, trying to make his escape out of court. Finally it turned out, that George was honourably acquitted, and young Wringhim bound over to keep the peace with heavy penalties and securities.

That was a day of high exultation to George and his youthful associates, all of whom abhorred Wringhim; and the evening being spent in great glee, it was agreed between Mr. Adam Gordon and George that their visit to the Highlands, though thus long delayed, was not to be abandoned; and though they had, through the machinations of an incendiary, lost the season of delight, they would still find plenty of sport in deer-shooting. Accordingly, the day was set a second time for their departure; and, on the day preceding that, all the party were invited by George to dine with him once more at the sign of the Black Bull of Norway. Every one promised to attend, anticipating nothing but festivity and joy. Alas, what short-sighted improvident creatures we are all of us; and how often does the evening cup of joy lead to sorrow in the morning!

The day arrived—the party of young noblemen and gentlemen met, and were as happy and jovial as men could be. George was never so brilliant, or so full of spirits; and exulting to see so many gallant young chiefs and gentlemen about him, who all gloried in the same principles of loyalty (perhaps this word should have been written *disloyalty*), he made speeches, gave toasts, and sang songs, all leaning slily to the same side, until a very late hour. By that time he had pushed the bottle so long and so freely, and its fumes had taken possession of every brain to such a degree, that they held Dame Reason rather at the staff's end, overbearing all her counsels and expostulations; and it was imprudently proposed by a wild inebriated spark, and carried by a majority of voices, that the whole party should adjourn to another tavern for the remainder of the night.

They did so; and it appears from what follows that the house to which they retired must have been somewhere on the opposite side of the street to the Black Bull Inn, a little farther to the eastward. They had not been an hour in that house, till some altercation chanced to arise between George Colwan and a Mr. Drummond, the younger son of a nobleman of distinction. It was perfectly casual, and no one thenceforward, to this day, could ever tell what it was about, if it was not about the misunderstanding of some word or term that the one had uttered. However it was, some high words passed between

them; these were followed by threats; and in less than two minutes from the commencement of the quarrel, Drummond left the house in apparent displeasure, hinting to the other that they two should settle that in a more convenient place.

The company looked at one another, for all was over before any of them knew such a thing was begun. "What is the matter?" cried one. "What ails Drummond?" cried another. "Who has he quarrelled with?" asked a third.

"Don't know." "Can't tell, on my life." "He has quarrelled with his wine, I suppose, and is going to send it a challenge."

Such were the questions, and such the answers that passed in the jovial party, and the matter was no more thought of.

But in the course of a very short space, about the length of which the ideas of the company were the next day at great variance, a sharp rap came to the door: it was opened by a female; but there being a chain inside, she only saw one side of the person at the door. He appeared to be a young gentleman, in appearance like him who had lately left the house, and asked, in a low whispering voice, "if young Dalcastle was still in the house?" The woman did not know. "If he is," added he, "pray tell him to speak with me for a few minutes." The woman delivered the message before all the party, among whom there were then sundry courteous ladies of notable distinction, and George, on receiving it, instantly rose, and said, in the hearing of them all, "I will bet a hundred merks that is Drummond." "Don't go to quarrel with him, George," said one. "Bring him in with you," said another. George stepped out; the door was again bolted, the chain drawn across, and the inadvertent party left within thought no more of the circumstance till the next morning, that the report had spread over the city, that a young gentleman had been slain, on a little washing-green at the side of the North Loch, and at the very bottom of the close where this thoughtless party had been assembled.

Several of them on first hearing the report hasted to the dead-room in the old guard-house, where the corpse had been deposited, and soon discovered the body to be that of their friend and late entertainer, George Colwan. Great were the consternation and grief of all concerned, and in particular of his old father and Miss Logan; for George had always been the sole hope and darling of both, and the news of the event paralyzed them so as to render them incapable of all thought or exertion. The spirit of the old laird was broken by the blow, and he descended at once from a jolly, good-natured, and active man, to a mere driveller, weeping over the body of his son, kissing his wound, his lips, and his cold brow alternately; denouncing vengeance on his murderers, and lamenting that he himself had not met the cruel doom, so that the hope of his race might have been preserved. In short, finding that all further motive of action and object of concern or of love here below were for ever removed from him, he abandoned himself to despair, and threatened to go down to the grave with his son.

But although he made no attempt to discover the murderers, the arm of justice was not idle: and it being evident to all that the crime must infallibly be brought home to young Drummond, some of his friends sought him out, and compelled him, sorely against his will, to retire into concealment till the issue of the proof that should be led was made known. At the same time, he denied all knowledge of the incident with a resolution that astonished his intimate friends and relations, who to a man suspected him guilty. His father was not in Scotland, for I think it was said to me that this young man was second son to a John, Duke of Melford, who lived abroad with the royal family of the Stuarts: but this young gentleman lived with the relations of his mother, one of whom, an uncle, was a lord of session: these having thoroughly effected his concealment went away and listened to the evidence: and the examination of every new witness convinced them that their noble young relative was the slayer of his friend.

All the young gentlemen of the party were examined, save Drummond, who, when sent for, could not be found, which circumstance sorely confirmed the suspicions against him in the minds of judges and jurors, friends and enemies; and there is little doubt, that the care of his relations in concealing him injured his character and his cause. The young gentlemen of whom the party was composed varied considerably with respect to the quarrel between him and the deceased. Some of them had neither heard nor noted it; others had, but not one of them could tell how it began. Some of them had heard the threat uttered by Drummond on leaving the house, and one only had noted him lay his hand on his sword. Not one of them could swear that it was Drummond who came to the door and desired to speak with the deceased, but the general impression on the minds of them all was to that effect: and one of the women swore that she heard the voice distinctly at the door, and every word that voice pronounced; and at the same time heard the deceased say that it was Drummond's.

On the other hand, there were some evidences on Drummond's part, which Lord Craigie, his uncle, had taken care to collect. He produced the sword which his nephew had worn that night, on which there was neither blood nor blemish; and above all, he insisted on the evidence of a number of surgeons, who declared that both the wounds which the deceased had received had been given behind. One of these was below the left arm, and a slight one; the other was quite through the body, and both evidently inflicted with the same weapon, a two-edged sword, of the same dimensions as that worn by Drummond.

Upon the whole, there was a division in the court, but a majority decided it. Drummond was pronounced guilty of the murder, outlawed for not appearing, and a high reward offered for his apprehension. It was with the greatest difficulty that he escaped on board of a small trading vessel, which landed him in Holland, and from thence, flying into Germany, he entered into the service of the emperor Charles VI. Many regretted that he was not taken, and made to suffer the penalty due for such a crime; and the melancholy incident became a pulpit theme over a great part of Scotland, being held up as a proper warning to youth.

After the funeral of this promising and excellent young man, his father never more held up his head. Miss Logan, with all her art, could not get him to attend to any worldly thing, or to make any settlement whatsoever of his affairs, save making her over a present of what disposable funds he had about him. As to his estates, when they were mentioned to him, he wished them all in the bottom of the sea, and himself along with him. But whenever she mentioned the circumstance of Thomas Drummond having been the murderer of his son, he shook his head, and once made the remark, that "It was all a mistake, a gross and fatal error; but that God, who had permitted such a flagrant deed, would bring it to light in his own time and way." In a few weeks he followed his son to the grave, and the notorious Robert Wringhim took possession of his estates as the lawful son of the late laird, born in wedlock, and under his father's roof. The investiture was celebrated by prayer, singing of psalms, and religious disputation. The late guardian and adopted father, and the mother of the new laird, presided on the grand occasion, making a conspicuous figure in all the work of the day; and though the youth himself indulged rather more freely in the bottle than he had ever been seen to do before, it was agreed by all present, that there had never been a festivity so sanctified within the great hall of Dalcastle.

But the ways of Heaven are altogether inscrutable. It is the controller of nature alone that can bring light out of darkness, and order out of confusion. Who is he that causeth the mole, from his secret path of darkness, to throw up the gem, the gold, and the precious ore? The same, that from the mouths of babes and sucklings can extract the perfection of praise, and who can make the most abject of his creatures instrumental in bringing the most hidden truths to light.

Miss Logan had never lost the thought of her late master's prediction, that heaven would bring to light the truth concerning the untimely death of his son. She perceived that some strange conviction, too horrible for expression, preyed on his mind from the moment that the fatal news reached him to the last of his existence; and in his last ravings, he uttered some incoherent words about fanaticism having been the ruin of his house. These, to be sure, were the words of dotage, and of the last and severest kind of it; but for all that, they sank deep into Miss Logan's soul, and at length she began to think with herself, "Is it possible the Wringhims, and the sophisticated wretch who is in conjunction with them, the mother of my late beautiful and amiable young master, can have effected his destruction? If so, I will spend my days, and my little patrimony, in endeavours to rake up and expose the unnatural deed."

In all her outgoings and incomings, Mrs. Logan (as she was now styled) never lost sight of this one object. Every new disappointment only whetted her desire to secure some particulars concerning it; for she thought so long, and so ardently upon it, that by degrees it became settled in her mind as a sealed truth. And as woman is always most jealous of her own sex in such matters, her suspicions were fixed on her greatest enemy, Mrs. Colwan, now the Lady-dowager of Dalcastle. All was wrapped in a chaos of confusion; but at last by dint of a thousand sly and secret inquiries, Mrs. Logan found out where Lady Dalcastle had been on the night that the murder happened, and likewise what company she had kept, as well as some of the comers and goers; and she had hopes of having discovered a cue, which, if she could keep hold of the thread, would lead her through darkness to the light of truth.

Returning very late one evening from a convocation of family servants, which she had drawn together in order to fish something out of them, her maid having been in attendance on her all the evening, they found on going home, that the house had been broken into, and a number of valuable articles stolen therefrom. Mrs. Logan had grown quite heartless before this stroke, having been altogether unsuccessful in her inquiries, and now she began to entertain some resolutions of giving up the fruitless search.

In a few days thereafter, she received intelligence that her clothes and plate were mostly recovered, and that she for one was bound over to prosecute the depredator, provided the articles turned out to be hers, as libelled in the indictment, and as a king's evidence had given out. She was likewise summoned, or requested, I know not which, being ignorant of these matters, to go as far as the town of Peebles on Tweedside, in order to survey the articles on such a day, and make affidavit to their identity before the sheriff. She went accordingly: but on entering the town by the north gate, she was accosted by a poor girl in tattered apparel, who with great earnestness inquired if her name was not Mrs. Logan? On being answered in the affirmative, she said that the unfortunate prisoner in the tolbooth requested her, as she valued all that was dear to her in life, to go and see her before she appeared in court, at the hour of cause, as she (the

prisoner) had something of the greatest moment to impart to her. Mrs. Logan's curiosity was excited, and she followed the girl straight to the tolbooth, who by the way said to her, that she would find in the prisoner a woman of a superior mind, who had gone through all the vicissitudes of life. "She has been very unfortunate, and I fear very wicked," added the poor thing, "but she is my mother, and God knows, with all her faults and failings, she has never been unkind to me. You, madam, have it in your power to save her; but she has wronged you, and therefore if you will not do it for her sake, do it for mine, and the God of the fatherless will reward you."

Mrs. Logan answered her with a cast of the head, and a hem! and only remarked, that "the guilty must not always be suffered to escape, or what a world must we be doomed to live in!"

She was admitted to the prison, and found a tall emaciated figure, who appeared to have once possessed a sort of masculine beauty in no ordinary degree, but was now considerably advanced in years. She viewed Mrs. Logan with a stern, steady gaze, as if reading her features as a margin to her intellect; and when she addressed her it was not with that humility and agonized fervour which are natural for one in such circumstances to address to another, who has the power of her life and death in her hands.

"I am deeply indebted to you for this timely visit, Mrs. Logan," said she. "It is not that I value life, or because I fear death, that I have sent for you so expressly. But the manner of the death that awaits me has something peculiarly revolting in it to a female mind. Good God! when I think of being hung up, a spectacle to a gaping multitude. It rends to atoms a soul born for another sphere than that in which it has moved, had not the vile selfishness of a lordly fiend ruined all my prospects, and all my hopes. Hear me then; for I do not ask your pity; I only ask of you to look to yourself, and behave with womanly prudence. If you deny this day that these goods are yours, there is no other evidence whatever against my life, and it is safe for the present. For as for the word of the wretch who has betrayed me, it is of no avail; he has prevaricated so notoriously to save himself. If you deny them, you shall have them all again to the value of a mite, and more to the bargain. If you swear to the identity of them, the process will, one way and another, cost you the half of what they are worth."

"And what security have I for that?" said Mrs. Logan.

"You have none but *my word*," said the other proudly, "and that never yet was violated. If you cannot take that, I know the worst you can do. But I had forgot—I have a poor helpless child without, waiting, and starving about the prison door; surely it was of her that I wished to speak. This shameful death of mine will leave her in a deplorable state."

"The girl seems to have candour and strong affections," said Mrs. Logan; "I grievously mistake if such a child would not be a thousand times better without such a guardian and director."

"Then will you be so kind as come to the Grassmarket, and see me put down?" said the prisoner. "I thought a woman would estimate a woman's and a mother's feelings, when such a dreadful throw was at stake, at least in part. But you are callous, and have never known any feelings but those of subordination to your old unnatural master. Alas, I have no cause of offence! I have wronged you: and justice must take its course. Will you forgive me before we part?"

Mrs. Logan hesitated, for her mind ran on something else: on which the other subjoined, "No, you will not forgive me, I see. But you will pray to God to forgive me? I know you will *do that.*"

Mrs. Logan heard not this jeer, but looking at the prisoner with an absent and stupid stare, she said, "Did you know my late master?"

"Ay, that I did, and never for any good," said she. "I knew the old and the young spark both, and was by when the latter was slain."

This careless sentence affected Mrs. Logan in a most peculiar manner? A shower of tears burst from her eyes ere it was done, and when it was, she appeared like one bereaved of her mind. She first turned one way and then another, as if looking for something she had dropped. She seemed to think she had lost her eyes, instead of her tears, and at length, as by instinct, she tottered close up to the prisoner's face, and looking wistfully and joyfully in it, said, with breathless earnestness. "Pray, mistress, what is your name?"

"My name is Arabella Calvert," said the other: "Miss, mistress, or widow, as you choose, for I have been all the three, and that not once nor twice only—Ay, and something beyond all these. But as for you, you have never been anything!"

"Ay, ay! and so you are Bell Calvert! Well I thought so—I thought so," said Mrs. Logan: and helping herself to a seat, she came and sat down close by the prisoner's knee. "So you are indeed Bell Calvert, so called once. Well, of all the world you are the woman whom I have longed and travailed the most to see. But you were invisible: a being to be heard of, not seen."

"There have been days, madam," returned she, "when I *was* to be seen, and when there were few to be seen like me. But since that time there have indeed been days on which I was not to be seen. My crimes have been great, but my sufferings have been greater: so great that neither you nor the world can ever either know or conceive them. I hope they will be taken into account by the Most High. Mine have been crimes of utter desperation.

But whom am I speaking to! You had better leave me to myself, mistress."

"Leave you to yourself? That I will be loth to do, till you tell me where you were that night my young master was murdered?"

"Where the devil would, I was! Will that suffice you? Ah, it was a vile action! A night to be remembered that was!—Won't you be going? I want to trust my daughter with a commission."

"No, Mrs. Calvert, you and I part not till you have divulged that mystery to me."

"You must accompany me to the other world, then, for you shall not have it in this."

"If you refuse to answer me, I can have you before a tribunal, where you shall be sifted to the soul."

"Such miserable inanity! What care I for your threatenings of a tribunal? I who must so soon stand before my last earthly one? What could the word of such a culprit avail? Or if it could, where is the judge that could enforce it?"

"Did you not say that there was some mode of accommodating matters on that score?"

"Yes, I prayed you to grant me my life, which is in your power. The saving of it would not have cost you a plack, yet you refused to do it. The taking of it will cost you a great deal, and yet to that purpose you adhere. I can have no parley with such a spirit. I would not have my life in a present from its motions, nor would I exchange courtesies with its possessor."

"Indeed, Mrs. Calvert, since ever we met, I have been so busy thinking about who you might be, that I know not what you have been proposing. I believe I meant to do what I could to save you. But once for all, tell me everything that you know concerning that amiable young gentleman's death, and here is my hand, there shall be nothing wanting that I can effect for you."

"No, I despise all barter with such mean and selfish curiosity; and, as I believe *that* passion is stronger with you than fear is with me, we part on equal terms. Do your worst; and my secret shall go to the gallows and the grave with me."

Mrs. Logan was now greatly confounded, and after proffering in vain to concede everything she could ask in exchange for the particulars relating to the murder, she became the suppliant in her turn. But the unaccountable culprit, exulting in her advantage, laughed her to scorn; and finally, in a paroxysm of pride and impatience, called in the jailer, and had her expelled, ordering him in her hearing, not to grant her admittance a second time, on any pretence.

Mrs. Logan was now hard put to it, and again driven almost to despair. She might have succeeded in the attainment of that she thirsted for most in life so easily, had she known the character which she had to deal with—had she known to have soothed her high and afflicted spirit; but that opportunity was past, and the hour of examination at hand. She once thought of going and claiming her articles, as she at first intended; but then, when she thought again of the Wringhims swaying it at Dalcastle, where she had been wont to hear them held in such contempt, if not abhorrence, and perhaps of holding it by the most diabolical means, she was withheld from marring the only chance that remained of having a glimpse into that mysterious affair.

Finally, she resolved not to answer to her name in the court, rather than to appear and assert a falsehood, which she might be called on to certify by oath. She did so; and heard the sheriff give orders to the officers to make inquiry for Miss Logan from Edinburgh, at the various places of entertainment in town, and to expedite her arrival in court, as things of great value were in dependence. She also heard the man who had turned king's evidence against the prisoner examined for the second time, and sifted most cunningly. His answers gave anything but satisfaction to the sheriff, though Mrs. Logan believed them to be mainly truth. But there were a few questions and answers that struck her above all others.

"How long is it since Mrs. Calvert and you became acquainted?"

"About a year and a half."

"State the precise time, if you please; the day, or night, according to your remembrance."

"It was on the morning of the 28th of February, 1705."

"What time of the morning?"

"Perhaps about one."

"So early as that? At what place did you meet then?"

"It was at the foot of one of the north wynds of Edinburgh."

"Was it by appointment that you met?"

"No, it was not."

"For what purpose was it then?"

"For no purpose."

"How is it that you chance to remember the day and hour so minutely, if you met that woman whom you have accused merely by chance, and for no manner of purpose, as you must have met others that night, perhaps to the amount of hundreds, in the same way?"

"I have good cause to remember it, my lord."

"What was that cause?—No answer?—You don't choose to say what that cause was?"

"I am not at liberty to tell."

The sheriff then descended to other particulars, all of which tended to prove that the fellow was an accomplished villain, and that the principal share of the atrocities had been committed by himself. Indeed the sheriff hinted, that he suspected the only share Mrs. Calvert had in them was in being too much in his company, and too true to him. The case was remitted to the court of justiciary; but Mrs. Logan had heard enough to convince her that

the culprits first met at the very spot, and the very hour, on which George Colwan was slain; and she had no doubt that they were incendiaries set on by his mother, to forward her own and her darling son's way to opulence. Mrs. Logan was wrong, as will appear in the sequel; but her antipathy to Mrs. Colwan made her watch the event with all care. She never quitted Peebles as long as Bell Calvert remained there, and when she was removed to Edinburgh, the other followed. When the trial came on, Mrs. Logan and her maid were again summoned as witnesses before the jury, and compelled by the prosecutor for the crown to appear.

The maid was first called; and when she came into the witnesses' box, the anxious and hopeless looks of the prisoner were manifest to all; but the girl, whose name, she said, was Bessy Gillies, answered in so flippant and fearless a way, that the auditors were much amused. After a number of routine questions, the depute-advocate asked her if she was at home on the morning of the 5th September last, when her mistress's house was robbed?

"Was I at hame, say ye? Na, faith-ye, lad! An I had been at hame, there had been mair to dee. I wad hae raised sic a yelloch!"

"Where were you that morning?"

"Where was I, say you? I was in the house where my mistress was, sitting dozing an' half sleeping in the kitchen. I thought aye she would be setting out every minute, for twa hours."

"And when you went home, what did you find?"

"What found we? Be my sooth, we found a broken lock, an' toom kists."

"Relate some of the particulars, if you please."

"Oh, sir, the thieves didna stand upon particulars: they were halesale dealers in a' our best wares."

"I mean, what passed between your mistress and you on the occasion?"

"What passed, say ye? Oh, there wasna muckle: I was in a great passion, but she was dung doitrified a wee. When she gaed to put the key i' the door, up it flew to the fer wa'. 'Bess, ye jaud, what's the meaning o' this?' quo' she. 'Ye hae left the door open, ye tawpie.' 'The ne'er o' that I did,' quo' I, 'or may my shakel bane never turn another key.' When we got the candle lightit, a' the house was in a hoad-road. 'Bessy, my woman,' quo' she, 'we are baith ruined and undone creatures.' 'The deil a bit,' quo' I; 'that I deny positively. H'mh! to speak o' a lass o' my age being ruined and undone! I never had muckle except what was within a good jerkin, an' let the thief ruin me there wha can.'"

"Do you remember ought else that your mistress said on the occasion? Did you hear her blame any person?"'

"Oh, she made a great deal o' grumphing an' groaning about the *misfortune*, as she ca'd it, an' I think she said it was a part o' the ruin wrought by the Ringans, or some sic name—'they'll hae't a'! they'll hae't a'!' cried she, wringing her hands; 'they'll hae't a,' an' hell wi't, an' they'll get them baith.' 'Aweel, that's aye some satisfaction,' quo' I."

"Whom did she mean by the Ringans, do you know?"

"I fancy they are some creatures that she has dreamed about, for I think there canna be as ill folks living as she ca's them."

"Did you never hear her say that the prisoner at the bar there, Mrs. Calvert, or Bell Calvert, was the robber of her house; or that she was one of the Ringans?"

"Never. Somebody tauld her lately, that ane Bell Calvert robbed her house, but she disna believe it. Neither do I."

"What reasons have you for doubting it?"

"Because it was nae woman's fingers that broke up the bolts an' the locks that were torn open that night."

"Very pertinent, Bessy. Come then within the bar, and look at these articles on the table. Did you ever see these silver spoons before?"

"I hae seen some very like them, and whaever has seen siller spoons, has done the same."

"Can you swear you never saw them before?"

"Na, na, I wadna swear to ony siller spoons that ever war made, unless I had put a private mark on them wi' my ain hand, an' that's what I never did to ane."

"See, they are all marked with a C."

"Sae are a' the spoons in Argyle, an' the half o' them in Edinburgh I think. A C is a very common letter, an' so are a' the names that begin wi't. Lay them by, lay them by, an' gie the poor woman her spoons again. They are marked wi' her ain name, an' I hae little doubt they are hers, an' that she has seen better days."

"Ah, God bless her heart" sighed the prisoner: and that blessing was echoed in the breathings of many a feeling breast.

"Did you ever see this gown before, think you?"

"I hae seen ane very like it."

"Could you not swear that gown was your mistress's once?"

"No, unless I saw her hae't on, an' kend that she had paid for't. I am very scrupulous about an oath. *Like* is an ill mark. Sae ill indeed, that I wad hardly swear to ony thing."

"But you say that gown is *very like* one your mistress used to wear."

"I never said sic a thing. It is like one I hae seen her hae out airing on the hay raip i' the back green. It is very like ane I hae seen Mrs. Butler in the Grassmarket wearing too; I rather think it is the same. Bless you, sir, I wadna swear to my ain fore-finger, if it had been as lang out o' my sight, an' brought in an' laid on that table."

"Perhaps you are not aware, girl, that this scrupulousness of yours is likely to thwart the purposes of justice, and bereave your mistress of property to the amount of a thousand merks?" (*From the Judge.*)

"I canna help that, my lord: that's her look-out. For my part, I am resolved to keep a clear conscience, till I be married at any rate."

"Look over these things, and see if there is any one article among them which you can fix on as the property of your mistress."

"No ane o' them, sir, no ane o' them. An oath is an awfu' thing, especially when it is for life or death. Gie the poor woman her things again, an' let my mistress pick up the next she finds: that's my advice."

When Mrs. Logan came into the box, the prisoner groaned, and laid down her head. But how was she astonished when she heard her deliver herself something to the following purport! That whatever penalties she was doomed to abide, she was determined she would not bear witness against a woman's life, from a certain conviction that it could not be a woman who broke her house. "I have no doubt that I may find some of my own things there," added she, "but if they were found in her possession, she has been made a tool, or the dupe, of an infernal set, who shall be nameless here. I believe she *did not* rob me, and for that reason I will have no hand in her condemnation."

The Judge.—"This is the most singular perversion I have ever witnessed. Mrs. Logan, I entertain strong suspicions that the prisoner, or her agents, have made some agreement with you on this matter, to prevent the course of justice."

"So far from that, my lord, I went into the jail at Peebles to this woman, whom I had never seen before, and proffered to withdraw my part in the prosecution, as well as my evidence, provided she would tell me a few simple facts; but she spurned at my offer, and had me turned insolently out of the prison, with orders to the jailer never to admit me again on any pretence."

The prisoner's counsel, taking hold of this evidence, addressed the jury with great fluency; and finally the prosecution was withdrawn, and the prisoner dismissed from the bar, with a severe reprimand for her past conduct, and an exhortation to keep better company.

It was not many days till a caddy came with a large parcel to Mrs. Logan's house, which parcel he delivered into her hands, accompanied with a sealed note, containing an inventory of the articles, and a request to know if the unfortunate Arabella Calvert would be admitted to converse with Mrs. Logan.

Never was there a woman so much overjoyed as Mrs. Logan was at this message. She returned compliments; would be most happy to see her; and no article of the parcel should be looked at, or touched, till her arrival. It was not long till she made her appearance, dressed in somewhat better style than she had yet seen her; delivered her over the greater part of the stolen property, besides many things that either never had belonged to Mrs. Logan, or that she thought proper to deny, in order that the other might retain them.

The tale that she told of her misfortunes was of the most distressing nature, and was enough to stir up all the tender as well as abhorrent feelings in the bosom of humanity. She had suffered every deprivation in fame, fortune, and person. She had been imprisoned; she had been scourged, and branded as an impostor; and all on account of her resolute and unmoving fidelity and truth to *several* of the very worst of men, every one of whom had abandoned her to utter destitution and shame. But this narrative we cannot enter on at present, as it would perhaps mar the thread of our story, as much as it did the anxious anticipations of Mrs. Logan, who sat pining and longing for the relation that follows.

"Now I know, Mrs. Logan, that you are expecting a detail of the circumstances relating to the death of Mr. George Colwan; and in gratitude for your unbounded generosity and disinterestedness, I will tell you all that I know, although, for causes that will appear obvious to you, I had determined never in life to divulge one circumstance of it. I can tell you, however, that you will be disappointed, for it was not the gentleman who was accused, found guilty, and would have suffered the utmost penalty of the law, had he not made his escape. *It was not he*, I say, who slew your young master, nor had he any hand in it."

"I never thought he had. But, pray, how do you come to know this?"

"You shall hear. I had been abandoned in York by an artful and consummate fiend; found guilty of being art and part concerned in the most heinous atrocities, and, in his place, suffered what I yet shudder to think of. I was banished the county—begged my way with my poor outcast child up to Edinburgh, and was there obliged, for the second time in my life, to betake myself to the most degrading of all means to support two wretched lives. I hired a dress, and betook me, shivering, to the High Street, too well aware that my form and appearance would soon draw me suitors enow at that throng and intemperate time of the parliament. On my very first stepping out to the street, a party of young gentlemen was passing. I heard by the noise they made, and the tenor of their speech, that they were more than mellow, and so I resolved to keep near them, in order, if possible, to make some of them my prey. But just as one of them began to eye me, I was rudely thrust into a narrow close by one of the guardsmen. I had heard to what house the party was bound, for the men were talking exceedingly loud, and making no secret of it; so I hasted down the close, and round below to the one where their rendezvous was to be; but I was too late, they were all housed and the door bolted. I resolved to wait, thinking they could not at all stay long; but I was perishing with famine, and was like to fall down. The moon shone as bright as day, and I perceived, by a sign at the bottom of the close, that there was

a small tavern of a certain description up two stairs there. I went up and called, telling the mistress of the house my plan. She approved of it mainly, and offered me her best apartment, provided I could get one of these noble mates to accompany me. She abused Lucky Sudds, as she called her at the inn where the party was, envying her huge profits, no doubt, and giving me afterward something to drink, for which I really felt exceedingly grateful in my need. I stepped down stairs in order to be on the alert. The moment that I reached the ground, the door of Lucky Sudds' house opened and shut, and down came the Honourable Thomas Drummond, with hasty and impassioned strides, his sword rattling at his heel. I accosted him in a soft and soothing tone. He was taken with my address; for he instantly stood still and gazed intently at me, then at the place, and then at me again. I beckoned him to follow me, which he did without further ceremony, and we soon found ourselves together in the best room of a house where everything was wretched. He still looked about him, and at me; but all this while he had never spoken a word. At length, I asked if he would take any refreshment? 'If you please,' said he. I asked what he would have? but he only answered, 'Whatever you choose, madam.' If he was taken with my address, I was much more taken with his; for he was a complete gentleman, and a gentleman will ever act as one. At length, he began as follows:—

"'I am utterly at a loss to account for this adventure, madam. It seems to me like enchantment, and I can hardly believe my senses. An English lady, I judge, and one, who from her manner and address should belong to the first class of society, in such a place as this, is indeed matter of wonder to me. At the foot of a close in Edinburgh! and at this time of the night! Surely it must have been no common reverse of fortune that reduced you to this?' I wept, or pretended to do so; on which he added, 'Pray, madam, take heart. Tell me what has befallen you; and if I can do anything for you, in restoring you to your country or your friends, you shall command my interest.'

"I had great need of a friend then, and I thought now was the time to secure one. So I began and told him the moving tale I have told. But I soon perceived that I had kept by the naked truth too unvarnishedly, and thereby quite overshot my mark. When he learned that he was sitting in a wretched corner of an irregular house, with a felon, who had so lately been scourged, and banished as a swindler and impostor, his modest nature took the alarm, and he was shocked, instead of being moved with pity. His eye fixed on some of the casual stripes on my arm, and from that moment he became restless and impatient to be gone. I tried some gentle arts to retain him, but in vain; so, after paying both the landlady and me for pleasures he had neither tasted nor asked, he took his leave.

"I showed him down stairs: and just as he turned the corner of the next land, a man came rushing violently by him, exchanged looks with him, and came running up to me. He appeared in great agitation, and was quite out of breath; and, taking my hand in his, we ran up stairs together without speaking, and were instantly in the apartment I had left, where a stoup of wine still stood untasted. 'Ah, this is fortunate!' said my new spark, and helped himself. In the meanwhile, as our apartment was a corner one, and looked both east and north, I ran to the easter casement to look after Drummond. Now, note me well: I saw him going eastward in his tartans and bonnet, and the gilded hilt of his claymore glittering in the moon; and, at the very same time, I saw two men, the one in black, and the other likewise in tartans, coming toward the steps from the opposite bank, by the foot of the loch; and I saw Drummond and them eyeing each other as they passed. I kept view of *him* till he vanished towards Leith Wynd, and by that time the two strangers had come close up under our window. This is what I wish you to pay particular attention to. I had only lost sight of Drummond (who had given me his name and address), for the short space of time that we took in running up one pair of short stairs; and during that space he had halted a moment, for, when I got my eye on him again, he had not crossed the mouth of the next entry, nor proceeded above ten or twelve paces, and, *at the same time*, I saw the two men coming down the bank on the opposite side of the loch, at about 300 paces' distance. Both he and they were distinctly in my view, and never within speech of each other, until he vanished into one of the wynds leading toward the bottom of the High Street, at which precise time the two strangers came below my window; so that it was quite clear he neither could be one of them, nor have any communication with them.

"Yet, mark me again; for of all things I have ever seen, this was the most singular. When I looked down at the two strangers, *one of them was extremely like Drummond*. So like was he, that there was not one item in dress, form, feature, nor voice, by which I could distinguish the one from the other. I was certain it was not he, because I had seen the one going and the other approaching at the same time, and my impression at the moment was, that I looked upon some spirit, or demon, in his likeness. I felt a chillness creep all round my heart, my knees tottered, and, withdrawing my head from the open casement that lay in the dark shade, I said to the man who was with me, 'Good God, what is this?'

"'What is it, my dear?' said he, as much alarmed as I was.

"'As I live, there stands an apparition!' said I.

"He was not so much afraid when he heard me say so, and peeping cautiously out, he looked and listened a while, and then drawing back, he said in

a whisper, 'They are both living men, and one of them is he I passed at the corner.'

"'That he is not,' said I, emphatically. 'To that I will make oath.'

"He smiled and shook his head, and then added, 'I never then saw a man before whom I could not know again, particularly if he was the very last I had seen. But what matters it whether it be or not? As it is no concern of ours, let us sit down and enjoy ourselves.'

"'But it *does* matter a very great deal with me, sir,' said I. 'Bless me, my head is giddy—my breath quite gone, and I feel as if I were surrounded with fiends! Who are you, sir?'

"'You shall know that ere we two part, my love,' said he: 'I cannot conceive why the return of this young gentleman to the spot he so lately left should discompose you? I suppose he got a glance of you as he passed, and has returned to look after you, and that is the whole secret of the matter.'

"'If you will be so civil as to walk out and join him then, it will oblige me hugely,' said I, 'for I never in my life experienced such boding apprehensions of evil company. I cannot conceive how you should come up here without asking my permission? Will it please you to begone, sir?'—I was within an ace of prevailing. He took out his purse—I need not say more—I was bribed to let him remain. Ah, had I kept by my frail resolution of dismissing him at that moment, what a world of shame and misery had been evited? But that, though uppermost still in my mind, has nothing ado here.

"When I peeped over again, the two men were disputing in a whisper, the one of them in violent agitation and terror, and the other upbraiding him, and urging him on to some desperate act. At length I heard the young man in the Highland garb say indignantly, 'Hush, recreant! It is God's work which you are commissioned to execute, and it must be done. But if you positively decline it, I will do it myself, and do you beware of the consequences.'

"'Oh, I will, I will!' cried the other in black clothes, in a wretched beseeching tone. 'You shall instruct me in this, as in all things else.'

"I thought all this while I was closely concealed from them, and wondered not a little when he in tartans gave me a sly nod, as much as to say, 'What do you think of this?' or, 'Take note of what you see,' or something to that effect, from which I perceived, that whatever he was about, he did not wish it to be kept a secret. For all that, I was impressed with a terror and anxiety that I could not overcome, but it only made me mark every event with the more intense curiosity. The Highlander, whom I still could not help regarding as the evil genius of Thomas Drummond, performed every action, as with the quickness of thought. He concealed the youth in black in a narrow entry, a little to the westward of my windows, and as he was leading him across the moonlight green by the shoulder, I perceived, for the first time, that both of them were armed with rapiers. He pushed him without resistance into the dark shaded close, made another signal to me, and hasted up the close to Lucky Sudds' door. The city and the morning were so still, that I heard every word that was uttered, on putting my head out a little. He knocked at the door sharply, and after waiting a considerable space, the bolt was drawn, and the door, as I conceived, edged up as far as the massy chain would let it. 'Is young Dalcastle still in the house?' said he sharply.

"I did not hear the answer, but I heard him say, shortly after, 'If he is, pray tell him to speak with me for a few minutes.' He then withdrew from the door, and came slowly down the close, in a lingering manner, looking oft behind him. Dalcastle came out; advanced a few steps after him, and then stood still, as if hesitating whether or not he should call out a friend to accompany him; and that instant the door behind him was closed, chained, and the iron bolt drawn; on hearing of which, he followed his adversary without further hesitation. As he passed below my window, I heard him say, 'I beseech you, Tom, let us do nothing in this matter rashly;' but I could not hear the answer of the other, who had turned the corner.

"I roused up my drowsy companion, who was leaning on the bed, and we both looked together from the north window. We were in the shade, but the moon shone full on the two young gentlemen. Young Dalcastle was visibly the worse of liquor, and his back being turned toward us, he said something to the other which I could not make out, although he spoke a considerable time, and, from his tones and gestures, appeared to be reasoning. When he had done, the tall young man in the tartans drew his sword, and his face being straight to us, we heard him say distinctly, 'No more words about it, George, if you please; but if you be a man, as I take you to be, draw your sword, and let us settle it here.'

"Dalcastle drew his sword, without changing his attitude; but he spoke with more warmth, for we heard his words, 'Think you that I fear you, Tom? Be assured, sir, I would not fear ten of the best of your name, at each other's backs: all that I want is to have friends with us to see fair play, for if you close with me, you are a dead man.'

"The other stormed at these words. 'You are a braggart, sir,' cried he, 'a wretch—a blot on the cheek of nature—a blight on the Christian world—a reprobate—I'll have your soul, sir.' As he said this, he brandished his rapier, exciting Dalcastle to offence. He gained his point; the latter, who had previously drawn, advanced in upon his vapouring and licentious antagonist, and a fierce combat ensued. My companion was delighted beyond mea-

sure, and I could not keep him from exclaiming, loud enough to have been heard, 'that's grand! that's excellent!' For me, my heart quaked like an aspen. Young Dalcastle either had a decided advantage over his adversary, or else the other thought proper to let him have it; for he shifted, and wore, and flitted from Dalcastle's thrusts like a shadow, uttering ofttimes a sarcastic laugh, that seemed to provoke the other beyond all bearing. At one time, he would spring away to a great distance, then advance again on young Dalcastle with the swiftness of lightning. But that young hero always stood his ground, and repelled the attack: he never gave way, although they fought nearly twice round the bleaching green, which you know is not a very small one. At length they fought close up to the mouth of the dark entry, where the fellow in black stood all this while concealed, and then the combatant in tartans closed with his antagonist, or pretended to do so; but the moment they began to grapple, he wheeled about, turning Colwan's back towards the entry, and then cried out, 'Now, my friend, my friend!'

"That moment the fellow in black rushed from his cover with his drawn rapier, and gave the brave young Dalcastle two deadly wounds in the back, as quick as arm could thrust, both of which I thought pierced through his body. He fell, and rolling himself on his back, he perceived who it was that had slain him thus foully, and said, with a dying emphasis, which I never heard equalled, 'Oh, is it you who have done this!'

"He articulated some more, which I could not hear for other sounds; for the moment that the man in black inflicted the deadly wound, my companion called out, 'That's unfair! that's damnable! to strike a brave fellow behind! One at a time, you cowards!' &c., to all which the unnatural fiend in the tartans answered with a loud exulting laugh; and then, taking the poor paralyzed murderer by the bow of the arm, he hurried him into the dark entry once more, where I lost sight of them for ever."

Before this time, Mrs. Logan had risen up; and when the narrator had finished, she was standing with her arms stretched upward at their full length, and her visage turned down, on which were portrayed the lines of the most absolute horror. "The dark suspicions of my late benefactor have been just, and his last prediction is fulfilled," cried she. "The murderer of the accomplished George Colwan has been his own brother, set on, there is little doubt, by her who bare them both, and her directing angel, the self-justified bigot. Aye, and yonder they sit, enjoying the luxuries so dearly purchased, with perfect impunity! If the Almighty do not hurl them down, blasted with shame and confusion, there is no hope of retribution in this life. And, by his might, I will be the agent to accomplish it! Why did the man not pursue the foul murderers? Why did he not raise the alarm, and call the watch?'

"He? The wretch! He durst not move from the shelter he had obtained—no, not for the soul of him. He was pursued for his life, at the moment when he first flew into my arms. But I did not know it; no, I did not *then* know him. He pursue for the sake of justice! No; his efforts have all been for evil, but never for good. But *I* raised the alarm; miserable and degraded as I was, I pursued and raised the watch myself. Have you not heard the name Bell Calvert coupled with that hideous and mysterious affair?"

"Yes, I have. In secret often I have heard it. But how came it that you could never be found! How came it that you never appeared in defence of the honourable Thomas Drummond;—you, the only person who could have justified him!"

"I could not, for I then fell under the power and guidance of a wretch, who durst not for the soul of him be brought forward in the affair. And what was worse, his evidence would have overborne mine, for he would have sworn, that the man who called out and fought Colwan, was the same he met leaving my apartment, and there was an end of it. And moreover, it is well known, that this same man—this wretch of whom I speak, never mistook one man for another in his life, which makes the mystery of the likeness between this incendiary and Drummond the more extraordinary."

"If it was Drummond, after all that you have asserted, then are my surmises still wrong."

"There is nothing of which I can be more certain, than that it was not Drummond. We have nothing on earth but our senses to depend upon: if these deceive us, what are we to do? I own I cannot account for it; nor ever shall be able to account for it as long as I live."

"Could you know the man in black, if you saw him again?"

"I think I could, if I saw him walk or run; his gait was very particular: he walked as if he had been flat-soled, and his legs made of steel, without any joints in his feet or ankles."

"The very same! The very same! The very same! Pray will you take a few days' journey into the country with me, to look at such a man?"

"You have preserved my life, and for you I will do anything. I will accompany you with pleasure: and I think I can say that I will know him, for his form left an impression on my heart not soon to be effaced. But of this I am sure, that my unworthy companion *will* recognize him, and that he will be able to swear to his identity every day as long as he lives."

"Where is he? Where is he? Oh! Mrs. Calvert, where is he?"

"Where is he? He is the wretch whom you heard giving me up to the death; who, after experiencing every mark of affection that a poor ruined being could confer, and after committing a thousand atrocities of which she was ignorant, became

an informer to save his diabolical life, and attempted to offer up mine as a sacrifice for all. We will go by ourselves first, and I will tell you if it is necessary to send any further."

"The two dames the very next morning dressed themselves like country goodwives; and, hiring two stout ponies furnished with pillions, they took their journey westward, and the second evening after leaving Edinburgh they arrived at the village about two miles below Dalcastle, where they alighted. But Mrs. Logan being anxious to have Mrs. Calvert's judgment, without either hint or preparation, took care not to mention that they were so near to the end of their journey. In conformity with this plan, she said, after they had sat a while, "Heigh-ho, but I am weary! What suppose we should rest a day here before we proceed farther on our journey?"

Mrs. Calvert was leaning on the casement, and looking out when her companion addressed these words to her, and by far too much engaged to return any answer, for her eyes were rivetted on two young men who approached from the farther end of the village; and at length, turning round her head, she said, with the most intense interest, "Proceed farther on our journey, did you say? That we need not do; for, as I live, here comes the very man!"

Mrs. Logan ran to the window, and behold there was indeed Robert Wringhim Colwan (now the Laird of Dalcastle) coming forward almost below their window, walking arm in arm with another young man; and as the two passed, the latter looked up and made a sly signal to the two dames, biting his lip, winking with his left eye, and nodding his head. Mrs. Calvert was astonished at this recognizance, the young man's former companion having made exactly such another signal on the night of the duel, by the light of the moon; and it struck her, moreover, that she had somewhere seen this young man's face before. She looked after him, and he winked over his shoulder to her; but she was prevented from returning his salute by her companion, who uttered a loud cry, between a groan and a shriek, and fell down on the floor with a rumble like a wall that had suddenly been undermined. She had fainted quite away, and required all her companion's attention during the remainder of the evening, for she had scarcely ever well recovered out of one fit before she fell into another; and in the short intervals she raved like one distracted, or in a dream. After falling into a sound sleep by night, she recovered her equanimity, and the two began to converse seriously on what they had seen. Mrs. Calvert averred that the young man who passed next to the window, *was* the very man who stabbed George Colwan in the back, and she said she was willing to take her oath on it at any time when required, and was certain if the wretch Ridsley saw him, that he would make oath to the same purport, for that his walk was so peculiar, no one of common discernment could mistake it.

Mrs. Logan was in great agitation, and said, "It is what I have suspected all along, and what I am sure my late master and benefactor was persuaded of, and the horror of such an idea cut short his days. That wretch, Mrs. Calvert, is the born brother of him he murdered; sons of the same mother they were, whether or not of the same father the Lord only knows. But, oh Mrs. Calvert, that is not the main thing that has discomposed me, and shaken my nerves to pieces at this time. Who do you think the young man was who walked in his company to-night?"

"I cannot for my life recollect, but am convinced I have seen the same fine form and face before."

"And did not he seem to know us, Mrs. Calvert? You who are able to recollect things as they happened, did he not seem to recollect us, and make signs to that effect?"

"He did, indeed, and apparently with great good humour."

"Oh, Mrs. Calvert, hold me, else I shall fall into hysterics again! Who is he? Who is he? Tell me who you suppose he is, for I cannot say my own thought."

"On my life, I cannot remember."

"Did you note the appearance of the young gentleman you saw slain that night? Do you recollect aught of the appearance of my young master, George Colwan?"

Mrs. Calvert sat silent, and stared the other mildly in the face. Their looks encountered, and there was an unearthly amazement that gleamed from each, which, meeting together, caught real fire, and returned the flame to their heated imaginations, till the two associates became like two statues, with their hands spread, their eyes fixed, and their chops fallen down upon their bosoms. An old woman who kept the lodging-house, having been called in before when Mrs. Logan was fainting, chanced to enter at this crisis with some cordial; and, seeing the state of her lodgers, she caught the infection, and fell into the same rigid and statue-like appearance. No scene more striking was ever exhibited; and if Mrs. Calvert had not resumed strength of mind to speak, and break the spell, it is impossible to say how long it might have continued. "It is he, I believe," said she, uttering the words as it were inwardly. "It can be none other but he. But, no, it is impossible! I saw him stabbed through and through the heart; I saw him roll backward on the green in his own blood, utter his last words, and groan away his soul. Yet, if it is not he, who can it be?"

"It *is* he?" cried Mrs. Logan, hysterically.

"Yes, yes, it *is* he!" cried the landlady, in unison.

"It is who?" said Mrs. Calvert; "whom do you mean, mistress?"

"Oh, I don't know! I don't know! I was affrighted."

"Hold your peace then till you recover your senses, and tell me, if you can, who that young gentleman is, who keeps company with the new Laird of Dalcastle?"

"Oh, it is he! it is he!" screamed Mrs. Logan, wringing her hands.

"Oh, it is he! it is he!" cried the landlady, wringing hers.

Mrs. Calvert turned the latter gently and civilly out of the apartment, observing that there seemed to be some infection in the air of the room, and she would be wise for herself to keep out of it.

The two dames had a restless and hideous night. Sleep came not to their relief; for their conversation was wholly about the dead, who seemed to be alive, and their minds were wandering and groping in a chaos of mystery. "Did you attend to his corpse, and know that he positively died and was buried?" said Mrs. Calvert.

"Oh, yes, from the moment that his fair but mangled corpse was brought home, I attended it till that when it was screwed in the coffin. I washed the long stripes of blood from his lifeless form, on both sides of the body—I bathed the livid wound that passed through his generous and gentle heart. There was one through the flesh of his left side too, which had bled most outwardly of them all. I bathed them, and bandaged them up with wax and perfumed ointment, but still the blood oozed through all, so that when he was laid in the coffin he was like one newly murdered. My brave, my generous young master! he was always as a son to me, and no son was ever more kind or more respectful to a mother. But he was butchered—he was cut off from the earth ere he had well reached manhood—most barbarously and unfairly slain. And how is it, how can it be, that we again see him here, walking arm in arm with his murderer?"

"The thing cannot be, Mrs. Logan. It is a phantasy of our disturbed imaginations, therefore let us compose ourselves till we investigate this matter further."

"It cannot be in nature, that is quite clear," said Mrs. Logan; "yet how it should be that I should *think* so—I who knew and nursed him from his infancy—there lies the paradox. As you said once before, we have nothing but our senses to depend on, and if you and I believe that we see a person, why, we do see him. Whose word or whose reasoning can convince us against our own senses? We will disguise ourselves, as poor women selling a few country wares, and we will go up to the hall, and see what is to see, and hear what we can hear, for this is a weighty business in which we are engaged, namely, to turn the vengeance of the law upon an unnatural monster; and we will further learn, if we can, who this is that accompanies him."

Mrs. Calvert acquiesced, and the two dames took their way to Dalcastle, with baskets well furnished with trifles. They did not take the common path from the village, but went about, and approached the mansion by a different way. But it seemed as if some overruling power ordered it, that they should miss no chance of attaining the information they wanted. For ere ever they came within half a mile of Dalcastle, they perceived the two youths coming, as to meet them, on the same path. The road leading from Dalcastle toward the north-east, as all the country knows, goes along a dark bank of brushwood called the Bogle-heuch. It was by this track that the two women were going; and when they perceived the two gentlemen meeting them, they turned back, and the moment they were out of their sight, they concealed themselves in a thicket close by the road. They did this because Mrs. Logan was afraid of being discovered, and because they wished to reconnoitre without being seen. Mrs. Calvert now charged her, whatever she saw, or whatever she heard, to put on a resolution, and support it, for if she fainted there and was discovered, what was to become of her!

The two young men came on, in earnest and vehement conversation; but the subject they were on was a terrible one, and hardly fit to be repeated in the face of a Christian community. Wringhim was disputing the boundlessness of the true Christian's freedom, and expressing doubts, that, chosen as he knew he was from all eternity, still it might be possible for him to commit acts that would exclude him from the limits of the covenant. The other argued, with mighty fluency, that the thing was utterly impossible, and altogether inconsistent with eternal predestination. The arguments of the latter prevailed, and the laird was driven to sullen silence. But, to the women's utter surprise, as the conquering disputant passed, he made a signal of recognizance through the brambles to them, as formerly, and that he might expose his associate fully, and in his true colours, he led him backward and forward past the women more than twenty times, making him to confess both the crimes that he had done, and those he had in contemplation. At length he said to him, "Assuredly I saw some strolling vagrant women on this walk, my dear friend: I wish we could find them, for there is little doubt that they are concealed here in your woods."

"I wish we *could* find them," answered Wringhim; "we would have fine sport maltreating and abusing them."

"That we should, that we should! Now tell me, Robert, if you found a malevolent woman, the latent enemy of your prosperity, lurking in these woods to betray you, what would you inflict on her?"

"I would tear her to pieces with my dogs, and feed them with her flesh. O, my dear friend, there is an old hag who lived with my unnatural father, whom I hold in such utter detestation, that I stand constantly in dread of her, and would sacrifice the half of my estate to shed her blood!"

"What will you give me if I will put her in your power, and furnish you with a fair and genuine excuse for making away with her; one for which you shall answer at any bar, here or hereafter?"

"I should like to see the vile crone put down. She is in possession of the family plate, that is mine by right, as well as a thousand valuable relics, and great riches besides, all of which the old profligate gifted shamefully away. And it is said, besides all these, that she has sworn my destruction."

"She has, she has. But I see not how she can accomplish that, since the deed was done so suddenly, and in the silence of the night."

"It was said there were some onlookers. But where shall we find that disgraceful Miss Logan?"

"I will show you her by and by. But will you then consent to the other meritorious deed? Come, be a man, and throw away scruples."

"If you can convince me that the promise is binding, I will."

"Then step this way, till I give you a piece of information."

They walked a little way out of hearing, but went not out of sight; therefore, though the women were in a terrible quandary, they durst not stir, for they had some hopes that this extraordinary person was on a mission of the same sort with themselves, knew of them, and was going to make use of their testimony. Mrs. Logan was several times on the point of falling into a swoon, so much did the appearance of the young man impress her, until her associate covered her face that she might listen without embarrassment. But this latter dialogue aroused different feelings within them; namely, those arising from imminent personal danger. They saw his waggish associate point out the place of their concealment to Wringhim, who came toward them, out of curiosity to see what his friend meant by what he believed to be a joke, manifestly without crediting it in the least degree. When he came running, the other called after him, "If she is too hard for you, call to me." As he said this, he hasted out of sight, in the contrary direction, apparently much delighted with the joke.

Wringhim came rushing through the thicket impetuously, to the very spot where Mrs. Logan lay squatted. She held the wrapping close about her head, but he tore it off and discovered her. "The curse of God be on thee!" said he; "what fiend has brought thee here, and for what purpose art thou come? But, whatever has brought thee, *I have thee!*" and with that he seized her by the throat. The two women, when they heard what jeopardy they were in from such a wretch, had squatted among the underwood at a small distance from each other, so that he had never observed Mrs. Calvert; but no sooner had he seized her benefactress, than, like a wild cat, she sprang out of the thicket, and had both her hands fixed at his throat, one of them twisted in his stock, in a twinkling. She brought him back-over among the brushwood, and the two, fixing on him like two harpies, mastered him with ease. Then indeed was he woefully beset. He deemed for a while that his friend was at his back, and turning his bloodshot eyes toward the path, he attempted to call; but there was no friend there, and the women cut short his cries by another twist of his stock. "Now, gallant and rightful Laird of Dalcastle," said Mrs. Logan, "what hast thou to say for thyself? Lay thy account to dree the weird thou hast so well earned. Now shalt thou suffer due penance for murdering thy brave and only brother."

"Thou liest, thou hag of the pit! I touched not my brother's life."

"I saw thee do it with these eyes that now look thee in the face; aye, when his back was to thee too, and while he was hotly engaged with thy friend," said Mrs. Calvert.

"I heard thee confess it again and again this same hour," said Mrs. Logan.

"Aye, and so did I," said her companion. "Murder will out, though the Almighty should lend hearing to the ears of the willow, and speech to the seven tongues of the woodriff."

"You are liars and witches!" said he, foaming with rage, "and creatures fitted from the beginning for eternal destruction. I'll have your bones and your blood sacrificed on your cursed altars! Oh, Gil-Martin! Gil-Martin! where art thou now? Here, here is the proper food for blessed vengeance!—Hilloa!"

There was no friend, no Gil-Martin there to hear or assist him: he was in the two women's mercy, but they used it with moderation. They mocked, they tormented, and they threatened him; but, finally, after putting him in great terror, they bound his hands behind his back, and his feet fast with long straps of garters which they chanced to have in their baskets, to prevent him from pursuing them till they were out of his reach. As they left him, which they did in the middle of the path, Mrs. Calvert said, "We could easily put an end to thy sinful life, but our hands shall be free of thy blood. Nevertheless, thou art still in our power, and the vengeance of thy country shall overtake thee, thou mean and cowardly murderer, aye, and that more suddenly than thou art aware!"

The women posted to Edinburgh; and as they put themselves under the protection of an English merchant, who was journeying thither with twenty horses laden, and armed servants, so they had scarcely any conversation on the road. When they arrived at Mrs. Logan's house, then they spoke of what they had seen and heard, and agreed that they had sufficient proof to condemn young Wringhim, who they thought richly deserved the severest doom of the law.

"I never in my life saw any human being," said Mrs. Calvert, "whom I thought so like a fiend. If a

demon could inherit flesh and blood, that youth is precisely such a being as I could conceive that demon to be. The depth and the malignity of his eye is hideous. His breath is like the airs from a charnel-house, and his flesh seems fading from his bones, as if the worm that never dies were gnawing it away already."

"He was always repulsive, and every way repulsive," said the other; "but he is now indeed altered greatly to the worse. While we were handfasting him, I felt his body to be feeble and emaciated; but yet I know him to be so puffed up with spiritual pride, that I believe he weens every one of his actions justified before God, and instead of having stings of conscience for these, he takes great merit to himself in having effected them. Still my thoughts are less about him than the extraordinary being who accompanies him. He does everything with so much ease and indifference, so much velocity and effect, that all bespeak him an adept in wickedness. The likeness to my late hapless young master is so striking, that I can hardly believe it to be a chance model; and I think he imitates him in everything, for some purpose or some effect on his sinful associate. Do you know that he is so like in every lineament, look, and gesture, that, against the clearest light of reason, I cannot in my mind separate the one from the other, and have a certain indefinable impression on my mind, that they are one and the same being, or that the one was a prototype of the other."

"If there is an earthly crime," said Mrs. Calvert, "for the due punishment of which the Almighty may be supposed to subvert the order of nature, it is fratricide. But tell me, dear friend, did you remark to what the subtile and hellish villain was endeavouring to prompt the assassin?"

"No, I could not comprehend it. My senses were altogether so bewildered, that I thought they had combined to deceive me, and I gave them no credit."

"Then hear me: I am almost certain he was using every persuasion to induce him to make away with his mother; and I likewise conceive that I heard the incendiary give his consent.

"This is dreadful. Let us speak and think no more about it, till we see the issue. In the meantime, let us do that which is our bounden duty—go and divulge all that we know relating to this foul murder."

Accordingly the two women went to Sir Thomas Wallace of Craigie, the lord justice clerk (who was, I think, either uncle or grandfather to young Drummond, who was outlawed, and obliged to flee his country on account of Colwan's death), and to that gentleman they related every circumstance of what they had seen and heard. He examined Calvert very minutely, and seemed deeply interested in her evidence; said he knew she was relating the truth, and in testimony of it, brought a letter of young Drummond's from his desk, wherein that young gentleman, after protesting his innocence in the most forcible terms, confessed having been with such a woman in such a house, after leaving the company of his friends; and that on going home, Sir Thomas's servant had let him in, in the dark, and from these circumstances he found it impossible to prove an *alibi*. He begged of his relative, if ever an opportunity offered, to do his endeavour to clear up that mystery, and remove the horrid stigma from his name in his country, and among his kin, of having stabbed a friend behind his back.

Lord Craigie, therefore, directed the two women to the proper authorities, and after hearing their evidence there, it was judged proper to apprehend the present Laird of Dalcastle, and bring him to trial. But before that, they sent the prisoner in the tolbooth, he who had seen the whole transaction along with Mrs. Calvert, to take a view of Wringhim privately; and his discrimination being so well known as to be proverbial all over the land, they determined secretly to be ruled by his report. They accordingly sent him on a pretended mission of legality to Dalcastle, with orders to see and speak with the proprietor, without giving him a hint what was wanted. On his return, they examined him, and he told them that he found all things at the place in utter confusion and dismay; that the lady of the place was missing, and could not be found, dead or alive. On being asked if he had ever seen the proprietor before, he looked astounded, and unwilling to answer. But it came out that he had; and that he had once seen him kill a man on such a spot at such an hour.

Officers were then despatched, without delay, to apprehend the monster, and bring him to justice. On these going to the mansion, and inquiring for him, they were told he was at home; on which they stationed guards, and searched all the premises, but he was not to be found. It was in vain that they overturned beds, raised floors, and broke open closets: Robert Wringhim Colwan was lost once and for ever. His mother also was lost; and strong suspicions attached to some of the farmers and house-servants, to whom she was obnoxious, relating to her disappearance. The Honourable Thomas Drummond became a distinguished officer in the Austrian service, and died in the memorable year for Scotland, 1715; and this is all with which history, justiciary records, and tradition, furnish me relating to these matters.

I have now the pleasure of presenting my readers with an original document of a most singular nature, and preserved for their perusal in a still more singular manner. I offer no remarks on it, and make as few additions to it, leaving every one to judge for himself. We have heard much of the rage of fanaticism in former days, but nothing to this

PRIVATE MEMOIRS AND CONFESSIONS OF A FANATIC.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

My life has been a life of trouble and turmoil; of change and vicissitude; of anger and exultation; of sorrow and of vengeance. My sorrows have all been for a slighted gospel, and my vengeance has been wreaked on its adversaries. Therefore, in the might of Heaven I will sit down and write: I will let the wicked of this world know what I have done in the faith of the promises, that they may read and tremble, and bless their gods of silver and of gold, that the minister of heaven was removed from their sphere before their blood was mingled with their sacrifices.

I was born an outcast in the world, in which I was destined to act so conspicuous a part. My mother was a burning and shining light in the community of Scottish worthies, and in the days of her virginity had suffered much in the persecution of the saints. But it so pleased Heaven, that, as a trial of her faith, she was married to one of the wicked, a man all over spotted with the leprosy of sin. As well might they have conjoined fire and water together, in hopes that they would consort and amalgamate, as purity and corruption: she fled from his embraces the first night after their marriage, and from that time forth, his iniquities so galled her upright heart, that she quitted his society altogether, keeping her own apartments in the same house with him.

I was the second son of this unhappy marriage, and, long ere ever I was born, my father, according to the flesh, disclaimed all relation or connection with me, and all interest in me, save what the law compelled him to take, which was to grant me a scanty maintenance; and had it not been for a faithful minister of the gospel, my mother's early instructor, I should have remained an outcast from the church visible. He took pity on me, admitting me not only into that, but into the bosom of his own household and ministry also, and to him am I indebted, under Heaven, for the high conceptions and glorious discernment between good and evil, right and wrong, which I attained even at an early age. It was he who directed my studies aright, both in the learning of the ancient fathers, and the doctrines of the reformed church, and designed me for his assistant and successor in the holy office. I missed no opportunity of perfecting myself particularly in all the minute points of theology in which my reverend father and mother took great delight; but at length I acquired so much skill, that I astonished my teachers, and made them gaze at one another. I remember that it was the custom, in my patron's house, to ask the questions of the Single Catechism round every Sabbath night. He asked the first, my mother the second, and so on, every one saying the question asked, and then asking the next. It fell to my mother to ask Effectual Calling at me. I said the answer with propriety and emphasis. "Now, madam," added I, "my question to you is, What is *In*effectual calling?"

"Ineffectual calling! There is no such thing, Robert," said she.

"But there is, madam," said I; "and that answer proves how much you say these fundamental precepts by rote, and without any consideration. Ineffectual calling is *the outward call of the gospel* without any effect on the hearts of unregenerated and impenitent sinners. Have not all these the same calls, warnings, doctrines, and reproofs that we have? and is not this Ineffectual calling? Has not Ardinferry the same? Has not Patrick M'Lure the same? *Has not the Laird of Dalcastle and his reprobate heir* the same? And will any tell me that *this is not In*effectual calling?"

"What a wonderful boy he is?" said my mother.

"I'm feared he turn out to be a conceited gowk," said old Barnet, the minister's man.

"No," said my pastor, and *father* (as I shall henceforth denominate him)—"No, Barnet, he *is* a wonderful boy; and no marvel, for I have prayed for these talents to be bestowed on him from his infancy: and do you think that Heaven would refuse a prayer so disinterested? No, it is impossible. But my dread is, madam," continued he, turning to my mother, "that he is yet in the bond of iniquity."

"God forbid!" said my mother.

"I have struggled with the Almighty long and hard," continued he; "but have as yet had no certain token of acceptance in his behalf. How dreadful is it to think of our darling being still without the pale of the covenant! But I have vowed a vow, and in that there is hope."

My heart quaked with terror, when I thought of being still living in a state of reprobation, subjected to the awful issues of death, judgment, and eternal misery, by the slightest accident or casualty, and I set about the duty of prayer myself with the utmost earnestness. I prayed three times every day, and seven times on the Sabbath; but the more frequently and fervently that I prayed, I sinned still the more. About this time, and for a long period afterwards, amounting to several years, I lived in a hopeless and deplorable state of mind, for I said to myself, "If my name is not written in the book of life from all eternity, it is in vain for me to presume that either vows or prayers of mine, or those of all mankind combined, can ever procure its insertion now." I had come under many vows, most solemnly taken, every one of which I had broken; and I saw with the intensity of juvenile grief, that there was no hope for me. I went on sinning every hour, and all the while most strenuously warring against sin, and repenting of every one transgression, as soon after the commission of it as I got leisure to think.

But oh what a wretched state this unregenerated state is, in which every effort only aggravates our offences! I found it vanity to contend; for, after communing with my heart, the conclusion was as follows: "If I could repent me of all my sins, and shed tears of blood for them, still have I not a load of original transgression pressing on me that is enough to crush me to the lowest hell? I may be angry with my first parents for having sinned, but how I shall repent me of their sin, is beyond what I am able to comprehend."

Still, in those days of depravity and corruption, I had some of those principles implanted in my mind, which were afterward to spring up with amazing fertility. In particular, I felt great indignation against all the wicked of this world, and often wished for the means of ridding it of such a noxious burden.

It was about this time that my reverend father preached a sermon, one sentence of which affected me most disagreeably: it was to the purport, that every unrepented sin was productive of a new sin with each breath that a man drew; and every one of these new sins added to the catalogue in the same manner. I was utterly confounded at the multitude of my transgressions; for I was sensible that there were great numbers of sins of which I had never been able thoroughly to repent, and these momentary ones, by a moderate calculation, had, I saw, long ago amounted to a hundred and fifty thousand in the minute, and I saw no end to the series of repentances to which I had subjected myself. A lifetime was nothing to enable me to accomplish the sum; and then, being, for anything I was certain of, in my state of nature, and the grace of repentance withheld from me—what was I to do, or what was to become of me? In the meantime, I went on sinning without measure; but I was still more troubled about the multitude than the magnitude of my transgressions, and the small minute ones puzzled me more than those that were more heinous, as the latter had generally some good effects in the way of punishing wicked men, froward boys, and deceitful women; and I rejoiced even then in my early youth, at being used as a scourge in the hand of the Lord; another Jehu, a Cyrus, or a Nebuchadnezzar.

On the whole, I remember that I got into great confusion relating to my sins and repentances. I could not help running into new sins continually; but then I was mercifully dealt with, for I was often made to repent of them most heartily, by reason of bodily chastisements received on these delinquencies being discovered. I was particularly prone to lying, and I cannot but admire the mercy that has freely forgiven me all these juvenile sins. Now that I know them all to be blotted out, I may the more freely confess them: the truth is, that one lie always paved the way for another, from hour to hour, from day to day, and from year to year; so that I found myself constantly involved in a labyrinth of deceit, from which it was impossible to extricate myself. If I knew a person to be a godly one, I could almost have kissed his feet; but against the carnal portion of mankind, I set my face continually. I esteemed the true ministers of the gospel; but the prelatic party, and the preachers up of good works I abhorred, and to this hour I account them the worst and most heinous of all transgressors.

There was only one boy at Mr. Wilson's class, who kept always the upper hand of me in every part of education. I strove against him from year to year, but it was all in vain; for he was a very wicked boy, and I was convinced he had dealings with the devil. Indeed it was believed all over the country that his mother was a witch; and I was at length convinced that it was no human ingenuity that beat me with so much ease in the Latin, after I had often sat up a whole night with my reverend father, studying my lesson in all its bearings. I often read as well and sometimes better than he: but the moment Mr. Wilson began to examine us, my opponent popped up above me. I determined (as I knew him for a wicked person, and one of the devil's handfasted children) to be revenged on him, and to humble him by some means or other. Accordingly I lost no opportunity of setting the master against him, and succeeded several times in getting him severely beaten for faults of which he was innocent. I can hardly describe the joy that it gave to my heart to see a wicked creature suffering, for though he deserved it not for one thing, he richly deserved it for others. This may be by some people accounted a great sin in me; but I deny it, for I did it as a duty, and what a man or boy does for the right, will never be put into the sum of his transgressions.

This boy, whose name was M'Gill, was at all his leisure hours engaged in drawing profane pictures of beasts, men, women, houses, and trees, and, in short, of all things that his eye encountered. These profane things the master often smiled at, and admired; therefore I began privately to try my hand likewise. I had scarcely tried above once to draw the figure of a man, ere I conceived that I had hit the very features of Mr. Wilson. They were so particular that they could not be easily mistaken, and I was so tickled and pleased with the droll likeness that I had drawn, that I laughed immoderately at it. I tried no other figure but this; and I tried it in every situation in which a man and a schoolmaster could be placed. I often wrought for hours together at this likeness, nor was it long before I made myself so much master of the outline, that I could have drawn it in any situation whatever, almost off-hand. I then took M'Gill's account book of algebra home with me, and at my leisure put down a number of gross caricatures of Mr. Wilson here and there, several of them in situations notori-

ously ludicrous. I waited the discovery of this treasure with great impatience; but the book, chancing to be one that M'Gill was not using, I saw it might be long enough before I enjoyed the consummation of my grand scheme: therefore, with all the ingenuity I was master of, I brought it before our dominie's eye. But never shall I forget the rage that gleamed in the tyrant's phiz! I was actually terrified to look at him, and trembled at his voice. M'Gill was called upon, and examined relating to the obnoxious figures. He denied flatly that any of them were of his doing. But the master inquiring at him whose they were, he could not tell, but affirmed it to be some trick. Mr. Wilson at one time began, as I thought, to hesitate; but the evidence was so strong against M'Gill, that at length his solemn asseverations of innocence only proved an aggravation of his crime. There was not one in the school who had ever been known to draw a figure but himself, and on him fell the whole weight of the tyrant's vengeance. It was dreadful; and I was once in hopes that he would not leave life in the culprit. He, however, left the school for several months, refusing to return to be subjected to punishment for the faults of others, and I stood king of the class.

Matters were at last made up between M'Gill's parents and the schoolmaster; but by that time I had got the start of him, and never in my life did I exert myself so much to keep the mastery. It was in vain; the powers of enchantment prevailed, and I was again turned down with the tear in my eye. I could think of no amends but one, and being driven to desperation, I put it in practice. I told a lie of him. I came boldly up to the master, and told him that M'Gill had in my hearing cursed him in a most shocking manner, and called him vile names. He called M'Gill, and charged him with the crime, and the proud young coxcomb was so stunned at the atrocity of the charge, that his face grew as red as crimson, and the words stuck in his throat as he feebly denied it. His guilt was manifest, and he was again flogged most nobly, and dismissed the school for ever in disgrace, as a most incorrigible vagabond.

This was a great victory gained, and I rejoiced and exulted exceedingly in it. It had, however, very nigh cost me my life; for not long thereafter, I encountered M'Gill in the fields, on which he came up and challenged me for a liar, daring me to fight him. I refused, and said that I looked on him as quite below my notice; but he would not quit me, and finally told me that he should either *lick me*, or I should *lick him*, as he had no other means of being revenged on such a scoundrel. I tried to intimidate him, but it would not do; and I believe I would have given all that I had in the world to be quit of him. He at length went so far as first to kick me, and then strike me on the face; and, being both older and stronger than he, I thought it scarcely became me to take such insults patiently. I was, nevertheless, well aware that the devilish powers of his mother would finally prevail; and either the dread of this, or the inward consciousness of having wronged him, certainly unnerved my arm, for I fought wretchedly, and was soon wholly overcome. I was so sore defeated, that I kneeled, and was going to beg his pardon; but another thought struck me momentarily, and I threw myself on my face, and inwardly begged aid from heaven; at the same time I felt as if assured that my prayer was heard, and would be answered. While I was in this humble attitude, the villain kicked me with his foot and cursed me; and I being newly encouraged, arose and encountered him once more. We had not fought long at this second turn, before I saw a man hastening towards us; on which I uttered a shout of joy, and laid on valiantly; but my very next look assured me, that the man was old John Barnet, whom I had likewise wronged all that was in my power, and between these two wicked persons I expected anything but justice. My arm was again enfeebled, and that of my adversary prevailed. I was knocked down and mauled most grievously, and while the ruffian was kicking and cuffing me at his will and pleasure, up came old John Barnet, breathless with running, and at one blow with his open hand, levelled my opponent with the earth. "Tak ye that, maister!" says John, "to learn ye better breeding. Hout awa, man! an ye will fight, fight fair. Gude sauf us, are ye a gentleman's brood, that ye will kick an' cuff a lad when he's down?"

When I heard this kind and unexpected interference, I began once more to value myself on my courage, and springing up, I made at my adversary; but John, without saying a word, bit his lip, and seizing me by the neck, threw me down. M'Gill begged of him to stand and see fair play, and suffer us to finish the battle; for, added he, "he is a liar, and a scoundrel, and deserves ten times more than I can give him."

"I ken he's a' that ye say, an' mair, my man," quoth John: "but am I sure that ye're no as bad, an' waur? It says nae muckle for ony o' ye to be tearing like tikes at ane anither here."

John cocked his cudgel and stood between us, threatening to knock the one dead who first offered to lift his hand against the other; but, perceiving no disposition in any of us to separate, he drove me home before him like a bullock, keeping close guard behind me, lest M'Gill had followed. I felt greatly indebted to John, yet I complained of his interference to my mother, and the old officious sinner got no thanks for his pains.

As I am writing only from recollection, so I remember of nothing further of these early days, in the least worthy of being recorded. That I was a great, a transcendent sinner, I confess. But still I had hopes of forgiveness, because I never sinned

from principle, but accident; and then I always *tried* to repent of these sins by the slump, for individually it was impossible; and though not always successful in my endeavours, I could not help that; the grace of repentance being withheld from me, I regarded myself as in no degree accountable for the failure. Moreover, there were many of the most deadly sins into which I never fell, for I dreaded those mentioned in the Revelations as excluding sins, so that I guarded against them continually. In particular, I brought myself to despise, if not to abhor, the beauty of women, looking on it as the greatest snare to which mankind are subjected, and though young men and maidens, and even old women (my mother among the rest), taxed me with being an unnatural wretch, I gloried in my acquisition; and to this day am thankful for having escaped the most dangerous of all snares.

I kept myself also free of the sins of idolatry, and misbelief, both of a deadly nature: and, upon the whole, I think I had not then broken, that is, absolutely broken, above four out of the ten commandments; but for all that, I had more sense than to regard either my good works, or my evil deeds, as in the smallest degree influencing the eternal decrees of God concerning me, either with regard to my acceptance or reprobation. I depended entirely on the bounty of free grace, holding all the righteousness of man as filthy rags, and believing in the momentous and magnificent truth, that the more heavily laden with transgressions, the more welcome was the believer at the throne of grace. And I have reason to believe that it was this dependence and this belief that at last insured my acceptance there.

I come now to the most important period of my existence, the period that has modelled my character, and influenced every action of my life, without which this detail of my actions would have been as a tale that hath been told—a monotonous *farrago*—an uninteresting harangue—in short, a thing of nothing. Whereas, lo! it must now be a relation of great and terrible actions, done in the might and by the commission of heaven. *Amen.*

Like the sinful king of Israel, I had been walking softly before the Lord for a season. I had been humbled for my transgressions, and, as far as I recollect, sorry on account of their numbers and heinousness. My reverend father had been, moreover, examining me every day regarding the state of my soul, and my answers sometimes appeared to give him satisfaction, and sometimes not. As for my mother, she would harp on the subject of my faith for ever; yet, though I knew her to be a Christian, I confess that I always despised her motley instructions, nor had I any great regard for her person. If this was a crime in me, I never could help it. I confess it freely, and believe it was a judgment from heaven inflicted on her for some sin of former days, and that I had no power to have acted otherwise toward her than I did.

In this frame of mind was I, when my reverend father one morning arose from his seat, and, meeting me as I entered the room, he embraced me, and welcomed me into the community of the just upon earth. I was struck speechless, and could make no answer save by looks of surprise. My mother also came to me, kissed, and wept over me, and after showering unnumbered blessings on my head, she also welcomed me into the society of *the just made perfect*. Then each of them took me by a hand, and my reverend father explained to me how he had wrestled with God, as the patriarch of old had done, not for a night, but for days and years, and that in bitterness and anguish of spirit, on my account; but that *he* had at last prevailed, and had now gained the long and earnestly desired assurance of my acceptance with the Almighty, in and through the merits and sufferings of his Son.

I wept for joy to be assured of my freedom from all sin, and of the impossibility of my ever again falling away from my new state. I bounded away into the fields and the woods, to pour out my spirit in prayer before the Almighty for his kindness to me: my whole frame seemed to be renewed: every nerve was buoyant with new life; I felt as if I could have flown in the air, or leaped over the tops of the trees. An exaltation of spirit lifted me, as it were, far above the earth, and the sinful creatures crawling on its surface; and I deemed myself as an eagle among the children of men, soaring on high, and looking down with pity and contempt on the grovelling creatures below.

As I thus wended my way, I beheld a young man of a mysterious appearance coming towards me. I tried to shun him, being bent on my own contemplations: but he cast himself in my way, so that I could not well avoid him; and more than that, I felt a sort of invisible power that drew me towards him, something like the force of enchantment, which I could not resist. As we approached each other, our eyes met, and I can never describe the strange sensations that thrilled through my whole frame at that impressive moment—a moment to me fraught with the most tremendous consequences, the beginning of a series of adventures which has puzzled myself, and will puzzle the world when I am no more in it. That time will now soon arrive, sooner than any one can devise who knows not the tumult of my thoughts, and the labour of my spirit; and when it hath come and passed over—when my flesh and my bones are decayed, and my soul has passed to its everlasting home, then shall the sons of men ponder on the events of my life; wonder and tremble, and tremble and wonder how such things should be.

That stranger youth and I approached each other in silence, and slowly, with our eyes fixed on each other's eyes. We approached till not more than a yard intervened between us, and then stood still and gazed, measuring each other from head to foot. What was my astonishment, on perceiving that he

was the same being as myself! The clothes were the same to the smallest item. The form was the same; the apparent age; the colour of the hair; the eyes; and, as far as recollection could serve me from viewing my own features in a glass, the features too were the very same. I conceived at first that I saw a vision, and that my guardian angel had appeared to me at this important era of my life; but this singular being read my thoughts in my looks, anticipating the very words that I was going to utter.

"You think I am your brother," said he; "or that I am your second self. I am indeed your brother, not according to the flesh, but in my belief of the same truths, and my assurance in the same mode of redemption, than which I hold nothing so great or so glorious on earth."

"Then you are an associate well adapted to my present state," said I. "For this time is a time of great rejoicing in spirit to me. I am on my way to return thanks for my redemption from the bonds of sin and misery. If you will join with me heart and hand in youthful thanksgiving, then shall we two go and worship together, but if not, go your way, and I shall go mine."

"Ah, you little know with how much pleasure I will accompany you, and join with you in your elevated devotions," said he fervently. "Your state is a state to be envied indeed; but I have been advised of it, and am come to be a humble disciple of yours; to be initiated into the true way of salvation by conversing with you, and perhaps by being assisted by your prayers."

My spiritual pride being greatly elevated by this address, I began to assume the preceptor, and questioned this extraordinary youth with regard to his religious principles, telling him plainly, if he was one who expected acceptance with God at all, on account of good works, that I would hold no communion with him. We then went on to commune about all our points of belief; and in everything that I suggested, he acquiesced, and, as I thought that day, often carried them to extremes, so that I had a secret dread he was advancing blasphemies. Yet he had such a way with him, and paid such a deference to all my opinions, that I was quite captivated, and at the same time I stood in a sort of awe of him, which I could not account for, and several times was seized with an involuntary inclination to escape from his presence, by making a sudden retreat. But he seemed constantly to anticipate my thoughts, and was sure to divert my purpose by some turn in the conversation that particularly interested me.

We moved about from one place to another, until the day was wholly spent. My mind had all the while been kept in a state of agitation resembling the motion of a whirlpool, and when we came to separate, I then discovered that the purpose for which I had sought the fields had been neglected, and that I had been diverted from the worship of God by attending to the quibbles and dogmas of this singular and unaccountable being, who seemed to have more knowledge and information than all the persons I had ever known put together.

We parted with expressions of mutual regret, and when I left him I felt a deliverance, but at the same time a certain consciousness that I was not thus to get free of him, but that he was like to be an acquaintance that was to stick to me for good or for evil. I was astonished at his acuteness and knowledge about everything; but as for his likeness to me, that was quite unaccountable. He was the same person in every respect, but yet he was not always so; for I observed several times, when we were speaking of certain divines and their tenets, that his face assumed something of the appearance of theirs; and it struck me, that by setting his features to the mould of other people's, he entered at once into their conceptions and feelings. I had been greatly flattered and greatly interested by his conversation; whether I had been the better for it or the worse, I could not tell. I had been diverted from returning thanks to my gracious Maker for his great kindness to me, and came home as I went away, but not with the same buoyancy and lightness of heart. Well may I remember that day in which I was first received into the number, and made an heir to all the privileges of the children of God, and on which I first met this mysterious associate, who from that day forth contrived to wind himself into all my affairs, both spiritual and temporal, to this day on which I am writing the account of it. It was on the 25th day of March, 1704, when I had just entered the eighteenth year of my age. Whether it behoves me to bless God for the events of that day, or to deplore them, has been hid from my discernment, though I have inquired into it with fear and trembling; and I have now lost all hopes of ever discovering the true import of these events until that day when my accounts are to make up and reckon for in another world.

When I came home, I went straight into the parlour, where my mother was sitting by herself. She started to her feet, and uttered a smothered scream. "What ails you, Robert?" cried she. "My dear son, what is the matter with you?"

"Do you see anything the matter with me?" said I. "It appears that the ailment is with yourself, and either in your crazed head or your dim eyes, for there is nothing the matter with me."

"Ah, Robert, you are ill," cried she; "you are very ill, my dear boy; you are quite changed; your very voice and manner are changed. Ah, Jane, haste you up to the study, and tell Mr. Wringhim to come here on the instant and speak to Robert."

"I beseech you, woman, to restrain yourself," said I. "If you suffer your frenzy to run away with your judgment in this manner, I will leave the house. What do you mean? I tell you, there is nothing ails me: I never was better."

She screamed, and ran between me and the door, to bar my retreat: in the meantime my reverend father entered, and I have not forgot how he gazed, through his glasses, first at my mother and then at me. I imagined that his eyes burned like candles, and was afraid of him, which I suppose made my looks more unstable than they would otherwise have been.

"What is all this for?" said he. "Mistress! Robert! What is the matter here?"

"Oh, sir, our boy!" cried my mother; "our dear boy, Mr. Wringhim! Look at him, and speak to him: he is either dying or translated, sir!"

He looked at me with a countenance of great alarm; mumbling some sentences to himself, and then taking me by the arm, as if to feel my pulse, he said, with a faltering voice, "Something has indeed befallen you, either in body or mind, boy; for you are so transformed since the morning, that I could not have known you for the same person. Have you met with any accident?"

"No."

"Have you seen anything out of the ordinary course of nature?"

"No."

"Then Satan, I fear, has been busy with you, tempting you in no ordinary degree at this momentous crisis of your life?"

My mind turned on my associate for the day, and the idea that he might be an agent of the devil had such an effect on me, that I could make no answer.

"I see how it is," said he; "you are troubled in spirit, and I have no doubt that the enemy of our salvation has been busy with you. Tell me this, has he overcome you, or has he not?"

"He has not, my dear father," said I. "In the strength of the Lord, I hope I have withstood him. But indeed, if he has been busy with me, I knew it not. I have been conversant this day with one stranger only, whom I took rather for an angel of light."

"It is one of the devil's most profound wiles to appear like one," said my mother.

"Woman, hold thy peace!" said my reverend father: "thou pretendest to teach what thou knowest not. Tell me this, boy. Did this stranger, with whom you met, adhere to the religious principles in which I have educated you?"

"Yes, to every one of them, in their fullest latitude," said I.

"Then he was no agent of the wicked one with whom you held converse," said he; "for that is the doctrine that was made to overturn the principalities and powers, the might and dominion of the kingdom of darkness. Let us pray."

After spending about a quarter of an hour in solemn and sublime thanksgiving, this saintly man gave out that the day following should be kept by the family as a day of solemn thanksgiving, and spent in prayer and praise, on account of the calling and election of one of its members; or rather for the election of that individual being revealed on earth, as well as confirmed in heaven.

The next day was with me a day of holy exultation. It was begun by my reverend father laying his hands upon my head and blessing me, and then dedicating me to the Lord in the most awful and impressive manner. It was in no common way that he exercised this profound rite, for it was done with all the zeal and enthusiasm of a devotee to the true cause, and a champion on the side he had espoused. He used these remarkable words: "May he be a two-edged weapon in thy hand, and a spear coming out of thy mouth, to destroy, and overcome, and pass over; and may the enemies of thy church fall down before him, and be as dung to fatten the land."

From that moment, I conceived it decreed, not that I should be a minister of the gospel, but a champion of it, to cut off the wicked from the face of the earth; and I rejoiced in the commission, finding it more congenial to my nature to be cutting sinners off with the sword, than to be haranguing them from the pulpit, striving to produce an effect which God, by his act of absolute predestination, had for ever rendered impracticable. The more I pondered on these things, the more I saw of the folly and inconsistency of ministers, in spending their lives striving and remonstrating with sinners, in order to induce them to do that which they had it not in their power to do. How much more wise would it be, thought I, to begin and cut sinners off with the sword! for till that is effected, the saints can never inherit the earth in peace. Should I be honoured as an instrument to begin this great work of purification, I should rejoice in it. But then, where had I the means, or under what direction was I to begin? There was one thing clear; I was now the Lord's, and it behoved me to bestir myself in his service. Oh that I had an host at my command, then would I be as a devouring fire among the workers of iniquity!

Full of these great ideas, I hurried through the city, and sought again the private path through the field and wood of Finnieston, in which my reverend preceptor had the privilege of walking for study, and to which he had a key that was always at my command. Near one of the stiles, I perceived a young man sitting in a devout posture, reading on a Bible. He rose, lifted his hat, and made an obeisance to me, which I returned and walked on. I had not well crossed the stile, till it struck me I knew the face of the youth, and that he was some intimate acquaintance, to whom I ought to have spoken. I walked on, and returned, and walked on again, trying to recollect who he was; but for my life I could not. There was, however, a fascination in his look and manner, that drew me back toward him in spite of myself, and I resolved to go to him, if it were merely to speak and see who he was.

I came up to him and addressed him, but he was

so intent on his book, that, though I spoke, he lifted not his eyes. I looked on the book also, and still it seemed a Bible, having columns, chapters, and verses; but it was in a language of which I was wholly ignorant, and all intersected with red lines and verses. A sensation resembling a shock from an unseen hand came over me, on first casting my eyes on that mysterious book, and I stood motionless. He looked up, smiled, closed his book, and put it in his bosom. "You seem strangely affected, dear sir, by looking on my book," said he mildly.

"What book is that?" said I: "is it a Bible?"

"It is *my* Bible, sir," said he; "but I will cease reading it, for I am glad to see you. Pray, is not this a day of holy festivity with you?"

I stared in his face, but made no answer, for my senses were bewildered.

"Do you not know me?" said he. "You appear to be somehow at a loss. Had not you and I some sweet communion and fellowship yesterday?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said I. "But surely if you are the young gentleman with whom I spent the hours yesterday, you have the chameleon art of changing your appearance; I never could have recognized you."

"My countenance changes with my studies and sensations," said he. "It is a natural peculiarity in me, over which I have not full control. If I contemplate a man's features seriously, mine own gradually assume the very same appearance and character. And what is more, by contemplating a face minutely, I not only attain the same likeness, but, with the likeness, attain the very same ideas as well as the same mode of arranging them, so that, you see, by looking at a person attentively, I by degrees assume his likeness, and by assuming his likeness I attain to the possession of his most secret thoughts. This, I say, is a peculiarity in my nature, a gift of the God that made me; but whether or not given me for a blessing, he knows himself, and so do I. At all events, I have this privilege—I can never be mistaken of a character in whom I am interested."

"It is a rare qualification," replied I, "and I would give worlds to possess it. Then, it appears, that it is needless to dissemble with you, since you can at any time extract our most secret thoughts from our bosoms. You already know my natural character?"

"Yes," said he, "and it is that which attaches me to you. By assuming your likeness yesterday, I became acquainted with your character; and was no less astonished at the profundity and range of your thoughts, than at the heroic magnanimity with which these were combined. And now, in addition to these, you are dedicated to the great work of the Lord; for which reasons I have resolved to attach myself as closely to you as possible, and to render you all the service of which my poor abilities are capable."

I confess that I was greatly flattered by these compliments paid to my abilities by a youth of such superior qualifications; by one who, with a modesty and affability rare at his age, combined a height of genius and knowledge almost above human comprehension. Nevertheless, I began to assume a certain superiority of demeanour toward him, as judging it incumbent on me to do so, in order to keep up his idea of my exalted character; but I soon felt that, instead of being a humble disciple of mine, this new acquaintance was to be my guide and director, and all under the humble guise of one stooping at my feet to learn the right. He said that he saw I was ordained to perform some great action for the cause of Jesus and his church, and he earnestly coveted being a partaker with me: but he besought of me never to think it possible for me to fall from the truth, or the favour of him who had chosen me, else that misbelief would baulk every good work to which I set my face.

There was something so flattering in all this, that I could not resist it. Still, when he took leave of me, I felt it as a great relief; and yet, before the morrow, I wearied and was impatient to see him again. We carried on our fellowship from day to day, and all the while I knew not who he was, and still my mother and reverend father kept insisting that I was an altered youth, changed in my appearance, my manners, and my whole conduct; yet something always prevented me from telling them more about my new acquaintance than I had done on the first day we met. I rejoiced in him, was proud of him, and soon could not live without him; yet, though resolved every day to disclose the whole history of my connection with him, I had it not in my power: something always prevented me, till at length I thought no more of it, but resolved to enjoy his fascinating company in private, and by all means to keep my own with him. The resolution was vain: I set a bold face to it, but my powers were inadequate to the task; my adherent, with all the suavity imaginable, was sure to carry his point. I sometimes fumed, and sometimes shed tears at being obliged to yield to proposals against which I had at first felt every reasoning power of my soul rise in opposition; but, for all that, he never failed in carrying conviction along with him in effect, for he either forced me to acquiesce in his measures, and assent to the truth of his positions, or he put me so completely down, that I had not a word left to advance against them.

After weeks, and I may say months of intimacy, I observed, somewhat to my amazement, that we had never once prayed together; and more than that, that he had constantly led my attentions away from that duty, causing me to neglect it wholly. I thought this a bad mark of a man seemingly so much set on inculcating certain important points of

religion, and resolved next day to put him to the test, and request of him to perform that sacred duty in name of us both. He objected boldly; saying there were very few people indeed with whom he could join in prayer, and he made a point of never doing it, as he was sure they were to ask many things of which he disapproved, and that if he were to officiate himself, he was as certain to allude to many things that came not within the range of their faith. He disapproved of prayer altogether, in the manner it was generally gone about, he said. Man made it merely a selfish concern, and was constantly employed asking, asking, for everything. Whereas it became all God's creatures to be content with their lot, and only to kneel before him in order to thank him for such benefits as he saw meet to bestow. In short, he argued with such energy, that before we parted I acquiesced, as usual, in his position, and never mentioned prayer to him any more.

Having been so frequently seen in his company, several people happened to mention the circumstance to my mother and reverend father; but at the same time had all described him differently. At length they began to examine me with regard to the company I kept, as I absented myself from home day after day. I told them I kept company only with one young gentleman, whose whole manner of thinking on religious subjects I found so congenial with my own that I could not live out of his society. My mother began to lay down some of her old hackneyed rules of faith, but I turned from hearing her with disgust; for, after the energy of my new friend's reasoning, hers appeared so tame I could not endure it. And I confess with shame, that my reverend preceptor's religious dissertations began, about this time, to lose their relish very much, and by degrees became exceedingly tiresome to my ear. They were so inferior, in strength and sublimity, to the most common observations of my young friend, that in drawing a comparison the former appeared as nothing. He, however, examined me about many things relating to my companion, in all of which I satisfied him, save in one: I could neither tell him who my friend was, what was his name, nor of whom he was descended; and I wondered at myself how I had never once adverted to such a thing, for all the time we had been intimate.

I inquired the next day what his name was; as I said I was often at a loss for it, when talking with him. He replied, that there was no occasion for any one friend ever naming another, when their society was held in private, as ours was; for his part he had never once named me since we first met, and never intended to do so, unless by my own request. "But if you cannot converse without naming me, you may call me Gil for the present," added he; "and if I think proper to take another name at any future period, it shall be with your approbation."

"'Gil!' said I; have you no name but Gil? Or which of your names is it?—your Christian or surname?"

"Oh, you must have a surname too, must you!" replied he; "Very well, you may call me Gil-Martin. It is not my *Christian* name; but it is a name which may serve your turn."

"This is very strange!" said I. "Are you ashamed of your parents, that you refuse to give your real name?"

"I have no parents save one, whom I do not acknowledge," said he proudly; "therefore, pray drop that subject, for it is a disagreeable one. I am a being of a very peculiar temper, for though I have servants and subjects more than I can number, yet, to gratify a certain whim, I have left them, and retired to this city, and for all the society it contains, you see I have attached myself only to you. This is a secret, and I tell it you only in friendship, therefore pray let it remain one, and say not another word about the matter."

I assented, and said no more concerning it; for it instantly struck me that this was no other than the Czar Peter of Russia, having heard that he had been travelling through Europe in disguise, and I cannot say that I had not thenceforward great and mighty hopes of high preferment, as a defender and avenger of the oppressed Christian church, under the influence of this great potentate. He had hinted as much already, as that it was more honourable and of more avail to put down the wicked with the sword than try to reform them, and I thought myself quite justified in supposing that he intended me for some great employment, as he had thus selected me for his companion out of all the rest in Scotland, and even pretended to learn the great truths of religion from my mouth. From that time I felt disposed to yield to such a great prince's suggestions without hesitation.

Nothing ever astonished me so much as the uncommon powers with which he seemed invested. In our walk one day, we met with a Mr. Blanchard, who was reckoned a worthy, pious divine, but quite of the moral cast, who joined us; and we three walked on, and rested together in the fields. My companion did not seem to like him, but nevertheless regarded him frequently with deep attention, and there were several times, while he seemed contemplating him and trying to find out his thoughts, that his face became so like Mr. Blanchard's that it was impossible to have distinguished the one from the other. The antipathy between the two was mutual, and discovered itself quite palpably in a short time. When my companion the prince was gone, Mr. Blanchard asked me anent him, and I told him that he was a stranger in the city, but a very uncommon and great personage. Mr. Blanchard's answer to me was as follows:—"I never saw anybody I disliked so much in my life, Mr. Robert; and if it be true that he is a stranger here, which I doubt, believe me he is come for no good."

"Do you not perceive what mighty powers of mind he is possessed of?" said I, "and also how clear and unhesitating he is on some of the most interesting points of divinity?"

"It is for his great mental faculties that I dread him," said he. "It is incalculable what evil such a person as he may do, if so disposed. There is a sublimity in his ideas, with which there is to me a mixture of terror; and when he talks of religion, he does it as one who rather dreads its truths than reverences them. He, indeed, pretends great strictness of orthodoxy regarding some of the points of doctrine embraced by the Reformed church; but you do not seem to perceive, that both you and he are carrying these points to a dangerous extremity. Religion is a sublime and glorious thing, the bond of society on earth, and the connector of humanity with the divine nature; but there is nothing so dangerous to man as the wresting of any of its principles, or forcing them beyond their due bounds: this is of all others the readiest way to destruction. Neither is there anything so easily done. There is not an error into which a man can fall, of which he may not press Scripture into his service as proof of its probity, and though your boasted theologian shunned the full discussion of the subject before me, while you pressed it, I can easily see that both you and he are carrying your ideas of absolute predestination and its concomitants to an extent that overthrows all religion and revelation together. Believe me, Mr. Robert, the less you associate with that illustrious stranger the better."

I was rather stunned at this; but I pretended to smile with disdain, and said it did not become youth to control age; and, as I knew our principles differed fundamentally, it behoved us to drop the subject. He, however, would not drop it, but took both my principles and me fearfully to task, for Blanchard was an eloquent and powerful-minded old man; and, before we parted, I believe I promised to drop my new acquaintance, and was *all but* resolved to do it.

As well might I have laid my account with shunning the light of day. He was constant to me as my shadow, and by degrees he acquired such an ascendency over me, that I never was happy out of his company, nor greatly so in it. When I repeated to him all that Mr. Blanchard had said, his countenance kindled with rage; and then by degrees his eyes sunk inward, his brow lowered, so that I was awed, and withdrew my eyes from looking at him. A while afterward, as I was addressing him, I chanced to look him again in the face, and the sight of him made me start violently. He had made himself so like Mr. Blanchard, that I actually believed I had been addressing that gentleman, and that I had done so in some absence of mind that I could not account for. Instead of being amused at the quandary I was in, he seemed offended: indeed, he never was truly amused with anything. And he then asked me sullenly, if I conceived such personages as he to have no other endowments than common mortals!

I said I never conceived that princes or potentates had any greater share of endowments than other men, and frequently not so much. He shook his head, and bade me think over the subject again; and there was an end of it. I certainly felt every day the more disposed to acknowledge such a superiority in him, and from all that I could gather, I had now no doubt that he was Peter of Russia. Everything combined to warrant the supposition, and, of course, I resolved to act in conformity with the discovery I had made.

For several days the subject of Mr. Blanchard's doubts and doctrines formed the theme of our discourse. My friend deprecated them most devoutly; and then again he would deplore them, and lament the great evil that such a man might do among the human race. I joined with him in allowing the evil in its fullest latitude; and, at length, after he thought he had fully prepared my nature for such a trial of its powers and abilities, he proposed calmly that we two should make away with Mr. Blanchard. I was so shocked, that my bosom became as it were a void, and the beatings of my heart sounded loud and hollow in it: my breath was cut, and my tongue and palate became dry and speechless. He mocked at my cowardice, and began a reasoning on the matter with such powerful eloquence, that before we parted, I felt fully convinced that it was my bounden duty to slay Mr. Blanchard; but my will was far, very far from consenting to the deed.

I spent the following night without sleep, or nearly so; and the next morning, by the time the sun arose, I was again abroad, and in the company of my illustrious friend. The same subject was resumed, and again he reasoned to the following purport:—That supposing me placed at the head of an army of Christian soldiers, all bent on putting down the enemies of the church, would I have any hesitation in destroying and rooting out these enemies? None, surely. Well then, when I saw and was convinced, that here was an individual who was doing more detriment to the church of Christ on earth than tens of thousands of such warriors were capable of doing, was it not my duty to cut him off? "He, who would be a champion in the cause of Christ and his church, my brave young friend," added he, "must begin early, and no man can calculate to what an illustrious eminence small beginnings may lead. If the man Blanchard is worthy, he is only changing his situation for a better one; and if unworthy, it is better that one fall than that a thousand souls perish. Let us be up and doing in our vocations. For me, my resolution is taken; I have but one great aim in this world, and I never for a moment lose sight of it."

I was obliged to admit the force of his reasoning; for though I cannot from memory repeat his words,

his eloquence was of that overpowering nature, that the subtilty of other men sunk before it; and there is also little doubt that the assurance I had that these words were spoken by a great potentate, who could raise me to the highest eminence (provided that I entered into his extensive and decisive measures), assisted mightily in dispelling my youthful scruples and qualms of conscience; and I thought moreover, that having such a powerful back friend to support me, I hardly needed to be afraid of the consequences. I consented!—but begged a little time to think of it. He said the less one thought of a duty the better; and we parted.

But the most singular instance of this wonderful man's power over my mind was, that he had as complete influence over me by night as by day. All my dreams corresponded exactly with his suggestions; and when he was absent from me, still his arguments sunk deeper in my heart than even when he was present. I dreamed that night of a great triumph obtained, and though the whole scene was but dimly and confusedly defined in my vision, yet the overthrow and death of Mr. Blanchard was the first step by which I attained the eminent station I occupied. Thus, by dreaming of the event by night, and discoursing of it by day, it soon became so familiar to my mind, that I almost conceived it as done. It was resolved on; which was the first and greatest victory gained; for there was no difficulty in finding opportunities enow of cutting off a man, who, every good day, was to be found walking by himself in private grounds. I went and heard him preach for two days, and in fact I held his tenets scarcely short of blasphemy; they were such as I had never heard before, and his congregation, which was numerous, were turning up their ears and drinking in his doctrines with the utmost delight; for oh, they suited their carnal natures and self-sufficiency to a hair!

When I began to tell the prince about his false doctrines, to my astonishment I found that he had been in the church himself, and had every argument that the old divine had used *verbatim;* and he remarked on them with great concern, that these were not the tenets that corresponded with his views in society, and that he had agents in every city, and every land, exerting their powers to put them down. I asked, with great simplicity, "Are all your subjects Christians, prince?"

"All my European subjects are, or deem themselves so," returned he; "and they are the most faithful and true subjects I have."

Who could doubt, after this, that he was the Czar of Russia? I have nevertheless had reasons to doubt of his identity since that period, and which of my conjectures is right, I believe heaven only knows, for I do not. I shall go on to write such things as I remember, and if any one shall ever take the trouble to read over these confessions, such a one will judge for himself. It will be observed, that since ever I fell in with this extraordinary person, I have written about him only, and I must continue to do so to the end of this memoir, as I have performed no great or interesting action in which he had not a principal share.

He came to me one day and said, "We must not linger thus in executing what we have resolved on. We have much before our hands to perform for the benefit of mankind, civil as well as religious. Let us do what we have to do here, and then we must wend our way to other cities, and perhaps to other countries. Mr. Blanchard is to hold forth in the high church of Paisley on Sunday next, on some particularly great occasion: this must be defeated: he must not go there. As he will be busy arranging his discourses, we may expect him to be walking by himself in Finnieston Dell the greater part of Friday and Saturday. Let us go and cut him off. What is the life of a man more than the life of a lamb, or any guiltless animal? It is not half so much, especially when we consider the immensity of the mischief this old fellow is working among our fellow-creatures. Can there be any doubt that it is the duty of one consecrated to God to cut off such a mildew?"

"I fear me, great sovereign," said I, "that your ideas of retribution are too sanguine, and too arbitrary for the laws of this country. I dispute not that your motives are great and high; but have you debated the consequences and settled the result?"

"I have," returned he, "and hold myself amenable for the action, to the laws of God and of equity: as to the enactments of men, I despise them. Fain would I see the weapon of Providence begin the work of vengeance that awaits it to do!"

I could not help thinking that I perceived a little derision of countenance on his face as he said this, nevertheless I sunk dumb before such a man, and aroused myself to the task, seeing he would not have it deferred. I approved of it in theory, but my spirit stood aloof from the practice. I saw and was convinced that the elect would be happier and purer were the wicked and unbelievers all cut off from troubling and misleading them, but if it had not been for the instigations of this illustrious stranger, I should never have presumed to begin so great a work myself. Yet, though he often aroused my zeal to the highest pitch, still my heart at times shrunk from the shedding of life-blood, and it was only at the earnest and unceasing instigations of my enlightened and voluntary patron, that I at length put my hand to the conclusive work. After I said all that I could say, and all had been overborne (I remember my actions and words as well as it had been yesterday), I turned round hesitatingly, and looked up to heaven for direction; but there was a dimness came over my eyes that I could not see. The appearance was as if there had been a veil drawn over me, so nigh that I put up my hand to feel it; and then Gil-Martin (as this great sovereign was pleased to have himself

called) frowned, and asked me what I was grasping at? I knew not what to say, but answered, with fear and shame, "I have no weapons, not one; nor know I where any are to be found."

"The God whom thou servest will provide these," said he, "if thou provest worthy of the trust committed to thee."

I looked again up into the cloudy veil that covered us, and thought I beheld golden weapons of every description let down in it, but all with their points towards me. I kneeled, and was going to stretch out my hand to take one, when my patron seized me, as I thought, by the clothes, and dragged me away with as much ease as I had been a lamb, saying, with a joyful and elevated voice—"Come, my friend, let us depart: thou art dreaming—thou art dreaming. Rouse up all the energies of thy exalted mind, for thou art an highly-favoured one; and doubt thou not, that He whom *thou* servest will be ever at thy right and left hand, to direct and assist thee."

These words, but particularly the vision I had seen of the golden weapons descending out of heaven, inflamed my zeal to that height that I was as one beside himself; which my parents perceived that night, and made some motions toward confining me to my room. I joined in the family prayers, and then I afterwards sung a psalm and prayed by myself; and I had good reasons for believing that that small oblation of praise and prayer was not turned to sin.

I felt greatly strengthened and encouraged that night, and the next morning I ran to meet my companion, out of whose eye I had now no life. He rejoiced at seeing me so forward in the great work of reformation by blood, and said many things to raise my hopes of future fame and glory; and then, producing two pistols of pure beaten gold, he held them out and proffered me the choice of one, saying, "See what thy master hath provided thee!" I took one of them eagerly, for I perceived at once that they were two of the very weapons that were let down from heaven in the cloudy veil, the dim tapestry of the firmament; and I said to myself, "Surely this is the will of the Lord."

The little splendid and enchanting piece was so perfect, so complete, and so ready for executing the will of the donor, that I now longed to use it in his service. I loaded it with my own hand, as Gil-Martin did the other, and we took our stations behind a bush of hawthorn and bramble on the verge of the wood, and almost close to the walk. My patron was so acute in all his calculations, that he never mistook an event. We had not taken our stand above a minute and a half, till old Mr. Blanchard appeared, coming slowly on the path. When we saw this, we cowered down, and leaned each of us a knee upon the ground, pointing the pistols through the bush, with an aim so steady, that it was impossible to miss our victim.

He came deliberately on, pausing at times so long, that we dreaded he was going to turn. Gil-Martin dreaded it, and I said I did, but wished in my heart that he might. He, however, came onward, and I will never forget the manner in which he came! No, I don't believe I ever can forget it, either in the narrow bounds of time or the ages of eternity! He was a boardly ill-shaped man, of a rude exterior, and a little bent with age; his hands were clasped behind his back, and below his coat, and he walked with a slow swinging air that was very peculiar. When he paused and looked abroad on nature, the act was highly impressive: he seemed conscious of being all alone, and conversant only with God and the elements of his creation. Never was there such a picture of human inadvertency! a man approaching step by step to the person that was to hurl him out of one existence into another, with as much ease and indifference as the ox goeth to the stall. Hideous vision, wilt thou not be gone from my mental sight! If not, let me bear with thee as I can!

When he came straight opposite to the muzzles of our pieces, Gil-Martin called out "Eh!" with a short quick sound. The old man, without starting, turned his face and breast toward us, and looked into the wood, but looked over our heads. "Now!" whispered my companion, and fired. But my hand refused the office, for I was not at that moment sure about becoming an assassin in the cause of Christ and his church. I thought I heard a sweet voice behind me, whispering me to beware, and I was going to look round, when my companion exclaimed, "Coward, we are ruined!"

I had no time for an alternative: Gil-Martin's ball had not taken effect, which was altogether wonderful, as the old man's breast was within a few yards of him. "Hilloa!" cried Blanchard; "what is that for, you dog!" and with that he came forward to look over the bush. I hesitated, as I said, and attempted to look behind me; but there was no time; the next step discovered two assassins lying in covert, waiting for blood. "Coward, we are ruined!" cried my indignant friend; and that moment my piece was discharged. The effect was as might have been expected: the old man first stumbled to one side, and then fell on his back. We kept our places, and I perceived my companion's eyes gleaming with an unnatural joy. The wounded man raised himself from the bank to a sitting posture, and I beheld his eyes swimming; he, however, appeared sensible, for we heard him saying, in a low and rattling voice, "Alas, alas! whom have I offended, that they should have been driven to an act like this? Come forth and show yourselves, that I may either forgive you before I die, or curse you in the name of the Lord." He then fell a groping with both hands on the ground, as if feeling for something he had lost, manifestly in the agonies of death: and, with a solemn and interrupted prayer for forgiveness, he breathed his last.

I had become rigid as a statue, whereas my associate appeared to be elevated above measure. "Arise, thou faint-hearted one, and let us be going," said he. "Thou hast done well for once; but wherefore hesitate in such a cause? This is but a small beginning of so great a work as that of purging the Christian world. But the first victim is a worthy one, and more of such lights must be extinguished immediately."

We touched not our victim, nor anything pertaining to him, for fear of staining our hands with his blood; and the firing having brought three men within view, who were hastening towards the spot, my undaunted companion took both the pistols, and went forward as with intent to meet them, bidding me shift for myself. I ran off in a contrary direction, till I came to the foot of the Pearman Sike, and then, running up the hollow of that, I appeared on the top of the bank as if I had been another man brought forward by hearing the shots in such a place. I had a full view of a part of what passed, though not of all. I saw my companion going straight to meet the men, apparently with a pistol in each hand, waving in a careless manner. They seemed not quite clear of meeting with him, and so he went straight on, and passed between them. They looked after him, and came onward; but when they came to the old man lying stretched in his blood, then they turned and pursued my companion, though not so quickly as they might have done; and I understood that from the first they saw no more of him.

Great was the confusion that day in Glasgow. The most popular of all their preachers of morality was (what they called) murdered in cold blood, and a strict and extensive search was made for the assassin. Neither of the accomplices was found, however, that is certain, nor was either of them so much as suspected; but another man was apprehended under circumstances that warranted suspicion. This was one of the things that I witnessed in my life, which I never understood, and it surely was one of my patron's most dexterous tricks, for I must still say, what I have thought from the beginning, that like him there never was a man created. The young man who was taken up was a preacher; and it was proved that he had purchased firearms in town, and gone out with them that morning. But the far greatest mystery of the whole was, that two of the men, out of the three who met my companion, swore that that unfortunate preacher was the man whom they met with a pistol in each hand, fresh from the death of the old divine. The poor fellow made a confused speech himself, which there is not the least doubt was quite true; but it was laughed to scorn, and an expression of horror ran through both the hearers and jury. I heard the whole trial, and so did Gil-Martin; but we left the journeyman preacher to his fate, and from that time forth I have had no faith in the justice of criminal trials. If once a man is prejudiced on one side, he will swear anything in support of such prejudice. I tried to expostulate with my mysterious friend on the horrid injustice of suffering this young man to die for our act, but the prince exulted in it more than the other, and said the latter was the more dangerous man of the two.

The alarm in and about Glasgow was prodigious. The country being divided into two political parties, the court and the country party, the former held meetings, issued proclamations, and offered rewards, ascribing all to the violence of party spirit, and deprecating the infernal measures of their opponents. I did not understand their political differences; but it was easy to see that the true gospel preachers joined all on one side, and the upholders of pure morality and a blameless life on the other, so that this division proved a test to us, and it was forthwith resolved, that we two should pick out some of the leading men of this unsaintly and heterodox cabal, and cut them off one by one, as occasion should suit.

Now the ice being broken, I felt considerable zeal in our great work, but pretended much more; and we might soon have kidnapped them all through the ingenuity of my patron, had not our next attempt miscarried, by some awkwardness or mistake of mine. The consequence was, that he was discovered fairly, and very nigh seized. I also was seen, and suspected so far, that my reverend father, my mother, and myself were examined privately. I denied all knowledge of the matter; and they held it in such a ridiculous light, and their conviction of the complete groundlessness of the suspicion was so perfect, that their testimony prevailed, and the affair was hushed. I was obliged, however, to walk circumspectly, and saw my companion the prince very seldom, who was prowling about every day, quite unconcerned about his safety. He was every day a new man, however, and needed not to be alarmed at any danger; for such a facility had he in disguising himself, that if it had not been for a pass-word which we had between us, for the purposes of recognition, I never could have known him myself.

It so happened that my reverend father was called to Edinburgh about this time, to assist with his council in settling the national affairs. At my earnest request I was permitted to accompany him, at which both my associate and I rejoiced, as we were now about to move in a new and extensive field. All this time I never knew where my illustrious friend resided. He never once invited me to call on him at his lodgings, nor did he ever come to our house, which made me sometimes to suspect, that if any of our great efforts in the cause of true religion were discovered he intended leaving me in the lurch. Consequently, when we met in Edinburgh (for we travelled not in company) I proposed to go with him to look for lodgings, telling him at the same time what a blessed religious family my

reverend instructor and I were settled in. He said he rejoiced at it, but he made a rule of never lodging in any particular house, but took these daily, or hourly, as he found it convenient, and that he never was at a loss in any circumstance.

"What a mighty trouble you put yourself to, great sovereign!" said I, "and all, it would appear, for the purpose of seeing and knowing more and more of the human race."

"I never go but where I have some great purpose to serve," returned he, "either in the advancement of my own power and dominion, or in thwarting my enemies."

"With all due deference to your great comprehension, my illustrious friend," said I, "it strikes me that you can accomplish very little either the one way or the other here, in the humble and private capacity you are pleased to occupy."

"It is your own innate modesty that prompts such a remark," said he. "Do you think the gaining of you to my service, is not an attainment worthy of being envied by the greatest potentate in Christendom! Before I had missed such a prize as the attainment of your services, I would have travelled over one half of the habitable globe." I bowed with great humility, but at the same time how could I but feel proud and highly flattered? He continued: "Believe me, my dear friend, for such a prize I account no effort too high. For a man who is not only dedicated to heaven, in the most solemn manner, soul, body, and spirit, but also justified, sanctified, and received into a communion that never shall be broken, and from which no act of his shall ever remove him—the possession of such a man, I tell you, is worth kingdoms; because every deed that he performs, he does it with perfect safety to himself and honour to me." I bowed again, lifting my hat, and he went on: "I am now going to put his courage in the cause he has espoused to a severe test—to a trial at which common nature would revolt, but he who is dedicated to be the sword of the Lord must raise himself above common humanity. You have a father and a brother according to the flesh; what do you know of them?"

"I am sorry to say I know nothing good," said I. "They are reprobates, castaways, beings devoted to the wicked one, and, like him, workers of every species of iniquity with greediness."

"They must both fall!" said he, with a sigh and melancholy look; "it is decreed in the councils above, that they must both fall by your hand."

"Heaven forbid it!" said I. "They are enemies to Christ and his church, that I know and believe; but they shall live and die in their iniquity for me, and reap their guerdon when their time cometh. There my hand shall not strike."

"The feeling is natural and amiable," said he; "but you must think again. Whether are the bonds of carnal nature or the bonds and vows of the Lord strongest!"

"I will not reason with you on this head, mighty potentate," said I, "for whenever I do so it is but to be put down. I shall only express my determination not to take vengeance out of the Lord's hand in this instance. It availeth not. These are men that have the mark of the beast in their foreheads and right hands; they are lost beings themselves, but have no influence over others. Let them perish in their sins; for they shall not be meddled with by me."

"How preposterously you talk, my dear friend!" said he. "These people are your greatest enemies; they would rejoice to see you annihilated. And now that you have taken up the Lord's cause of being avenged on his enemies, wherefore spare those that are your own as well as his? Besides, you ought to consider what great advantages would be derived to the cause of righteousness and truth, were the estate and riches of that opulent house in your possession, rather than in that of such as oppose the truth and all manner of holiness."

This was a portion of the consequence of following my illustrious adviser's summary mode of procedure, that had never entered into my calculation. I disclaimed all idea of being influenced by it; however, I cannot but say that the desire of being enabled to do so much good, by the possession of these bad men's riches, made some impression on my heart, and I said I would consider of the matter. I did consider it, and that right seriously as well as frequently; and there was scarcely an hour in the day on which my resolves were not animated by my great friend, till at length I began to have a longing desire to kill my brother, in particular. Should any man ever read this scroll, he will wonder at this confession, and deem it savage and unnatural. So it appeared to me at first, but a constant thinking of an event changes every one of its features. I have done all for the best, and as I was prompted, by one who knew right and wrong much better than I did. I had a desire to slay him, it is true, and such a desire too as a thirsty man has to drink; but at the same time, this longing desire was mingled with a certain terror, as if I had dreaded that the drink for which I longed was mixed with deadly poison.

My illustrious friend still continuing to sound in my ears the imperious duty to which I was called of making away with my sinful relations, I was obliged to acquiesce in his measures, though with certain limitations. It was not easy to answer his arguments, and yet I was afraid that he soon perceived a leaning to his will on my part. "If the acts of Jehu, in rooting out the whole house of his master, were ordered and approved of by the Lord," said he, "would it not have been more praiseworthy if one of Ahab's own sons had stood up for the cause of Israel, and rooted out the sinners and their idols out of the land?"

"It would certainly," said I. "To our duty to God all other duties must yield."

"Go thou then and do likewise," said he. "Thou art called to a high vocation; go thou forth then like a ruling energy, a master spirit of desolation in the dwellings of the wicked, and high shall be your reward both here and hereafter."

My heart now panted with eagerness to look my brother in the face; on which my companion, who was never out of the way, conducted me to a small square in the suburbs of the city, where there were a number of young noblemen and gentlemen playing at a vain, idle, and sinful game, at which there was much of the language of the accursed going on; and among these blasphemers he instantly pointed out my brother to me. I was fired with indignation at seeing him in such company, and so employed; and I placed myself close beside him to watch all his motions, listen to his words, and draw inferences from what I saw and heard. In what a sink of sin was he wallowing! I resolved to take him to task, and if he refused to be admonished, to inflict on him some condign punishment; and knowing that my illustrious friend and director was looking on, I resolved to show some spirit. Accordingly, I waited until I heard him profane his Maker's name three times, and then, my spiritual indignation being roused above all restraint, I went up and kicked him. Yes, I went boldly up and struck him with my foot, and meant to have given him a more severe blow than it was my fortune to inflict. It had, however, the effect of rousing up his corrupt nature to quarrelling and strife, instead of taking the chastisement in humility and meekness. He ran furiously against me in the choler that is always inspired by the wicked one; but I overthrew him, by reason of impeding the natural and rapid progress of his unholy feet, running to destruction. I also fell slightly; but his fall proving a severe one, he arose in wrath, and struck me with the mall which he held in his hand, until my blood flowed copiously; and from that moment I vowed his destruction in my heart. But I happened to have no weapon at that time, nor any means of inflicting due punishment on the caitiff, which would not have been returned double on my head, by him and his graceless associates. I mixed among them at the suggestion of my friend, and following them to their den of voluptuousness and sin, I strove to be admitted among them, in hopes of finding some means of accomplishing my great purpose, while I found myself moved by the spirit within me so to do. But I was not only debarred, but, by the machinations of my wicked brother and his associates, cast into prison.

I was not sorry at being thus honoured to suffer in the cause of righteousness, and at the hands of sinful men; and as soon as I was alone, I betook myself to prayer. My jailer came to me, and insulted me. He was a rude unprincipled fellow, partaking much of the loose and carnal manners of the age; but I remembered of having read in the *Cloud of Witnesses*, of such men formerly having been converted by the imprisoned saints; so I set myself, with all my heart, to bring about this man's repentance and reformation.

"Fat the deil are ye yoolling an' praying that gate for, man?" said he, coming angrily in. "I thought the day o' praying prisoners had been a' ower. Gie up your erooning, or I'll pit you to an in-by place, where you sall get plenty o't."

"Friend," said I, "I am making my appeal at that bar where all human actions are seen and judged, and where you shall not be forgot, sinful as you are."

I then opened up the mysteries of religion to him in a clear and perspicuous manner, but particularly the great doctrine of the election of grace; and then I added, "Now, friend, you must tell me if you pertain to this chosen number."

"An' fat the better wad you be for the kenning o' this, man?" said he.

"Because, if you are one of my brethren, I will take you into sweet communion and fellowship," returned I; "but if you belong to the unregenerate, I have a commission to slay you."

"Oo, foo, foo! I see how it is," said he; "yours is a very braw commission, but you will have the small opportunity of carrying it through here. Take my advising, and write a bit of a letter to your friends, and I will send it, for this is no place for such a great man. If you cannot steady your hand to write, as I see you have been at your great work, a word of a mouth may do; for I do assure you this is not the place at all, of any in the world, for your operations."

The man apparently thought I was deranged in my intellect. He could not swallow such great truths at the first morsel. So I took his advice, and sent a line to my reverend father, who was not long in coming, and great was the jailer's wonderment when he saw all the great Christian noblemen of the land sign my bond of freedom.

My reverend father took this matter greatly to heart, and bestirred himself in the good cause till the transgressors were ashamed to show their faces. For my part I was greatly strengthened in my resolution by the anathemas of my reverend father, who, privately (that is, in a family capacity), in his prayers, gave up my father and brother, according to the flesh, to Satan, making it plain to all my senses of perception, that they were beings to be devoured by fiends or men, at their will and pleasure, and that *whosoever* should slay them, would do God good service.

The next morning my illustrious friend met me at an early hour, and he was greatly overjoyed at hearing my sentiments now chime so much in unison with his own. I said, "I longed for the day and the hour that I might look my brother in the face at Gilgal, and visit on him the iniquity of his father and himself, for that I was now strengthened and prepared for the deed."

"I have been watching the steps and movements of the profligate one," said he; "and lo, I will take you straight to his presence. Let your heart be as the heart of the lion, and your arms strong as the bars of brass, and swift to avenge as the bolt that descendeth from Heaven, for the blood of the just and the good hath long flowed in Scotland. But already is the day of their avengement begun; the hero is at length arisen, who shall send all such as bear enmity to the true church, or trust in works of their own, to Tophet!"

Thus encouraged, I followed my friend, who led me directly to the same court in which I had chastised the miscreant on the foregoing day; and behold, there was the same group again assembled. They eyed me with terror in their looks, as I walked among them and regarded them with disapprobation and rebuke; and I saw that the very eye of a chosen one lifted on these children of Belial was sufficient to dismay and put them to flight. I walked aside to my friend, who stood at a distance looking on, and he said to me, "What thinkest thou now?" and I answered in the words of the venal prophet, "Lo now, if I had a sword into mine hand, I would even kill him."

"Wherefore lackest thou it?" said he. "Dost thou not see that they tremble at thy presence, knowing that the avenger of blood is among them?"

My heart was lifted up on hearing this, and again I strode into the midst of them, and eyeing them with threatening looks, they were so much confounded, that they abandoned their sinful pastime, and fled every one to his house!

This was a palpable victory gained over the wicked, and I thereby knew that the hand of the Lord was with me. My companion also exulted, and said, "Did not I tell thee! Behold thou dost not know one half of thy might, or of the great things thou art destined to do. Come with me and I will show thee more than this, for these young men cannot subsist without the exercises of sin. I listened to their counsels, and I know where they will meet again."

Accordingly he led me a little farther to the south, and we walked aside till by degrees we saw some people begin to assemble; and in a short time we perceived the same group stripping off their clothes to make them more expert in the practice of madness and folly. Their game was begun before we approached, and so also were the oaths and cursing. I put my hands in my pockets, and walked with dignity and energy into the midst of them. It was enough: terror and astonishment seized them. A few of them cried out against me, but their voices were soon hushed amid the murmurs of fear. One of them, in the name of the rest, then came and besought of me to grant them liberty to amuse themselves; but I refused peremptorily, and dared the whole multitude so much as to touch me with one of their fingers.

Again they all fled and dispersed at my look, and I went home in triumph, escorted by my friend, and some well-meaning young Christians, who, however, had not learned to deport themselves with soberness and humility. But my ascendency over my enemies was great indeed; for wherever I appeared I was hailed with approbation, and wherever my guilty brother made his appearance, he was hooted and held in derision, till he was forced to hide his disgraceful head, and appear no more in public.

Immediately after this I was seized with a strange distemper, which neither my friends nor physicians could comprehend, and it confined me to my chamber for many days; but I knew myself that I was bewitched, and suspected my father's reputed concubine of the deed. I told my fears to my reverend protector, who hesitated concerning them, but I knew by his words and looks that he was conscious I was right. I generally conceived myself to be two people. When I lay in bed, I deemed there were two of us in it; when I sat up, I always beheld another person, and always in the same position from the place where I sat or stood, which was about three paces off me towards my left side. It mattered not how many or how few were present: this my second self was sure to be present in his place; and this occasioned a confusion in all my words and ideas that utterly astounded my friends, who all declared, that instead of being deranged in my intellect, they had never heard my conversation manifest so much energy or sublimity of conception; but for all that, over the singular delusion that I was two persons my reasoning faculties had no power. The most perverse part of it was, that I rarely conceived *myself* to be any of the two persons. I thought for the most part that my companion was one of them, and my brother the other; and I found, that to be obliged to speak and answer in the character of another man, was a most awkward business at the long run.

Who can doubt, from this statement, that I was bewitched, and that my relatives were at the ground of it? The constant and unnatural persuasion that I was my brother proved it to my own satisfaction, and must, I think, do so to every unprejudiced person. This victory of the wicked one over me kept me confined in my chamber, at Mr. Millar's house, for nearly a month, until the prayers of the faithful prevailed, and I was restored. I knew it was a chastisement for my pride, because my heart was lifted up at my superiority over the enemies of the church; nevertheless, I determined to make short work with the aggressor, that the righteous might not be subjected to the effect of his diabolical arts again.

I say I was confined a month. I beg he that readeth to take note of this, that he may estimate how much the word, or even the oath, of a wicked man is to depend on. For a month I saw no one

but such as came into my room, and for all that, it will be seen, that there were plenty of the same set to attest upon oath that I saw my brother every day during that period; that I persecuted him with my presence day and night, while all the time I never saw his face, save in a delusive dream. I cannot comprehend what manœuvres my illustrious friend was playing off with them about this time; for he, having the art of personating whom he chose, had peradventure deceived them, else so many of them had never all attested the same thing. I never saw any man so steady in his friendships and attentions as he; but as he made a rule of never calling at private houses, for fear of some discovery being made of his person, so I never saw him while my malady lasted; but as soon as I grew better, I knew I had nothing ado but to attend at some of our places of meeting, to see him again. He was punctual, as usual, and I had not to wait.

My reception was precisely as I apprehended. There was no flaring, no flummery, nor bombastical pretensions, but a dignified return to my obeisance, and an immediate recurrence, in converse, to the important duties incumbent on us, in our stations, as reformers and purifiers of the church.

"I have marked out a number of most dangerous characters in this city," said he, "all of whom must be cut off from encumbering the true vineyard before we leave this land. And if you bestir not yourself in the work to which you are called, I must raise up others who shall have the honour of it."

"I am, most illustrious prince, wholly at your service," said I. "Show but what ought to be done, and here is the heart to dare, and the hand to execute. You pointed out my relations, according to the flesh, as brands fitted to be thrown into the burning. I approved peremptorily of the award; nay, I thirst to accomplish it; for I myself have suffered severely from their diabolical arts. When once that trial of my devotion to the faith is accomplished, then be your future operations disclosed."

"You are free of your words and promises," said he.

"So will I be of my deeds in the service of my master, and that shalt thou see," said I. "I lack not the spirit, nor the will, but I lack experience woefully; and because of that short-coming must bow to your suggestions."

"Meet me here to-morrow betimes," said he, "and perhaps you may hear of some opportunity of displaying your zeal in the cause of righteousness."

I met him as he desired me; and he addressed me with a hurried and joyful expression, telling me that my brother was astir, and that a few minutes ago he had seen him pass on his way to the mountain. "The hill is wrapped in a cloud," added he, "and never was there such an opportunity of executing justice on a guilty sinner. You may trace him in the dew, and shall infallibly find him on the top of some precipice; for it is only in secret that he dares show his debased head to the sun."

"I have no arms, else assuredly I would pursue him and discomfit him," said I.

"Here is a small dagger," said he; "I have nothing of weapon-kind about me save that, but it is a potent one; and should you require it, there is nothing more ready or sure."

"Will not you accompany me?" said I: "sure you will?"

"I will be with you, or near you," said he. "Go you on before."

I hurried away as he directed me, and imprudently asked some of Queensberry's guards if such and such a young man passed by them going out from the city. I was answered in the affirmative, and till then had doubted of my friend's intelligence, it was so inconsistent with a profligate's life to be early astir. When I got the certain intelligence that my brother was before me, I fell a-running, scarcely knowing what I did; and looking several times behind me, I perceived nothing of my zealous and arbitrary friend. The consequence of this was that by the time I reached St. Anthony's Well, my resolution began to give way. It was not my courage, for now that I had once shed blood in the cause of the true faith, I was exceedingly bold and ardent, but whenever I was left to myself I was subject to sinful doubtings.

In this desponding state, I sat myself down on a stone, and bethought me of the rashness of my undertaking. I tried to ascertain, to my own satisfaction, whether or not I really had been commissioned of God to perpetrate these crimes in his behalf, for in the eyes, and by the laws of men, they were great and crying transgressions. While I sat pondering on these things, I was involved in a veil of white misty vapour, and looking up to heaven I was just about to ask direction from above, when I heard as it were a still small voice close by me, which uttered some words of derision and chiding. I looked intensely in the direction whence it seemed to come, and perceived a lady, robed in white, who hasted toward me. She regarded me with a severity of look and gesture that appalled me so much, I could not address her; but she waited not for that, but coming close to my side said, without stopping, "Preposterous wretch! how dare you lift your eyes to heaven with such purposes in your heart! Escape homeward, and save your soul, or farewell for ever!"

These were all the words that she uttered, as far as I could ever recollect, but my spirits were kept in such a tumult that morning, that something might have escaped me. I followed her eagerly with my eyes, but in a moment she glided over the rocks above the holy well, and vanished. I persuaded myself that I had seen a vision, and that the radiant being who had addressed me was one of the good angels, or guardian spirits, commissioned by the Almighty to watch over the steps of the just. My first impulse was to follow her advice, and make my escape home; for I thought to myself, "How

is this interested and mysterious foreigner, a proper judge of the actions of a free Christian?"

The thought was hardly framed, nor had I moved in a retrograde direction six steps, when I saw my illustrious friend and great adviser descending the ridge towards me with hasty and impassioned strides. My heart fainted within me; and when he came up and addressed me, I looked as one caught in a trespass. "What hath detained thee, thou desponding trifler?" said he. "Verily now shall the golden opportunity be lost which may never be recalled. I have traced the reprobate to his sanctuary in the cloud, and lo he is perched on the pinnacle of a precipice an hundred fathoms high. One ketch with thy foot, or toss with thy finger, shall throw him from thy sight into the foldings of the cloud, and he shall be no more seen, till found at the bottom of the cliff dashed to pieces. Make haste therefore, thou loiterer, if thou wouldst ever prosper and rise to eminence in the work of thy master."

"I go no farther on this work," said I, "for I have seen a vision that has reprimanded the deed."

"A vision?" said he, "Was it that wench who descended from the hill?"

"The being that spake to me, and warned me of my danger, was indeed the form of a lady," said I.

"She also approached me and said a few words," returned he; "and I thought there was something mysterious in her manner. Pray, what did she say? for the words of such a singular message, and from such a messenger, ought to be attended to. If I understood her aright, she was chiding us for our misbelief and preposterous delay."

I recited her words, but he answered that I had been in a state of sinful doubting at the time, and that it was to these doubtings she had adverted. In short, this wonderful and clear-sighted stranger soon banished all my doubts and despondency, making me utterly ashamed of them, and again I set out with him in pursuit of my brother. He showed me the traces of his footsteps in the dew, and pointed out the spot where I should find him. "You have nothing more to do than go softly down behind him," said he; "which you can do to within an ell of him, without being seen; then rush upon him, and throw him from his seat, where there is neither footing nor hold. I will go, meanwhile, and amuse his sight by some exhibition in the contrary direction, and he shall neither know nor perceive who has done him this *kind office:* for, exclusive of more weighty concerns, be assured of this, that the sooner he falls, the fewer crimes will he have to answer for, and his estate in the other world will be proportionally more tolerable, than if he spent a long unregenerate life steeped in iniquity to the loathing of the soul."

"Nothing can be more plain or more pertinent," said I: "therefore I fly to perform that which is both a duty toward God and toward man!"

"You shall yet rise to great honour and preferment," said he.

"I value it not, provided I do honour and justice to the cause of my master here," said I.

"You shall be lord of your father's riches and demesnes," added he.

"I disclaim and deride every selfish motive thereto relating," said I, "further than as it enables me to do good."

"Ay, but that is a great and a heavenly consideration, that *longing for ability to do good,*" said he; and as he said so, I could not help remarking a certain derisive exultation of expression which I could not comprehend; and indeed I have noted this very often in my illustrious friend, and sometimes mentioned it civilly to him, but he has never failed to disclaim it. On this occasion I said nothing, but concealing his poniard in my clothes, I hasted up the mountain, determined to execute my purpose before any misgivings should again visit me; and I never had more ado than in keeping firm my resolution. I could not help my thoughts, and there are certain trains and classes of thoughts that have great power in enervating the mind. I thought of the awful deed of plunging a fellow-creature from the top of a cliff into the dark and misty void below—of his being dashed to pieces on the protruding rocks, and of hearing his shrieks as he descended the cloud, and beheld the shagged points on which he was to alight. Then I thought of plunging a soul so abruptly into hell, or, at the best, sending it to hover on the confines of that burning abyss—of its appearance at the bar of the Almighty to receive its sentence. And then I thought, "Will there not be a sentence pronounced against me there, by a jury of the just made perfect, and written down in the registers of heaven?"

These thoughts, I say, came upon me unasked, and instead of being able to dispel them, they mustered upon the summit of my imagination in thicker and stronger array: and there was another that impressed me in a very particular manner, though, I have reason to believe, not so strongly as those above written. It was this: "What if I should fail in my first effort: Will the consequence not be that I am tumbled from the top of the rock myself?" and then all the feelings anticipated, with regard to both body and soul, must happen to me! This was a spine-breaking reflection; and yet, though the probability was rather on that side, my zeal in the cause of godliness was such that it carried me on, maugre all danger and dismay.

I soon came close upon my brother, sitting on the dizzy pinnacle, with his eyes fixed steadfastly in the direction opposite to me. I descended the little green ravine behind him with my feet foremost, and every now and then raised my head, and watched his motions. His posture continued the same, until at last I came so near him I could have heard him breathe, if his face had been towards me. I laid my

cap aside, and made me ready to spring upon him, and push him over. I could not for my life accomplish it! I do not think it was that *I durst not*, for I have always felt my courage equal to anything in a good cause. But I had not the heart, or something that I ought to have had. In short, it was not done in time, as it easily might have been. These THOUGHTS are hard enemies wherewith to combat! And I was so grieved that I could not effect my righteous purpose, that I laid me down on my face and shed tears. Then, again, I thought of what my great enlightened friend and patron would say to me, and again my resolution rose indignant, and indissoluble save by blood. I arose on my right knee and left foot, and had just begun to advance the latter forward: the next step my great purpose had been accomplished, and the culprit had suffered the punishment due to his crimes. But what moved him I knew not: in the critical moment he sprung to his feet, and dashing himself furiously against me, he overthrew me, at the imminent peril of my life. I disencumbered myself by main force, and fled, but he overhied me, knocked me down, and threatened, with dreadful oaths, to throw me from the cliff. After I was a little recovered from the stunning blow, I aroused myself to the combat; and though I do not recollect the circumstances of that deadly scuffle very minutely, I know that I vanquished him so far as to force him to ask my pardon, and crave a reconciliation. I spurned at both, and left him to the chastisements of his own wicked and corrupt heart.

My friend met me again on the hill, and derided me, in a haughty and stern manner, for my imbecility and want of decision. I told him how nearly I had effected my purpose, and excused myself as well as I was able. On this, seeing me bleeding, he advised me to swear the peace against my brother, and have him punished in the meantime, he being the first aggressor. I promised compliance, and we parted, for I was somewhat ashamed of my failure, and was glad to be quit for the present of one of whom I stood so much in awe.

When my reverend father beheld me bleeding a second time by the hand of a brother, he was moved to the highest point of displeasure; and relying on his high interest and the justice of his cause, he brought the matter at once before the courts. My brother and I were first examined face to face. His declaration was a mere romance: mine was not the truth; but as it was by the advice of my reverend father, and that of my illustrious friend, that I gave it, I conceived myself completely justified on that score. I said, I had gone up into the mountain early on the morning to pray, and had withdrawn myself, for entire privacy, into a little sequestered dell—had laid aside my cap, and was in the act of kneeling, when I was rudely attacked by my brother, knocked over and nearly slain. They asked my brother if this was true. He acknowledged that it was; that I was bare-headed, and in the act of kneeling when he ran foul of me without any intent of doing so. But the judge took him to task on the improbability of this, and put the profligate sore out of countenance. The rest of his tale told still worse, insomuch that he was laughed at by all present, for the judge remarked to him, that granting it was true that he had at first run against me on an open mountain, and overthrown me by accident, how was it, that after I had extricated myself and fled, that he had pursued, overtaken, and knocked me down a second time? Would he pretend that all that was likewise by chance? The culprit had nothing to say for himself on this head, and I shall not forget my exultation and that of my reverend father, when the sentence of the judge was delivered. It was, that my wicked brother should be thrown into prison, and tried on a criminal charge of assault and battery, with the intent of committing murder. This was a just and righteous judge, and saw things in their proper bearings, that is, he could discern between a righteous and a wicked man, and then there could be no doubt as to which of the two were acting right, and which wrong.

My time was now much occupied, along with my reverend preceptor, in making ready for the approaching trial, as the prosecutors. Our counsel assured us of a complete victory, and that banishment would be the mildest award of the law on the offender. Mark how different was the result! From the shifts and ambiguities of a wicked bench, who had a fellow-feeling of iniquity with the defenders—my suit was cast, the graceless libertine was absolved, and I was incarcerated, and bound over to keep the peace, with heavy penalties, before I was set at liberty.

I was exceedingly disgusted at this issue, and blamed the counsel of my friend to his face. He expressed great grief, and expatiated on the wickedness of our judicatories, adding, "I see I cannot depend on you for quick and summary measures, but for your sake I shall be revenged on that wicked judge, and that you shall see in a few days." The lord justice-clerk died that same week! But he died in his own house and his own bed, and by what means my friend effected it I do not know. He would not tell me a single word of the matter, but the judge's sudden death made a great noise, and I made so many curious inquiries regarding the particulars of it, that some suspicions were like to attach to our family of some unfair means used. For my part I know nothing, and rather think he died by the visitation of Heaven, and that my friend had foreseen it, by symptoms, and soothed me by promises of complete revenge.

It was some days before he mentioned my brother's meditated death to me again, and certainly he then found me exasperated against him personally to the highest degree. But I told him that I could not now think any more of it, owing to the late judg-

ment of the court, by which, if my brother were missing or found dead, I would not only forfeit my life, but my friends would be ruined by the penalties.

"I suppose you know and believe in the perfect safety of your soul," said he.

"I believe in it thoroughly and perfectly," said I; "and whenever I entertain doubts of it, I am sensible of sin and weakness."

"Very well, so then am I," said he. "I think I can now divine, with all manner of certainty, what will be the high and merited guerdon of your immortal part. Hear me then further: I give you my solemn assurance, and bond of blood, that no human hand shall ever henceforth be able to injure your life, or shed one drop of your precious blood, but it is on the condition that you walk always by my directions."

"I will do so with cheerfulness," said I; "for without your enlightened counsel, I feel that I can do nothing. But as to your power of protecting my life, you must excuse me for doubting it. Nay, were we in your own proper dominions, you could not insure that."

"In whatever dominion or land I am, my power accompanies me," said he; "and it is only against human might and human weapon that I insure your life; on that will I keep an eye, and on that you may depend. I have never broken word or promise with you. Do you credit me?"

"Yes, I do," said I; "for I see you are in earnest. I believe, though I do not comprehend you."

"Then why do you not at once challenge your brother to the field of honour? Seeing you now act without danger, cannot you also act without fear?"

"It is not fear," returned I; "believe me, I hardly know what fear is. It is a doubt that on all these emergencies constantly haunts my mind, that in performing such and such actions I may fall from my upright state. This makes fratricide a fearful task."

"This is imbecility itself," said he. "We have settled and agreed on that point an hundred times. I would therefore advise that you challenge your brother to single combat. I shall insure your safety, and he cannot refuse giving you satisfaction."

"But then the penalties?" said I.

"We will try to evade these," said he; "and supposing you should be caught, if once you are Laird of Dalcastle and Balgrennan, what are the penalties to you?"

"Might we not rather pop him off in private and quietness, as we did the deistical divine?" said I.

"The deed would be alike meritorious, either way," said he. "But may we not wait for years before we find an opportunity? My advice is to challenge him, as privately as you will, and there cut him off."

"So be it then," said I. "When the moon is at the full, I will send for him forth to speak with one, and there will I smite him and slay him, and he shall trouble the righteous no more."

"Then this is the very night," said he. "The moon is nigh to the full, and this night your brother and his sinful mates hold carousal; for there is an intended journey to-morrow. The exulting profligate leaves town, where he must remain till the time of my departure hence; and then is he safe, and must live to dishonour God, and not only destroy his own soul, but those of many others. Alack, and woe is me! The sins that he and his friends will commit this very night will cry to Heaven against us for our shameful delay! When shall our great work of cleansing the sanctuary be finished, if we proceed at this puny rate?"

"I see the deed *must* be done, then," said I; "and since it is so, it shall be done. I will arm myself forthwith, and from the midst of his wine and debauchery you shall call him forth to me, and there will I smite him with the edge of the sword, that our great work be not retarded."

"If thy execution were equal to thy intent, how great a man you soon might be!" said he. "We shall make the attempt once more; and if it fail again, why, I must use other means to bring about my high purposes relating to mankind.—Home and make ready. I will go and procure what information I can regarding their motions, and will meet you in disguise twenty minutes hence, at the first turn of Hewie's Lane beyond the loch."

"I have nothing to make ready," said I; "for I do not choose to go home. Bring me a sword, that we may consecrate it with prayer and vows, and if I use it not to the bringing down of the wicked and profane, then may the Lord do so to me, and more also!"

We parted, and there was I left again to the multiplicity of my own thoughts for the space of twenty minutes, a thing my friend never failed in subjecting me to, and these were worse to contend with than hosts of sinful men. I prayed inwardly, that these deeds of mine might never be brought to the knowledge of men who were incapable of appreciating the high motives that led to them; and then I sang part of the 10th psalm, likewise in spirit; but for all these efforts, my sinful doubts returned, so that when my illustrious friend joined me, and proffered me the choice of two gilded rapiers, I declined accepting any of them, and began, in a very bold and energetic manner, to express my doubts regarding the justification of all the deeds of perfect men. He chided me severely, and branded me with cowardice, a thing that my nature never was subject to; and then he branded me with falsehood, and breach of the most solemn engagements.

I was compelled to take the rapier, much against my inclination; but for all the arguments, threats, and promises that he could use, I would not consent to send a challenge to my brother by his mouth. There was one argument only that he made use of

which had some weight with me, but yet it would not preponderate. He told me my brother was gone to a notorious and scandalous habitation of women, and that if I left him to himself for ever so short a space longer, it might embitter his state through ages to come. This was a trying concern to me; but I resisted it, and reverted to my doubts. On this he said that he had meant to do me honour, but since I put it out of his power, he would take the deed and the responsibility on himself. "I have with sore travail procured a guardship of your life," added he. "For my own, I have not; but, be that as it will, I shall not be baffled in my attempts to benefit my friends without a trial. You will at all events accompany me, and see that I get justice?"

"Certes, I will do thus much," said I; "and woe be to him if his arm prevail against my friend and patron!"

His lip curled with a smile of contempt, which I could hardly brook; and I began to be afraid that the eminence to which I had been destined by him was already fading from my view. And I thought what I should then do to ingratiate myself again with him, for without his countenance I had no life. "I will be a man in act," thought I, "but in sentiment I will not yield, and for this he must surely admire me the more."

As we emerged from the shadowy lane into the fair moonshine, I started so that my whole frame underwent the most chilling vibrations of surprise. I again thought I had been taken at unawares, and was conversing with another person. My friend was equipped in the Highland garb, and so completely translated into another being, that, save by his speech, all the senses of mankind could not have recognized him. I blessed myself, and asked whom it was his pleasure to personify to-night? He answered me carelessly, that it was a spark whom he meant should bear the blame of whatever might fall out to-night; and that was all that passed on the subject.

We proceeded by some stone steps at the foot of the North Loch, in hot argument all the way. I was afraid that our conversation might be overheard, for the night was calm and almost as light as day, and we saw sundry people crossing us as we advanced. But the zeal of my friend was so high, that he disregarded all danger, and continued to argue fiercely and loudly on my delinquency, as he was pleased to call it. I stood on one argument alone, which was, "that I did not think the Scripture promises to the elect, taken in their utmost latitude, warranted the assurance that they could do no wrong; and that, therefore, it behoved every man to look well to his steps."

There was no religious scruple that irritated my enlightened friend and master so much as this. He could not endure it. He lost all patience on hearing what I advanced on this matter, and taking hold of me, he led me into a darksome booth in a confined entry; and, after a friendly but cutting reproach, he bade me remain there in secret and watch the event; "and if I fall," said he, "you will not fail to avenge my death?"

I was so entirely overcome with vexation that I could make no answer, on which he left me abruptly, a prey to despair; and I saw or heard no more, till he came down to the moonlight green followed by my brother. They had quarrelled before they came within my hearing, for the first words I heard were those of my brother, who was in a state of intoxication, and he was urging a reconciliation, as was his wont on such occasions. My friend spurned at the suggestion, and dared him to the combat: and after a good deal of boastful altercation, which the turmoil of my spirits prevented me from remembering, my brother was compelled to draw his sword and stand on the defensive. It was a desperate and terrible engagement. I at first thought that the royal stranger and great champion of the faith would overcome his opponent with ease, for I considered Heaven as on his side, and nothing but the arm of sinful flesh against him. But I was deceived: the sinner stood firm as a rock, while the assailant flitted about like a shadow, or rather like a spirit. I smiled inwardly, conceiving that these lightsome manœuvres were all a sham to show off his art and mastership in the exercise, and that whenever they came to close fairly, that instant my brother would be overcome. Still I was deceived: my brother's arm seemed invincible, so that the closer they fought the more palpably did it prevail. They fought round the green to the very edge of the water, and so round, till they came close up to the covert where I stood. There being no more room to shift ground, my brother then forced him to come to close quarters, on which, the former still having the decided advantage, my friend quitted his sword, and called out. I could resist no longer; so, springing from my concealment, I rushed between them with my sword drawn, and parted them as if they had been two school-boys; then turning to my brother, I addressed him as follows:—"Wretch! miscreant! knowest thou what thou art attempting? Turn thee to me, that I may chastise thee for all thy wickedness, and not for the many injuries thou hast done to me!" To it we went, with full thirst of vengeance on every side. The duel was fierce; but the might of Heaven prevailed, and not my might. The ungodly and reprobate young man fell, covered with wounds, and with curses and blasphemy in his mouth, while I escaped uninjured. Thereto his power extended not.

I will not deny, that my own immediate impressions of this affair in some degree differed from this statement. But this is precisely as my illustrious friend described it to me afterwards, and I can rely implicitly on his information, as he was at that time a looker-on, and my senses all in a state of agitation, and he could have no motive for saying what was not the positive truth.

Never till my brother was down did we perceive that there had been witnesses to the whole business. Our ears were then astounded by rude challenges of unfair play, which were quite appalling to me; but my friend laughed at them, and conducted me off in perfect safety. As to the unfairness of the transaction, I can say thus much, that my royal friend's sword was down ere ever mine was presented. But if it still be accounted unfair to take up a conqueror, and punish him in his own way, I answer: that if a man is sent on a positive mission by his master, and hath laid himself under vows to do his work, he ought not to be too nice in the means of accomplishing it.

I was greatly disturbed in my mind for many days, knowing that the transaction had been witnessed, and sensible also of the perilous situation I occupied, owing to the late judgment of the court against me. But, on the contrary, I never saw my enlightened friend in such high spirits. He assured me there was no danger; and again repeated, that he warranted my life against the power of man. I thought proper, however, to remain in hiding for a week; but as he said, to my utter amazement, the blame fell on another, who was not only accused, but pronounced guilty by the general voice, and outlawed for non-appearance! how could I doubt, after this, that the hand of Heaven was aiding and abetting me? The matter was beyond my comprehension; and as for my friend, he never explained anything that was past, but his activity and art were without a parallel.

He enjoyed our success mightily; and for his sake I enjoyed it somewhat, but it was on account of his comfort only, for I could not for my life perceive in what degree the church was better or purer than before these deeds were done. He continued to flatter me with great things, as to honours, fame, and emolument: and above all, with the blessing and protection of him to whom my soul and body were dedicated. But after these high promises, I got no longer peace; for he began to urge the death of my father with such an unremitting earnestness, that I found I had nothing for it but to comply. I did so; and cannot express his enthusiasm of approbation. So much did he hurry and press me in this, that I was forced to devise some of the most openly violent measures, having no alternative. Heaven spared me the deed, taking, in that instance, the vengeance in its own hand; for before my arm could effect the sanguine but meritorious act, the old man followed his son to the grave. My illustrious and zealous friend seemed to regret this somewhat; but he comforted himself with the reflection, that still I had the merit of it, having not only consented to it, but in fact effected it, for by doing the one action I had brought about both.

No sooner were the obsequies of the funeral over, than my friend and I went to Dalcastle, and took undisputed possession of the houses, lands, and effects that had been my father's; but his plate, and vast treasures of ready money, he had bestowed on a voluptuous and unworthy creature who had lived long with him as a mistress. Fain would I have sent her after her lover, and gave my friend some hints on the occasion; but he only shook his head, and said that we must lay all selfish and interested motives out of the question.

For a long time when I awaked in the morning, I could not believe my senses, that I was indeed the undisputed and sole proprietor of so much wealth and grandeur; and I felt so much gratified, that I immediately set about doing all the good I was able, hoping to meet with all approbation and encouragement from my friend. I was mistaken. He checked the very first impulses towards such a procedure, questioned my motives, and uniformly made them out to be wrong. There was one morning that a servant said to me, there was a lady in the back chamber who wanted to speak with me, but he could not tell me who it was, for all the old servants had left the mansion, every one on hearing of the death of the late laird, and those who had come knew none of the people in the neighbourhood. From several circumstances I had suspicions of private confabulations with women, and refused to go to her, but bid the servant inquire what she wanted. She would not tell; she could only state the circumstance to me; so I, being sensible that a little dignity of manner became me in my elevated situation, returned for answer, that if it was business that could not be transacted by my steward, it must remain untransacted. The answer which the servant brought back was of a threatening nature. She stated that she must see me, and if I refused her satisfaction there, she would compel it where I should not evite her.

My friend and director appeared pleased with my dilemma, and rather advised that I should hear what the woman had to say; on which I consented, provided she would deliver her mission in his presence. She came in with manifest signs of anger and indignation, and began with a bold and direct charge against me of a shameful assault on one of her daughters; of having used the basest of means in order to lead her aside from the paths of rectitude; and on the failure of these, of having resorted to the most unqualified measures.

I denied the charge in all its bearings, assuring the dame that I had never so much as seen either of her daughters to my knowledge, far less wronged them; on which she got into great wrath, and abused me to my face as an accomplished vagabond, hypocrite, and sensualist; and she went so far as to tell me roundly, that if I did not marry her daughter, she would bring me to the gallows, and that in a very short time.

"Marry your daughter, honest woman!" said I; "on the faith of a Christian, I never saw your daughter; and you may rest assured in this, that I will neither marry you nor her. Do you consider

how short a time I have been in this place? How much that time has been occupied? And how there was even a possibility that I could have accomplished such villanies?"

"And how long does your Christian reverence suppose you have remained in this place since the late laird's death?" said she.

"That is too well known to need recapitulation," said I; "only a very few days, though I cannot at present specify the exact number; perhaps from thirty to forty, or so. But in all that time, certes, I have never seen either you or any of your two daughters that you talk of. You must be quite sensible of that."

My friend shook his head three times during this short sentence, while the woman held up her hands in amazement and disgust, exclaiming, "There goes the self-righteous one? There goes the consecrated youth who cannot err! You, sir, know, and the world shall know of the faith that is in this most just, devout, and religious miscreant! Can you deny that you have already been in this place four months and seven days? Or that in that time you have been forbid my house twenty times? Or that you have persevered in your endeavours to effect the basest and most ungenerous of purposes? Or that you *have* attained them, hypocrite and deceiver as you are? Yes, sir; I say, dare you deny that you *have* attained your vile, selfish, and degrading purposes towards a young, innocent, and unsuspecting creature, and thereby ruined a poor widow's only hope in this world? No, you cannot look in my face, and deny aught of this."

"The woman is raving mad!" said I. "You, illustrious sir, know that in the first instance, I have not yet been in this place *one* month." My friend shook his head again, and answered me, "You are wrong, my dear friend; you are wrong. It is indeed the space of time that the lady hath stated, to a day, since you came here, and I came with you; and I am sorry that I know for certain that you have been frequently haunting her house, and have often had private correspondence with one of the young ladies too. Of the nature of it I presume not to know."

"You are mocking me," said I. "But as well may you try to reason me out of my existence, as to convince me that I have been here even one month, or that any of those things you allege against me has the shadow of truth or evidence to support it. I will swear to you by——"

"Hold, you most abandoned profligate!" cried she violently, "and do not add perjury to your other detestable crimes. But tell me what reparation you propose offering to my injured child."

"I again declare, before Heaven, woman, that to the best of my knowledge and recollection, I never saw your daughter. I now think I have some faint recollection of having seen your face, but where, or in what place, puzzles me quite."

"And why?" said she. "Because for months and days you have been in such a state of extreme inebriety that your time has gone over like a dream that has been forgotten. I believe, that from the day you came first to my house you have been in a state of utter delirium, and that principally from the fumes of wine and ardent spirits."

"It is a manifest falsehood!" said I; "I have never, since I entered on the possession of Dalcastle, tasted wine or spirits, saving once, a few evenings ago; and I confess to my shame that I was led too far; but I have craved forgiveness and obtained it. I take my noble and distinguished friend there for a witness to the truth of what I assert; a man who has done more, and sacrified more for the sake of genuine Christianity, than any this world contains. Him you will believe."

"I hope you have attained forgiveness," said he, seriously. "Indeed it would be next to blasphemy to doubt it. But, of late, you have been very much addicted to intemperance. I doubt if, from the first night you tasted the delights of drunkenness, that you have ever again been in your right mind until Monday last. Doubtless you have been for a good while most diligent in your addresses to this lady's daughter."

"This is unaccountable," said I. "It is impossible that I can have been doing a thing and not doing it at the same time. But indeed, honest woman, there have several incidents occurred to me in the course of my life which persuade me I have a second self; or that there is some other being who appears in my likeness."

Here my friend interrupted me with a sneer, and a hint that I was talking insanely; and then he added, turning to the lady, "I know my friend Mr. Colwan will do what is just and right. Go and bring the young lady to him that he may see her, and he will then recollect all his former amours with her."

"I humbly beg your pardon, sir," said I. "But the mention of such a thing as *amours* with any woman existing, to me, is really so absurd, so far from my principles, so far from the purity of nature and frame to which I was born and consecrated, that I hold it as an insult, and regard it with contempt."

I would have said more in reprobation of such an idea had not my servant entered, and said that a gentleman wanted to see me on business. Being glad of an opportunity of getting quit of my lady visitor, I ordered the servant to show him in: and forthwith a little lean gentleman, with a long aquiline nose, and a bald head, daubed all over with powder and pomatum, entered. I thought I recollected having seen him too, but could not remember his name, though he spoke to me with the greatest familiarity, at least that sort of familiarity that an official person generally assumes. He bustled about and about, speaking to every one, but declined listening for a single moment to any. The lady offered to withdraw, but he stopped her.

"No, no, Mrs. Keeler, you need not go; you need not go; you *must* not go, madam. The business I came about concerns you—yes, that it does—bad business yon of Walker's? Eh? Could not help it—did all I could, Mr. Wringhim. Done your business. Have it all cut and dry here, sir—No, this is not it—Have it among them though,—I'm at a little loss for your name sir (addressing my friend)—seen you very often, though—exceedingly often—quite well acquainted with you."

"No, sir, you are not," said my friend, sternly.—The intruder never regarded him; never so much as lifted his eyes from his bundle of law papers, among which he was bustling with great hurry and importance, but went on—

"*Im*possible! Have seen a face very like it, then—what did you say your name was, sir?—very like it indeed. Is it not the young laird who was murdered whom you resemble so much?"

Here Mrs. Keeler uttered a scream, which so much startled me, that it seems I grew pale. And on looking at my friend's face there was something struck me so forcibly in the likeness between him and my late brother, that I had very nearly fainted. The woman exclaimed that it was my brother's spirit that stood beside me.

"Im*possible*?" exclaimed the attorney; "at least I hope not, else his signature is not worth a pin. There is some balance due on yon business, madam. Do you wish your account? because I have it here, ready discharged, and it does not suit letting such things lie over. This business of Mr. Colwan's will be a severe one on you, madam,—*ra*ther a severe one."

"What business of mine, if it be your will, sir," said I. "For my part I never engaged you in business of any sort, less or more." He never regarded me, but went on. "You may appeal, though: Yes, yes, there are such things as appeals for the refractory. Here it is, gentlemen—here they are altogether—here is, in the first place, sir, your power of attorney, regularly warranted, sealed, and signed with your own hand."

"I declare solemnly that I never signed that document," said I.

"Ay, ay, the system of denial is not a bad one in general," said my attorney; "but at present there is no occasion for it. You do not deny your own hand!"

"I deny everything connected with the business," cried I; "I disclaim it *in toto*, and declare that I know no more about it than the child unborn."

"That is exceedingly good!" exclaimed he; "I like your pertinacity vastly! I have three of your letters, and three of your signatures; that part is all settled, and I hope so is the whole affair; for here is the original grant to your father, which he has never thought proper to put in requisition. Simple gentleman! But here have I, Lawyer Linkum, in one hundredth part of the time that any other notary, writer, attorney, or writer to the signet in Britain, would have done it, procured the signature of his majesty's commissioner, and thereby confirmed the charter to you and your house, sir, for ever and ever—begging your pardon, madam." The lady, as well as myself, tried several times to interrupt the loquacity of Linkum, but in vain: he only raised his hand with a quick flourish, and went on:—

"Here it is:—'James, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, to his right trusty cousin, sendeth greeting: And whereas his right leal and trust-worthy cousin, George Colwan of Dalcastle and Balgrennan, hath suffered great losses, and undergone much hardship, on behalf of his majesty's rights and titles; he therefore, for himself, and as prince and steward of Scotland, and by the consent of his right trusty cousins and councillors, hereby grants to the said George Colwan, his heirs and assignees whatsomever, heritably and irrevocably, all and haill the lands and others underwritten: *To wit*, All and haill, the five merk land of Kipplerig; the five pound land of Easter Knockward, with all the towers, fortalices, manor-places, houses, biggings, yards, orchards, tofts, crofts, mills, woods, fishings, mosses, muirs, meadows, commonties, pasturages, coals, coal-heughs, tenants, tenantries, services of free tenants, annexes, connexes, dependencies, parts, pendicles, and pertinents of the same whatsomever; to be peaceably brooked, joysed, set, used, and disposed of by him and his aboves, as specified, heritably and irrevocably, in all time coming: And, in testimony thereof, his majesty, for himself, and as prince and steward of Scotland, with the advice and consent of his foresaids, knowledge, proper motive, and kingly power, makes, erects, creates, unites, annexes, and incorporates, the whole lands above mentioned in an haill and free barony, by all the rights, miethes, and marches thereof, old and divided, as the same lies, in length and breadth, in houses, biggings, mills, multures, hawking, hunting, fishing; with court, plaint herezeld, fock, fork, sack, sock, thole, thame, vert, wraik, waith, wair, venision, outfang thief, infang thief, pit and gallows, and all and sundry other commodities. Given at our court of Whitehall, &c. &c. God save the King.

'*Compositio* 5 *lib.* 13. 8.
'Registrate 26th Septemper, 1687.'

"See, madam, here are ten signatures of privy councillors of that year, and here are other ten of the present year, with his grace the Duke of Queensberry at the head.' All right;—see here it is, sir—all right—done your work. So you see, madam, this gentleman is the true and sole heritor of all the land that your father possesses, with all the rents thereof for the last twenty years, and upwards.—Fine job for my employers!—sorry on your account, madam; can't help it."

I was again going to disclaim all interest or con-

nection in the matter, but my friend stopped me; and the plaints and lamentations of the dame became so overpowering, that they put an end to all further colloquy; but Lawyer Linkum followed me, and stated his great outlay, and the important services he had rendered me, until I was obliged to subscribe an order to him for £100 on my banker.

I was now glad to retire with my friend, and ask seriously for some explanation of all this. It was in the highest degree unsatisfactory. He confirmed all that had been stated to me, assuring me that I had not only been assiduous in my endeavours to seduce a young lady of great beauty, which it seemed I had effected, but that I had taken counsel, and got this supposed old, false, and forged grant raked up and new signed, to ruin the young lady's family quite, so as to throw her entirely on myself for protection, and be wholly at my will.

This was to me wholly incomprehensible. I could have freely made oath to the contrary of every particular. Yet the evidences were against me, and of a nature not to be denied. Here I must confess, that highly as I disapproved of the love of women, and all intimacies and connections with the sex, I felt a sort of indefinite pleasure, an ungracious delight in having a beautiful woman solely at my disposal. But I thought of her spiritual good in the meantime. My friend spoke of my backslidings with concern; requesting me to make sure of my forgiveness, and to forsake them; and then he added some words of sweet comfort. But from this time forth I began to be sick at times of my existence. I had heart-burnings, longings, and yearnings that would not be satisfied; and I seemed hardly to be an accountable creature; being thus in the habit of executing transactions of the utmost moment, without being sensible that I did them. I was a being incomprehensible to myself. Either I had a second self who transacted business in my likeness, or else my body was at times possessed by a spirit over which it had no control, and of whose actions my own soul was wholly unconscious. This was an anomaly not to be accounted for by any philosophy of mine; and I was many times, in contemplating it, excited to terrors and mental torments hardly describable. To be in a state of consciousness and unconsciousness at the same time, in the same body and same spirit, was impossible. I was under the greatest anxiety, dreading some change would take place momently in my nature; for of dates I could make nothing; one-half or two-thirds of my time seemed to me to be totally lost. I often, about this time, prayed with great fervour, and lamented my hopeless condition, especially in being liable to the commission of crimes which I was not sensible of, and could not eschew. And I confess, notwithstanding the promises on which I had been taught to rely, I began to have secret terrors that the great enemy of man's salvation was exercising powers over me that might eventually lead to my ruin. These were but temporary and sinful fears, but they added greatly to my unhappiness.

The worst thing of all was, what hitherto I had never felt, and as yet durst not confess to myself, that the presence of my illustrious and devoted friend was becoming irksome to me. When I was by myself I breathed freer, and my step was lighter; but when he approached a pang went to my heart, and in his company I moved and acted as if under a load that I could hardly endure. What a state to be in! And yet to shake him off was impossible. we were incorporated together—identified with one another, as it were, and the power was not in me to separate myself from him. I still knew nothing who he was, further than that he was a potentate of some foreign land, bent on establishing some pure and genuine doctrines of Christianity, hitherto only half understood, and less than half exercised. Of this I could have no doubts, after all that he had said, done, and suffered in the cause. But along with this, I was also certain that he was possessed of some supernatural power, of the source of which I was wholly ignorant. That a man could be a Christian, and at the same time a powerful necromancer, appeared inconsistent, and adverse to every principle taught in our church; and from this I was led to believe that he inherited his powers from on high, for I could not doubt either of the soundness of his principles, or that he accomplished things impossible to account for.

Thus was I sojourning in the midst of a chaos of confusion. I looked back on my bypast life with pain, as one looks back on a perilous journey, in which he has attained his end, without gaining any advantage either to himself or others; and I looked forward as on a darksome waste, full of repulsive and terrific shapes, pitfalls, and precipices, to which there was no definite bourne, and from which I turned with disgust. With my riches, my unhappiness was increased tenfold; and here, with another great acquisition of property, for which I had carried on a plea, and which I had gained in a dream, my miseries and difficulties were increasing. My principal feeling about this time was an insatiable longing for something that I cannot describe or denominate properly, unless I say it was for *utter oblivion* that I longed. I desired to sleep; but it was with a deeper and longer sleep than that in which the senses were nightly steeped. I longed to be at rest and quiet, and to close my eyes on the past and the future alike, as far as this frail life was concerned. But what had been formerly and finally settled in the counsels above, I presumed not to call in question.

In this state of irritation and misery was I dragging on an existence, disgusted with all around me, and in particular with my mother, who, with all her love and anxiety, had such an insufferable mode of manifesting them, that she had by this time rendered herself exceedingly obnoxious to me. The

very sound of her voice at a distance went to my heart like an arrow, and made all my nerves to shrink; and as for the beautiful young lady of whom they told me I had been so much enamoured, I shunned all intercourse with her or hers. I read some of their letters and burned them, but refused to see either the young lady or her mother on any account.

About this time it was that my worthy and reverend parent came with one of his elders to see my mother and myself. His presence always brought joy with it into our family, for my mother was uplifted, and I had so few who cared for me, or for whom I cared, that I felt rather gratified at seeing him. My illustrious friend was also much more attached to him than any other person (except myself), for their religious principles tallied in every point, and their conversation was interesting, serious, and sublime. Being anxious to entertain well and highly the man to whom I had been so much indebted, and knowing that with all his integrity and righteousness, he disdained not the good things of this life, I brought from the late laird's well-stored cellars various fragrant and salubrious wines, and we drank and became merry, and I found that my miseries and overpowering calamities passed away over my head like a shower that is driven by the wind. I became elevated and happy, and welcomed my guests an hundred times; and then I joined them in religious conversation, with a zeal and enthusiasm which I had not often experienced, and which made all their hearts rejoice, so that I said to myself, "Surely every gift of God is a blessing, and ought to be used with liberality and thankfulness."

The next day I waked from a profound and feverish sleep, and called for something to drink. There was a servant answered whom I had never seen before, and he was clad in my servant's clothes and livery. I asked for Andrew Handyside, the servant who had waited at table the night before; but the man answered with a stare and a smile.

"What do you mean, sirrah," said I. "Pray what do you here? or what are you pleased to laugh at? I desire you to go about your business, and send me up Handyside. I want him to bring me something to drink."

"Ye sanna want a drink, maister," said the fellow: "Tak a hearty ane, and see if it will wauken ye up something, sae that ye dinna ca' for ghaists through your sleep. Surely ye haena forgotten that Andrew Handyside has been in his grave these six months?"

This was a stunning blow to me. I could not answer further, but sunk back on my pillow as if I had been a lump of lead, refusing to take a drink or anything else at the fellow's hand, who seemed thus mocking me with so grave a face. The man seemed sorry and grieved at my being offended, but I ordered him away, and continued sullen and thoughtful. Could I have again been for a season in utter oblivion to myself, and transacting business which I neither approved of nor had any connection with! I tried to recollect something in which I might have been engaged, but nothing was portrayed on my mind subsequent to the parting with my friends at a late hour the evening before. The evening before it certainly was; but if so, how came it that Andrew Handyside, who served at table that evening, should have been in his grave six months! This was a circumstance somewhat equivocal; therefore, being afraid to arise lest accusations of I knew not what might come against me, I was obliged to call once more, in order to come at what intelligence I could. The same fellow appeared to receive my orders as before, and I set about examining him with regard to particulars. He told me his name was Scrape; that I hired him myself; of whom I hired him; and at whose recommendation. I smiled, and nodded so as to let the knave see I understood he was telling me a chain of falsehoods, but did not choose to begin with any violent asseverations to the contrary.

"And where is my noble friend and companion?" said I. "How has he been engaged in the interim?"

"I dinna ken him, sir," said Scrape; "but have heard it said that the strange mysterious person that attended you, him that the maist part of folks countit uncanny, had gane awa wi' a Mr. Ringan o' Glasgow last year, and had never returned."

I was pleased in my heart at this intelligence, hoping that the illustrious stranger had returned to his own land and people, and that I should thenceforth be rid of his controlling and appalling presence. "And where is my mother?" said I.—The man's breath was cut short, and he looked at me without returning any answer—"I ask you where my mother is?" said I.

"God only knows, and not I, where she is," returned he. "He knows where her soul is, and as for her body, if you dinna ken something o' it, I suppose nae man alive does."

"What do you mean, you knave!" said I, "what dark hints are these you are throwing out? Tell me precisely and distinctly what you know of my mother."

"It is unco queer o' ye to forget, or pretend to forget everything that gate the day, sir," said he. "I'm sure you heard enough about it yestreen; an' I can tell you, there are some gayan ill-faured stories gaun about that business. But as the thing is to be tried afore the circuit lords, it wad be far wrang to say either this or that to influence the public mind, it is best just to let justice tak its swee. I hae naething to say, sir. Ye hae been a good enough maister to me, and paid my wages regularly, but ye hae muckle need to be innocent, for there are some heavy accusations rising against you."

"I fear no accusations of man," said I, "as long as I can justify my cause in the sight of Heaven; and that I can do this I am well aware. Go you

and bring me some wine and water, and some other clothes than these gaudy and glaring ones."

I took a cup of wine and water; put on my black clothes and walked out. For all the perplexity that surrounded me, I felt my spirits considerably buoyant. It appeared that I was rid of the two greatest bars to my happiness, by what agency I knew not. My mother, it seemed, was gone, who had become a grievous thorn in my side of late, and my great companion and counsellor, who tyrannized over every spontaneous movement of my heart, had likewise taken himself off. This last was an unspeakable relief; for I found that for a long season I had only been able to act by the motions of his mysterious mind and spirit. I therefore strode through my woods with a daring and heroic step; with independence in my eye, and freedom swinging in my right hand.

At the extremity of the Colwan wood, I perceived a figure approaching me with slow and dignified motion. The moment that I beheld it, my whole frame received a shock as if the ground on which I walked had sunk suddenly below me. Yet, at that moment, I knew not who it was; it was the air and motion of some one that I dreaded, and from whom I would gladly have escaped; but this I even had not power to attempt. It came slowly onward and I advanced as slowly to meet it; yet when we came within speech I still knew not who it was. It bore the figure, air, and features of my late brother, I thought, exactly; yet in all these there were traits so forbidding, so mixed with an appearance of misery, chagrin, and despair, that I still shrunk from the view, not knowing on whose face I looked. But when the being spoke, both my mental and bodily frame received another shock more terrible than the first, for it was the voice of the great personage I had so long denominated my friend, of whom I had deemed myself for ever freed, and whose presence and counsels I now dreaded. It was his voice, but so altered—I shall never forget it till my dying day. Nay, I can scarce conceive it possible that any earthly sounds could be so discordant, so repulsive to every feeling of a human soul, as the tones of the voice that grated on my ear at that moment. They were the sounds of the pit, wheezed through a grated cranny, or seemed so to my distempered imagination.

"So! Thou shudderest at my approach now, dost thou?" said he; is this all the gratitude that you deign for an attachment of which the annals of the world furnish no parallel? An attachment which has caused me to forego power and dominion, might, homage, conquest and adulation, all that I might gain one highly valued and sanctified spirit to my great and true principles of reformation among mankind. Wherein have I offended? What have I done for evil, or what have I not done for your good, that you would thus shun my presence?"

"Great and magnificent prince," said I humbly, "let me request of you to abandon a poor worthless wight to his own wayward fortune, and return to the dominion of your people. I am unworthy of the sacrifices you have made for my sake; and after all your efforts, I do not feel that you have rendered me either more virtuous or more happy. For the sake of that which is estimable in human nature depart from me to your own home, before you render me a being altogether above or below the rest of my fellow-creatures. Let me plod on towards heaven and happiness in my own way, like those that have gone before me, and I promise to stick fast by the great principles which you have so strenuously inculcated, on condition that you depart and leave me for ever."

"Sooner shall you make the mother abandon the child of her bosom; nay, sooner cause the shadow to relinquish the substance, than separate me from your side. Our beings are amalgamated as it were, and consociated in one, and never shall I depart from this country until I can carry you in triumph with me."

I can in nowise describe the effect this appalling speech had on me. It was like the announcement of death to one who had of late deemed himself free, if not of something worse than death, and of longer continuance. There was I doomed to remain in misery, subjugated, soul and body, to one whose presence was become more intolerable to me than aught on earth could compensate. And at that moment, when he beheld the anguish of my soul, he could not conceal that he enjoyed it. I was troubled for an answer, for which he was waiting: it became incumbent on me to say something after such a protestation of attachment; and, in some degree to shake the validity of it, I asked with great simplicity where he had been all this while?

"Your crimes and your extravagances forced me from your side for a season," said he; "but now that I hope the day of grace is returned, I am again drawn towards you by an affection that has neither bounds nor interest; an affection for which I receive not even the poor return of gratitude, and which seems to have its radical sources in fascination. I have been far, far abroad, and have seen much and transacted much, since I last spoke with you. During that space, I grievously suspect that you have been guilty of great crimes and misdemeanours; but as I knew it to be only a temporary falling off, I closed my eyes on the wilful debasement of your principles, knowing that in good time you would come to your senses."

"What crimes?" said I; "what misdemeanours and transgressions do you talk about? For my part, I am conscious of none, and am utterly amazed at insinuations which I do not comprehend."

"You have certainly been left to yourself for a season," returned he, "having gone on rather like a person in a delirium than a Christian in his sober senses. You are accused of having made away with your mother privately; as also of the death of a beautiful young lady, whose affections you had seduced."

"It is an intolerable and monstrous falsehood!" cried I, interrupting him; "I never laid a hand on a woman to take away her life, and have even shunned their society from my childhood; I know nothing of my mother's exit, nor of that young lady's whom you mention—nothing whatever."

"I hope it is so," said he. "But it seems there are some strong presumptive proofs against you, and I came to warn you this day that a precognition is in progress, and that unless you are perfectly convinced, not only of your innocence, but of your ability to prove it, it will be the safest course for you to abscond, and let the trial go on without you."

"Never shall it be said that I shrank from such a trial as this," said I. "It would give grounds for suspicions of guilt that never had existence, even in thought. I will go and show myself in every public place, that no slanderous tongue may wag against me. I have shed the blood of sinners, but of these deaths I am guiltless; therefore I will face every tribunal, and put all my accusers down."

"Asseverations will avail you but little," answered he, composedly: "it is however justifiable in its place, although to me it signifies nothing, who know too well that you did commit both crimes, in your own person, and with your own hands. Far be it from me to betray you; indeed, I would rather endeavour to palliate the offences."

"If this that you tell me be true," said I, "then is it as true that I have two souls, which take possession of my bodily frame by turns, the one being all unconscious of what the other performs; for as sure as I have at this moment a spirit within me, so sure am I utterly ignorant of the crimes you now lay to my charge."

"Your supposition may be true in effect," said he; "we are all subjected to two distinct natures in the same person. I myself have suffered grievously in that way. The spirit that now directs my energies is not that with which I was endowed at my creation. It is changed within me, and so is my whole nature. My former days were those of grandeur and felicity. But, would you believe it? *I was not then a Christian.* Now I am. I have been converted to its truths by passing through the fire, and since my final conversion, my misery has been extreme. You complain that I have not been able to render you more happy than you were. Alas! do you expect it in the difficult and exterminating career which you have begun? I, however, promise you this—a portion of the only happiness which I enjoy, sublime in its motions, and splendid in its attainments—I will place you on the right hand of my throne, and show you the grandeur of my domains, and the felicity of my millions of true professors."

I was once more humbled before this mighty potentate, and promised to be ruled wholly by his directions, although at that moment my nature shrank from the concession, and my soul longed rather to be inclosed in the depths of the sea, or involved once more in utter oblivion. I was like Daniel in the den of lions, without his faith in divine support, and wholly at their mercy. I felt as one round whose body a deadly snake is twisted, which continues to hold him in its fangs, without injuring him, further than in moving its scaly infernal folds with exulting delight, to let its victim feel to whose power he has subjected himself; and thus did I for a space drag an existence from day to day, in utter weariness and helplessness; at one time worshipping with great fervour of spirit, and at other times so wholly left to myself as to work all manner of vices and follies with greediness. In these my enlightened friend never accompanied me, but I always observed that he was the first to lead me to every one of them, and then leave me in the lurch.

But of all my troubles this was the chief; I was every day and every hour assailed with accusations of deeds of which I was wholly ignorant; of acts of cruelty, injustice, defamation, and deceit; of pieces of business which I could not be made to comprehend; with law-suits, details, arrestments of judgment, and a thousand interminable quibbles from the mouth of my loquacious and conceited attorney. So miserable was my life rendered by these continued attacks, that I was often obliged to lock myself up for days together, never seeing any person save my man Samuel Scrape, who was a very honest blunt fellow, a stanch Cameronian, but withal very little conversant in religious matters. He said he came from a place called Penpunt, which I thought a name so ludicrous, that I called him by the name of his native village, an appellation of which he was very proud, and answered everything with more civility and perspicuity when I denominated him Penpunt, than Samuel, his own Christian name. Of this peasant was I obliged to make a companion on sundry occasions, and strange indeed were the details which he gave me concerning myself, and the ideas of the country people concerning me. I took down a few of these in writing, to put off the time, and here leave them on record to show how the best and greatest actions are misconstrued among sinful and ignorant men.

"You say, Samuel, that I hired you myself—that I have been a good enough master to you, and have paid you your weekly wages punctually. Now, how is it that you say this, knowing, as you do, that I never hired you, and never paid you a sixpence of wages in the whole course of my life, excepting this last month?"

"Ye may as weel say, master, that water's no water, or that stanes are no stanes. But that's just your gate, an' it is a great pity aye to do a thing an' profess the clean contrair. Weel then, since you havena paid me ony wages, an' I can prove day and date when I was hired, an' came hame to your service, will you be sae kind as to pay me now?

That's the best way o' curing a man o' the mortal disease o' leasing-making that I ken o'."

"I should think that Penpunt and Cameronian principles would not admit of a man taking twice payment for the same article."

"In sic a case as this, sir, it diana hinge upon principles, but a piece o' good manners; as I canna bide to make you out a lecar, I'll thank you for my wages."

"Well you shall have them, Samuel, if you declare to me that I hired you myself in this same person, and bargained with you with this same tongue and voice with which I speak to you just now?"

"That I do declare, unless ye hae twa persons o' the same appearance, and twa tongues to the same voice, but 'od saif us, sir, do you ken what the auld wives o' the clachan say about you?"

"How should I, when no one repeats it to me?"

"Oo, I trow it's a' stuff;—folk shouldna heed what's said by auld crazy kimmers. But there are some o' them weel kend for witches too; an' they say, Lord have a care o' us!—they say the deil's often seen gaun sidie for sidie w'ye, whiles in ae shape an' whiles in anither. An' they say that he whiles takes your ain shape, or else enters into you, and then you turn deil yoursel."

I was so astounded at this terrible idea that had gone abroad, regarding my fellowship with the prince of darkness, that I could make no answer to the fellow's information, but sat like one in a stupor; and if it had not been for my well-founded faith, I should at that moment have given into the popular belief, and fallen into the sin of despondency; but I was preserved from such a fatal error by an inward and unseen supporter. Still the insinuation was so like what I felt myself, that I was greatly awed and confounded.

The poor fellow observed this, and tried to do away the impression by some further sage remarks of his own.

"Hout, dear sir, it is balderdash, there's nae doubt o't. It is the crownhead o' absurdity to tak in the havers o' auld wives for gospel. I told them that my master was a pecous man, an' a sensible man; an' for praying, that he could ding auld Macmillan himsel. 'Sae could the deil,' they said, 'when he liket, either at preaching or praying, if these war to answer his ain ends.' 'Na, na,' says I, 'but he's a strick believer in a' the truths o' Christianity, my master.' They said, sae was Satan, for that he was the firmest believer in a' the truths of Christianity that was out o' heaven; an' that, sin' the Revolution, that the gospel had turned sae rife, he had been often driven to the shift o' preaching it himsel, for the purpose o' getting some wrang tenets introduced into it, and thereby turning it into blasphemy and ridicule."

I confess to my shame, that I was so overcome by this jumble of nonsense, that a chillness came over me, and in spite of all my efforts to shake off the impression it had made, I fell into a faint. Samuel soon brought me to myself, and after a deep draught of wine and water, I was greatly revived, and felt my spirit rise above the sphere of vulgar conceptions. The shrewd but loquacious fellow perceiving this, tried to make some amends for the pain he had occasioned to me, by the following story, which I noted down, and which was brought on by a conversation to the following purport:—

"Now, Penpunt, you may tell me all that passed between you and the wives of the clachan. I am better of that stomach qualm, with which I am sometimes seized, and shall be much amused by hearing the sentiments of noted witches regarding myself and my connections."

"Weel, ye see, sir, I says to them, 'It will be lang afore the deil intermeddle wi' as serious a professor, and as fervent a prayer as my master, for gin he gets the haud o' sickan men, wha's to be safe!' An', what think ye they said, sir? There was nae Lucky Shaw set up her lang lantern chafts, an' answered me, an' a' the rest shanned and noddit in assent an' approbation: 'Ye silly, sauchless Cameronian cuif!' quo she, 'is that a' that ye ken about the wiles and doings o' the prince o' the air, that rules an' works in the bairns o' disobedience! Gin ever he observes a proud professor, wha has mae than ordinary pretensions to a divine calling, and that reads and prays till the very howlets learn his preambles, that's the man Auld Simmie fixes on to make a dishclout o'. He canna get rest if he sees a man, or a set of men o' this stamp, an' when he sets fairly to wark, it is seldom that he disna bring them round till his ain measures by hook or by crook. Then, O it is a grand prize for him, an' a proud deil he is, when he gangs hame to his ain ha', wi' a batch o' the souls o' sic strenuous professors on his back. Ay, I trow, auld Ingleby, the Liverpool packman, never came up Glasgow street wi' prouder pomp, when he had ten horse-lades afore him o' Flanders' lace, an' Hollin lawn, an' silks an' satins frae the eastern Indians, than Satan wad stroddge with a pack-lade o' the souls o' proud professors on his braid shoulders. Ha, ha, ha! I think I see how the auld thief wad be gaun through his gizzened dominions, crying his wares, in derision, 'wha will buy a fresh cauler divine, a bouxy bishop, a fasting zealot, or a piping priest? For a' their prayers an' their praises, their aumuses, an' their penances, their whinings, their howlings, their rantings, an' their ravings, here they come at last! Behold the end! Here go the rare and precious wares! A fat professor for a bodle, an' a lean ane for half a merk!' I declare, I tremble at the auld hag's ravings, but the lave o' the kimmers applauded the sayings as sacred truths. An' then Lucky went on: 'There are many wolves in sheep's claithing among us, my man; mony deils aneath the masks o' zealous professors roaming about in kirks and meeting-houses o' the land. An' whenever you are doubtfu' of a man,

take auld Robin Ruthven's plan, an' look for the cloven foot, for it's a thing that winna weel hide; an' it appears whiles where ane wadna think o't. It will keek out frae aneath the parson's gown, the lawyer's wig, and the Cameronian's blue bannet; but still there is a gouden rule whereby to detect it, an' that never, never fails.'—The auld witch didna gie me the rule, an' though I hae heard tell o't often an' often, shame fa' me an I ken what it is! But ye will ken it well, an' it wad be nae the waur of a trial on some o' your friends, maybe; for they say there's a certain gentleman seen walking wi' you whiles, that wherever he sets his foot, the grass withers as gin it war scoudered wi' a het ern. His presence be about us! What's the matter wi' you, master? Are ye gaun to take the calm o' the stamock again?"

The truth is, that the clown's absurd gossip made me sick at heart a second time. It was not because I though my illustrious friend was the devil, but it gave me a view of my own state, at which I shuddered, as indeed I now always did, when the image of my devoted friend and ruler presented itself to my mind. I often communed with my heart on this, and wondered how a connection that had the well-being of mankind solely in view could be productive of fruits so bitter. I then went to try my works by the Saviour's golden rule, as my servant had put it into my head to do; and, behold, not one of them would stand the test. I had shed blood on a ground on which I could not admit that any man had a right to shed mine; and I began to doubt the motives of my adviser once more, not that they were intentionally bad, but that his was some great mind led astray by enthusiasm, or some overpowering passion.

He seemed to comprehend every one of these motions of my heart, for his manner towards me altered every day. It first became anything but agreeable, then supercilious, and finally intolerable; so that I resolved to shake him off, cost what it would, even though I should be reduced to beg my bread in a foreign land. To do it at home was impossible, as he held my life in his hands, to sell it whenever he had a mind; and besides, his ascendency over me was as complete as that of a huntsman over his dogs. I was even so weak as, the next time I met with him, to look steadfastly at his foot, to see if it was cloven into two hoofs. It was the foot of a gentleman, in every respect, so far as appearances went, but the form of his counsels was somewhat equivocal, and if not double, they were amazingly crooked.

But, if I had taken my measures to abscond and flee from my native place, in order to free myself of this tormenting, intolerant, and bloody reformer, he had likewise taken his to expel me, or throw me into the hands of justice. It seems, that about this time, I was haunted by some spies connected with my late father and brother, of whom the mistress of the former was one. My brother's death had been witnessed by two individuals; indeed, I always had an impression that it was witnessed by more than one, having some faint recollection of hearing voices and challenges close beside me; and this woman had searched about until she found these people; but, as I shrewdly suspected, not without the assistance of the only person in my secret—my own warm and devoted friend. I say this, because I found that he had them concealed in the neighbourhood, and then took me again and again where I was fully exposed to their view, without being aware. One time in particular, on pretence of gratifying my revenge on that base woman, he knew so well where she lay concealed, that he led me to her, and left me to the mercy of two viragos, who had very nigh taken my life. My time of residence at Dalcastle was wearing to a crisis. I could no longer live with my tyrant, who haunted me like my shadow; and besides, it seems there were proofs of murder leading against me from all quarters. Of part of these I deemed myself quite free: but the world deemed otherwise; and how the matter would have ended, had the case undergone a judicial trial, I cannot say. It perhaps, however, behoves me here to relate all that I know of it, and it is simply this:—

On the first of June, 1712 (well may I remember the day), I was sitting locked in my secret chamber, in a state of the utmost despondency, revolving in my mind what I ought to do to be free of my persecutors, and wishing myself a worm, or a moth, that I might be crushed and at rest, when behold Samuel entered, with eyes like to start out of his head, exclaiming, "For God's sake, master, flee and hide yourself, for your mother's found; an' as sure as you're a living soul, the blame is gaun to fa' on you!"

"My mother found!" said I, "And pray, where has she been all this while?" In the meantime, I was terribly discomposed at the thoughts of her return.

"Been sir? been? Why she has been where ye pat her, it seems—lying buried in the sands o' the linn. I can tell you, ye will see her a frightsome figure, sic as I never wish to see again. An' the young lady is found too, sir: an' it is said the devil—I beg pardon sir, your friend, I mean—it is said your friend has made the discovery, an' the folk are away to raise officers, an' they will be here in an hour or two at the furthest, sir; an' sae you hae not a minute to lose, for there's proof, sir, strong proof, an' sworn proof, that you were last seen wi' them baith; sae, unless ye can gie a' the better an account o' baith yoursel an' them, either hide, or flee for your bare life."

"I will neither hide nor flee," said I; "for I am as guiltless of the blood of these women as the child unborn."

"The country diana think sae, master; an' I can assure you, that should evidence fail, you run a risk o' being torn limb frae limb. They are bringing the corpses here, to gar ye touch them baith afore witnesses, an' plenty o' witnesses there will be!"

"They shall not bring them here," cried I, shocked beyond measure at the experiment about to be made: "Go, instantly, and debar them from entering my gate with their bloated and mangled carcases."

"The body of your own mother, sir!" said the fellow emphatically. I was in terrible agitation; and, being driven to my wit's end, I got up and strode furiously round and round the room. Samuel wist not what to do, but I saw by his staring he deemed me doubly guilty. A tap came to the chamber door: we both started like guilty creatures; and as for Samuel, his hair stood all on end with alarm, so that when I motioned to him, he could scarcely advance to open the door. He did so at length, and who should enter but my illustrious friend, manifestly in the utmost state of alarm. The moment that Samuel admitted him, the former made his escape by the prince's side as he entered, seemingly in a state of distraction. I was little better, when I saw this dreaded personage enter my chamber, which he had never before attempted; and being unable to ask his errand, I suppose I stood and gazed on him like a statue.

"I come with sad and tormenting tidings to you, my beloved and ungrateful friend," said he; "but having only a minute left to save your life, I have come to attempt it. There is a mob coming towards you with two dead bodies, which will place you in circumstances disagreeable enough; but that is not the worst, for of that you may be able to clear yourself. At this moment there is a party of officers, with a justiciary warrant from Edinburgh, surrounding the house, and about to begin the search of it for you. If you fall into their hands, you are inevitably lost; for I have been making earnest inquiries, and find that everything is in train for your ruin."

"Ay, and who has been the cause of all this?" said I, with great bitterness. But he stopped me short, adding, "there is no time for such reflections at present: I gave you my word of honour that your life should be safe from the hand of man. So it shall, if the power remain with me to save it. I am come to redeem my pledge, and to save your life by the sacrifice of my own. Here—not one word of expostulation; change habits with me, and you may then pass by the officers, and guards, and even through the approaching mob, with the most perfect temerity. There is a virtue in this garb, and instead of offering to detain you, they shall pay you obeisance. Make haste, and leave this place for the present, fleeing where you best may, and if I escape from these dangers that surround me, I will endeavour to find you out, and bring you what intelligence I am able."

I put on his green frock-coat, buff belt, and a sort of a turban that he always wore on his head, somewhat resembling a bishop's mitre; he drew his hand thrice across my face, and I withdrew as he continued to urge me. My hall door and postern gate were both strongly guarded, and there were sundry armed people within, searching the closets; but all of them made way for me, and lifted their caps as I passed by them. Only one superior officer accosted me, asking if I had seen the culprit? I knew not what answer to make, but chanced to say, with great truth and propriety, "He is safe enough." The man beckoned with a smile, as much as to say, "Thank you, sir, that is quite sufficient;" and I walked deliberately away.

I had not well left the gate, till, hearing a great noise coming from the deep glen toward the east, I turned that way, deeming myself quite secure in this my new disguise, to see what it was, and if matters were as had been described to me. There I met a great mob, sure enough, coming with two dead bodies stretched on boards, and decently covered with white sheets. I would fain have examined their appearance, had I not perceived the apparent fury in the looks of the men, and judged from that how much more safe it was for me not to intermeddle in the affray. I cannot tell how it was, but I felt a strange and unwonted delight in viewing this scene, and a certain pride of heart in being supposed the perpetrator of the unnatural crimes laid to my charge. This was a feeling quite new to me; and if there were virtues in the robes of the illustrious foreigner, who had without all dispute preserved my life at this time; I say, if there was any inherent virtue in these robes of his, as he had suggested, this was one of their effects, that they turned my heart towards that which was evil, horrible, and disgustful.

I mixed with the mob to hear what they were saying. Every tongue was engaged in loading me with the most opprobrious epithets! One called me a monster of nature; another an incarnate devil; and another a creature made to be cursed in time and eternity. I retired from them, and winded my way southward, comforting myself with the assurance that so mankind had used and persecuted the greatest fathers and apostles of the Christian church, and that their vile opprobrium could not alter the counsels of Heaven concerning me.

On going over that rising ground called Doringtoa Moor, I could not help turning round and taking a look of Dalcastle. I had little doubt that it would be my last look, and nearly as little ambition that it should not. I thought how high my hopes of happiness and advancement had been on entering that mansion, and taking posession of its rich and extensive domains, and how miserably I had been disappointed. On the contrary, I had experienced nothing but chagrin, disgust, and terror; and I now consoled myself with the hope that I should henceforth shake myself free of the chains of my great tormentor, and for that privilege was I willing to encounter any earthly distress. I could not help perceiving, that I was now on a path which was likely to lead me into a species of distress hitherto unknown, and hardly dreamed of by me, and that was total destitution. For all the riches I had been

possessed of a few hours previous to this, I found that here I was turned out of my lordly possessions without a single merk, or the power of lifting and commanding the smallest sum, without being thereby discovered and seized. Had it been possible for me to have escaped in my own clothes, I had a considerable sum secreted in these, but by the sudden change, I was left without a coin for present necessity. But I had hope in heaven, knowing that the just man would not be left destitute; and that though many troubles surrounded him, he would at last be set free from them all. I was possessed of strong and brilliant parts, and a liberal education; and though I had somehow unaccountably suffered my theological qualifications to fall into desuetude, since my acquaintance with the ablest and most rigid of all theologians, I had nevertheless hopes that I should yet be enabled to benefit mankind in some country, and rise to high distinction.

These were some of the thoughts by which I consoled myself as I passed on my way southward, avoiding the towns and villages, and falling into the cross ways that led from each of the great roads passing east and west to another. I lodged the first night in the house of a country weaver, into which I stepped at a late hour, quite overcome with hunger and fatigue, having travelled not less than thirty miles from my late home. The man received me ungraciously, telling me of a gentleman's house at no great distance, and of an inn a little farther away; but I said I delighted more in the society of a man like him than that of any gentleman of the land, for my concerns were with the poor of this world, it being easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. The weaver's wife, who sat with a child on her knee, and had not hitherto opened her mouth, hearing me speak in that serious and religious style, stirred up the fire with her one hand; then drawing a chair near it, she said, "Come awa, honest lad, in by here; sin' it be sae that you belong to Him wha gies us a' that we hae, it is but right that you should share a part. You are a stranger it is true, but them that winna entertain a stranger will never entertain an angel unawares."

I never was apt to be taken with the simplicity of nature; in general I despised it; but, owing to my circumstances at the time, I was deeply affected by the manner of this poor woman's welcome. The weaver continued in a churlish mood throughout the evening, apparently dissatisfied with what his wife had done in entertaining me, and spoke to her in a manner so crusty that I thought proper to rebuke him, for the woman was comely in her person and virtuous in her conversation; but the weaver her husband was large of make, ill-favoured, and pestilent; therefore did I take him severely to task for the tenor of his conduct; but the man was froward, and answered me rudely, with sneering and derision, and, in the height of his caprice, he said to his wife, "Whan focks are sae keen of a chance o' entertaining angels, gudewife, it wad maybe be worth their while to tak tent what kind o' angels they are. It wadna wonder me vera muckle an ye had entertained your friend the deil the night, for I thought I fand a saur o' reek an' brimstane about him. *He's* nane o' the best o' angels, an' focks winna hae muckle credit by entertaining him."

Certainly, in the assured state I was in, I had as little reason to be alarmed at mention being made of the devil as any person on earth: of late, however, I felt that the reverse was the case, and that any allusion to my great enemy moved me exceedingly. The weaver's speech had such an effect on me, that both he and his wife were alarmed at my looks. The latter thought I was angry, and chided her husband gently for his rudeness; but the weaver himself rather seemed to be confirmed in his opinion that I was the devil, for he looked round like a startled roebuck, and immediately betook him to the family Bible.

I know not whether it was on purpose to prove my identity or not, but I think he was going to desire me either to read a certain portion of Scripture that he had sought out, or to make family worship, had not the conversation at that instant taken another turn; for the weaver, not knowing how to address me, abruptly asked my name, as he was about to put the Bible into my hands. Never having considered myself in the light of a malefactor, but rather as a champion in the cause of truth, and finding myself perfectly safe under my disguise, I had never once thought of the utility of changing my name, and when the man asked me, I hesitated; but being compelled to say something, I said my name was Cowan. The man stared at me, and then at his wife, with a look that spoke a knowledge of something alarming or mysterious.

"Ha! Cowan?" said he. "That's most extraordinar! Not Colwan, I hope?"

"No: Cowan is my surname," said I. "But why not Colwan, there being so little difference in the sound?"

"I was feared ye might be that wratch that the deil has taen the possession o', an' eggit him on to kill baith his father an' his mother, his only brother, an' his sweetheart," said he; "an' to say the truth, I'm no that sure about ye yet, for I see you're gaun wi' arms on ye."

"Not I, honest man," said I; "I carry no arms; a man conscious of his innocence and uprightness of heart needs not to carry arms in his defence now."

"Ay, ay, maister," said he; "an' pray what div ye ca' this bit windlestrae that's appearing here?" With that he pointed to something on the inside of the breast of my frock-coat. I looked at it, and there certainly was the gilded haft of a poniard, the same weapon I had seen and handled before, and which I knew my illustrious companion always carried about with him; but till that moment I knew not

that I was in possession of it. I drew it out; a more dangerous or insidious looking weapon could not be conceived. The weaver and his wife were both frightened, the latter in particular; and she being my friend, and I dependent on their hospitality for that night, I said, "I declare I knew not that I carried this small rapier, which has been in my coat by chance, and not by any design of mine. But lest you should think that I meditate any mischief to any under this roof, I give it into your hands, requesting of you to lock it by till to-morrow, or when I shall next want it."

The woman seemed rather glad to get hold of it; and taking it from me, she went into a kind of pantry out of my sight, and locked the weapon up; and then the discourse went on.

"There cannot be such a thing in reality," said I, "as the story you were mentioning just now, of a man whose name resembles mine."

"It's likely that you ken a wee better about the story than I do, maister," said he, "suppose you do leave the *l* out of your name. An' yet I think sic a wratch, an' a murderer, wad hae taen a name wi' some gritter difference in the sound. But the story is just that true, that there were twa o' the queen's officers here nae mair than an hour ago, in pursuit o' the vagabond, for they gat some intelligence that he had fled this gate; yet they said he had been last seen wi' black claes on, an' they supposed he was clad in black. His ain servant is wi' them, for the purpose o' kennin the scoundrel, an' they're galloping through the country like madmen. I hope they'll get him, an' rack his neck for him!"

I could not say *Amen* to the weaver's prayer, and therefore tried to compose myself as well as I could, and made some religious comment on the causes of the nation's depravity. But suspecting that my potent friend had betrayed my flight and disguise to save his life, I was very uneasy, and gave myself up for lost. I said prayers in the family, with the tenor of which the wife was delighted, but the weaver still dissatisfied; and, after a supper of the most homely fare, he tried to start an argument with me, proving that everything for which I had interceded in my prayer was irrelevant to man's present state. But I, being weary and distressed in mind, shunned the contest, and requested a couch whereon to repose.

I was conducted into the other end of the house, among looms, treadles, pirns, and confusion without end; and there, in a sort of box, was I shut up for my night's repose, for the weaver, as he left me, cautiously turned the key of my apartment, and left me to shift for myself among the looms, determined that I should escape from the house with nothing. After he and his wife and children were crowded into their den, I heard the two mates contending furiously about me in suppressed voices, the one maintaining the probability that I was the murderer, and the other proving the impossibility of it. The husband, however, said as much as let me understand, that he had locked me up on purpose to bring the military, or officers of justice, to seize me. I was in the utmost perplexity, yet for all that and the imminent danger I was in I fell asleep, and a more troubled and tormenting sleep never enchained a mortal frame. I had such dreams that they will not bear repetition, and early in the morning I awaked, feverish, and parched with thirst.

I went to call mine host, that he might let me out to the open air, but before doing so, I thought it necessary to put on some clothes. In attempting to do this, a circumstance arrested my attention, (for which I could in nowise account, which to this day I cannot unriddle, nor shall I ever be able to comprehend it while I live), the frock and turban, which had furnished my disguise on the preceding day, were both removed, and my own black coat and cocked hat laid down in their place. At first I thought I was in a dream, and felt the weaver's beam, web, and treadle-strings with my hands, to convince myself that I was awake. I was certainly awake; and there was the door locked firm and fast as it was the evening before. I carried my own black coat to the small window, and examined it. It was my own in verity; and the sums of money that I had concealed in case of any emergency remained untouched. I trembled with astonishment; and on my return from the small window, went dotting in amongst the weaver's looms, till I entangled myself, and could not get out again without working great decay amongst the coarse linen threads that stood in warp from one end of the apartment unto the other. I had no knife whereby to cut the cords of this wicked man, and therefore was obliged to call out lustily for assistance. The weaver came half naked, unlocked the door, and, setting in his head and long neck, accosted me thus:

"What now, Mr. Satan? What for are ye roaring that gate? Deil be in your reistit trams! What have you abscondit yoursel into ma leddy's wab for!"

"Friend, I beg your pardon," said I; "I wanted to be at the light, and have somehow unfortunately involved myself in the intricacies of your web, from which I cannot get clear without doing you a great injury. Pray do lend your experienced hand to extricate me."

"Ye doitit, donnart, deil's burd that ye be! what made ye gang howkin in there to be a poor man's ruin? Come out, ye vile rag-o'-muffin, or I will gar ye come out wi' mair shame and disgrace, an' fewer haill banes in your body."

My feet had slipped down through the double warpings of a web, and not being able to reach the ground with them (there being a small pit below), I rode upon a number of yielding threads, and there being nothing else that I could reach, to extricate myself was impossible. I was utterly powerless; and besides, the yarn and cords hurt me very much. For all that, the destructive weaver seized a loom-spoke, and began a-beating me most unmercifully,

while entangled as I was I could do nothing but shout aloud for mercy or assistance, whichever chanced to be within hearing. The latter, at length, made its appearance, in the form of the weaver's wife, in the same state of deshabille with himself, who instantly interfered, and that most strenuously, on my behalf. Before her arrival, however, I had made a desperate effort to throw myself out of the entanglement I was in: for the weaver continued repeating his blows and cursing me so, that I determined to get out of his meshes at any risk. This effort made my case worse; for my feet being wrapped among the nether threads, as I threw myself from my saddle on the upper ones, my feet brought the others up through these, and I hung with my head down, and my feet as firm as if they had been in a vice. The predicament of the web being thereby increased, the weaver's wrath was doubled in proportion, and he laid on without mercy.

At this critical juncture the wife arrived, and without hesitation rushed before her offended lord, withholding his hand from injuring me further, although then it was uplifted along with the loom-spoke in overbearing ire. "Dear Johnny! I think ye be gaen dementit this morning. Be quiet, my dear, an' dinna begin a Boddel Brigg business in your ain house. What for are ye persecutin' a servant o' the Lord's that gate, an' pitting the life out o' him wi' his head down an' his heels up?"

"Had ye said a servant o' the deil's, Nans, ye wad hae been nearer the nail, for gin he binna the auld ane himsel, he's gayan sib till him. There didna I lock him in on purpose to bring the military on him; an' in place o' that, hasna he keepit me in a sleep a' this while as deep as death? An' here do I find him abscondit like a spoeder i' the mids o' my leddy's wab, an' me dreamin' a' the night that I had the deil i' my house, an' that he was clapperclawin me ayont the loom. Have at you, ye brunstane thief!" and in spite of the good woman's struggles, he lent me another severe blow.

"Now, Johnny Dods, my man! O Johnny Dods, think if that be like a Christian, and ane o' the heroes o' Boddel Brigg, to entertain a stranger, an' then bind him in a web wi' his head down, an' mell him to death! O Johnny Dods, think what you are about! Slack a pin, an' let the good honest religious lad out."

The weaver was rather overcome, but still stood to his point that I was the deil, though in better temper; and as he slackened the web to release me, he remarked, half laughing, "Wha wad hae thought that John Dods should hae escapit a' the snares an' dangers that circumfauldit him, an' at last should hae weaved a net to catch the deil?"

The wife released me soon, and carefully whispered me, at the same time, that it would be as well for me to dress and be going. I was not long in obeying, and dressed myself in my black clothes, hardly knowing what I did, what to think, or whither to betake myself. I was sore hurt by the blows of the desperate ruffian; and, what was worse, my ankle was so much strained that I could hardly set my foot to the ground. I was obliged to apply to the weaver once more, to see if I could learn anything about my clothes, or how the change was effected. "Sir," said I, "how comes it that you have robbed me of my clothes, and put these down in their place over night?"

"Ha! thae claes? Me pit down thae claes!" said he, gaping with astonishment, and touching the clothes with the point of his fore-finger; "I never saw them afore, as I have death to meet wi'."

He strode into the work-house where I slept, to satisfy himself that my clothes were not there, and returned perfectly aghast with consternation. "The doors were baith fast lockit," said he. "I could hae defied a rat either to hae gotten out or in. My dream has been true! My dream has been true! I charge you to depart out o' this house; an', gin it be your will, dinna tak the braidside o't w'ye, but gang quietly out at the door wi' your face foremost. Wife, let nought o' this enchanter's remain i' the house, to be a curse, an' a snare to us; gang an' bring him his gildit weapon."

The wife went to seek my poniard, trembling so excessively that she could hardly walk, and shortly after, we heard a feeble scream from the pantry. The weapon had disappeared with the clothes, though under double lock and key; and the terror of the good people having now reached a disgusting extremity, I though proper to make a sudden retreat, followed by the weaver's anathemas.

My state both of body and mind was now truly deplorable. I was hungry, wounded, and lame; an outcast and a vagabond in society; my life sought after with avidity. I knew not whither to betake me. I had proposed going into England, and there making some use of the classical education I had received, but my lameness rendered this impracticable for the present. I was therefore obliged to turn my face towards Edinburgh, where I was little known—where concealment was more practicable than by skulking in the country, and where I might turn my mind to something that was great and good. I had a little money, both Scots and English, now in my possession, but not one friend in the whole world on whom I could rely. One devoted friend, it is true, I had, but he was become my greatest terror. To escape from him, I now felt that I would willingly travel to the farthest corners of the world, and be subjected to every deprivation; but after the certainty of what had taken place last night, after I had travelled thirty miles by secret and by-ways, I saw not how escape from him was possible.

Miserable, forlorn, and dreading every person that I saw, either behind or before me, I hasted on towards Edinburgh, taking all the bye and unfrequented paths; and the third night after I left the weaver's house, I reached the West Port, without meeting

with anything remarkable. Being exceedingly fatigued and lame, I took lodgings in the first house I entered, and for these I was to pay two groats a week, and to board and sleep with a young man who wanted a companion to make his rent easier. I liked this; having found from experience, that the great personage who had attached himself to me, and was now becoming my greatest terror among many surrounding evils, generally haunted me when I was alone, keeping aloof from all other society.

My fellow lodger came home in the evening, and was glad at my coming. His name was Linton, and I changed mine to Elliot. He was a flippant unstable being, one to whom nothing appeared a difficulty, in his own estimation, but who could effect very little after all. He was what is called by some a compositor, in the queen's printing-house, then conducted by a Mr. James Watson. In the course of our conversation that night, I told him that I was a first-rate classical scholar, and would gladly turn my attention to some business wherein my education might avail me something; and that there was nothing would delight me so much as an engagement in the queen's printing-office. Linton made no difficulty in bringing about that arrangement. His answer was. "Oo, gud sir, you are the very man we want. Gud bless your breast and your buttons, sir! Ay, that's neither here nor there—That's all very well—Ha-ha-ha—A byword in the house, sir. But, as I was saying, you are the very man we want—You will get any money you like to ask, sir—Any money you like, sir.—That's settled—All done—Settled, settled—I'll do it, I'll do it—No more about it; no more about it. Settled, settled."

The next day I went with him to the office, and he presented me to Mr. Watson as the most wonderful genius and scholar ever known. His recommendation had little sway with Mr. Watson, who only smiled at Linton's extravagancies, as one does at the prattle of an infant. I sauntered about the printing-office for the space of two or three hours, during which time Watson bustled about with green spectacles on his nose, and took no heed of me. But seeing that I still lingered, he addressed me at length, in a civil gentlemanly way, and inquired concerning my views. I satisfied him with all my answers, in particular those to his questions about the Latin and Greek languages; but when he came to ask testimonials of my character and acquirements, and found that I could produce none, he viewed me with a jealous eye, and said he dreaded I was some ne'er-do-weel, run from my parents or guardians, and he did not choose to employ any such. I said my parents were both dead; and that being thereby deprived of the means of following out my education, it behoved me to apply to some business in which my education might be of some use to me. He said he would take me into the office, and pay me according to the business I performed, and the manner in which I deported myself; but he could take no one into her majesty's printing-office upon a regular engagement, who could not produce the most respectable references with regard to morals.

I could not but despise the man in my heart who laid such a stress upon morals, leaving grace out of the question; and viewed it as a deplorable instance of human depravity and self-conceit; but for all that, I was obliged to accept of his terms, for I had an inward thirst and longing to distinguish myself in the great cause of religion, and I thought if once I could print my own works, how I would astonish mankind, and confound their self-wisdom and their esteemed morality. And I weened that I might thus get me a name even higher than if I had been made a general of the Czar Peter's troops against the infidels.

I attended the office some hours every day, but got not much encouragement, though I was eager to learn everything, and could soon have set types considerably well. It was here that I first conceived the idea of writing this journal, and having it printed, and applied to Mr. Watson to print it for me, telling him it was a religious parable, such as the *Pilgrim's Progress*. He advised me to print it close, and make it a pamphlet, and then if it did not sell, it would not cost me much; but that religious pamphlets, especially if they had a shade of allegory in them, were the very rage of the day. I put my work to the press, and wrote early and late; and encouraging my companion to work at odd hours, and on Sundays. Before the press-work of the second sheet was begun, we had the work all in types, corrected, and a clean copy thrown off for further revisal. The first sheet was wrought off; and I never shall forget how my heart exulted when at the printing-house this day. I saw what numbers of my works were to go abroad among mankind, and I determined with myself that I would not put the Border name of Elliot, which I had assumed, to the narrative.

Thus far have my History and Confessions been carried.

I must now furnish my Christian readers with a key to the process, management, and winding up of the whole matter; which I propose to limit to a very few pages.

Chesters, July 27, 1712.—My hopes and prospects are a wreck. My precious journal is lost! consigned to the flames! My enemy hath found me out, and there is no hope of peace or rest for me on this side the grave.

In the beginning of the last week, my fellow-lodger came home running in a great panic, and told me a story of the devil having appeared twice in the printing-house, assisting the workmen at the printing of my book, and that some of them had been frightened out of their wits. That the story was told to Mr. Watson, who till that time had never paid any attention to the treatise, but who, out of curiosity, began and read a part of it, and thereupon

flew into a great rage, called my work a medley of lies and blasphemy, and ordered the whole to be consigned to the flames, blaming his foreman, and all connected with the press, for letting a work go so far, that was enough to bring down the vengeance of Heaven on the concern.

If ever I shed tears through perfect bitterness of spirit it was that time, but I hope it was more for the ignorance and folly of my countrymen, than the overthrow of my own hopes. But my attention was suddenly aroused to other matters, by Linton mentioning that it was said by some in the office, the devil had inquired for me.

"Surely you are not such a fool," said I, "as to believe that the devil really was in the printing-office?"

"Oo, gude bless you, sir! saw him myself, gave him a nod, and good-day. Rather a gentlemanly personage—Green Circassian hunting coat and turban—Like a foreigner—Has the power of vanishing in one moment though—Rather a suspicious circumstance that. Otherwise, his appearance not much against him."

If the former intelligence thrilled me with grief, this did so with terror. I perceived who the personage was that had visited the printing-house in order to further the progress of my work; and at the approach of every person to our lodgings, I from that instant trembled every bone, lest it should be my elevated and dreaded friend. I could not say I had ever received an office at his hand that was not friendly, yet these offices had been of a strange tendency; and the horror with which I now regarded him was unaccountable to myself. It was beyond description, conception, or the soul of man to bear. I took my printed sheets, the only copy of my unfinished work existing; and, on pretence of going straight to Mr. Watson's office, decamped from my lodgings at Portsburgh a little before the fall of evening, and took the road towards England.

As soon as I got clear of the city, I ran with a velocity I knew not before I had been capable of. I flew out the way towards Dalkeith so swiftly, that I often lost sight of the ground, and I said to myself, "O that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly to the farthest corners of the earth, to hide me from those against whom I have no power to stand!"

I travelled all that night and the next morning, exerting myself beyond my power; and about noon the following day, I went into a yeoman's house, the name of which was Ellanshaws, and requested of the people a couch of any sort to lie down on, for I was ill, and could not proceed on my journey. They showed me to a stable-loft where there were two beds, on one of which I laid me down; and, falling into a sound sleep, I did not awake till the evening, that other three men came from the fields to sleep in the same place, one of whom lay down beside me, at which I was exceedingly glad. They fell all sound asleep, and I was terribly alarmed at a conversation I overheard somewhere outside the stable. I could not make out a sentence, but trembled to think I knew one of the voices at least, and rather than not be mistaken, I would that any man had run me through with a sword. I fell into a cold sweat, and once thought of instantly putting hand to my own life, as my only means of relief (May the rash and sinful thought be in mercy forgiven!), when I heard as it were two persons at the door contending, as I thought, about their right and interest in me. That the one was forcibly preventing the admission of the other, I could hear distinctly, and their language was mixed with something dreadful and mysterious. In an agony of terror, I awakened my snoring companion with great difficulty, and asked him, in a low whisper, who these were at the door? The man lay silent, and listening, till fairly awake, and then asked if I had heard anything? I said I had heard strange voices contending at the door.

"Then I can tell you, lad, it has been something neither good nor canny," said he: "it's no for naething that our horses are snorting that gate."

For the first time, I remarked that the animals were snorting and rearing as if they wished to break through the house. The man called to them by their names, and ordered them to be quiet; but they raged still the more furiously. He then roused his drowsy companions, who were alike alarmed at the panic of the horses, all of them declaring that they had never seen either Mause or Jolly start in their lives before. My bed-fellow and another then ventured down the ladder, and I heard one of them then saying, "Lord be wi' us! What can be i' the house? The sweat's rinning off the poor beasts like water."

They agreed to sally out together, and if possible to reach the kitchen and bring a light. I was glad at this, but not so much so when I heard the one man saying to the other, in a whisper, "I wish that stranger man may be canny enough."

"Gude kens!" said the other: "It doesnae look unco weel."

The lad in the other bed, hearing this, set up his head in manifest affright as the other two departed for the kitchen; and, I believe, he would have been glad to have been in their company. This lad was next the ladder, at which I was extremely glad, for had he not been there, the world should not have induced me to wait the return of these two men. They were not well gone, before I heard another distinctly enter the stable, and come towards the ladder. The lad who was sitting up in his bed, intent on the watch, called out, "Wha's that there? Walker, is that you? Purdie, I say, is it you?"

The darkling intruder paused for a few moments, and then came towards the foot of the ladder. The horses broke loose, and snorting and neighing for terror, raged through the house. In all my life I never heard so frightful a commotion. The being that occasioned it all now began to mount the ladder toward our loft, on which the lad in the bed next

the ladder sprung from his couch, crying out, "Preserve us! what can it be?" With that he sped across the loft, and by my bed, praying lustily all the way; and, throwing himself from the other end of the loft into a manger, he darted, naked as he was, through among the furious horses, and making the door, that stood open, in a moment he vanished and left me in the lurch. Powerless with terror, and calling out fearfully, I tried to follow his example; but not knowing the situation of the places with regard to one another, I missed the manger, and fell on the pavement in one of the stalls. I was both stunned and lamed on the knee; but terror prevailing, I got up and tried to escape. It was out of my power; for there were divisions and cross divisions in the house, and mad horses smashing everything before them, so that I knew not so much as on what side of the house the door was. Two or three times was I knocked down by the animals, but all the while I never stinted crying out with all my power. At length, I was seized by the throat and hair of the head, and dragged away, I wist not whither. My voice was now laid, and all my powers, both mental and bodily, totally overcome; and I remember no more till I found myself lying naked on the kitchen table of the farm house, and something like a horse's rug thrown over me. The only hint that I got from the people of the house on coming to myself was, that my absence would be good company; and that they had got me in a woeful state, one which they did not wish to describe or hear described.

As soon as day-light appeared, I was packed about my business, with the hisses and execrations of the yeoman's family, who viewed me as a being to be shunned, ascribing to me the visitations of that unholy night. Again was I on my way southward, as lonely, hopeless, and degraded a being as was to be found on life's weary round.

My case was indeed a pitiable one. I was lame, hungry, fatigued, and my resources on the very eve of being exhausted. Yet these were but secondary miseries, and hardly worthy of a thought, compared with those I suffered inwardly. I not only looked around me with terror at every one that approached, but I was become a terror to myself; or rather my body and soul were become terrors to each other; and, had it been possible, I felt as if they would have gone to war. I dared not look at my face in a glass, for I shuddered at my own image and likeness. I dreaded the dawning, and trembled at the approach of night, nor was there one thing in nature that afforded me the least delight.

In this deplorable state of body and mind was I jogging on towards the Tweed, by the side of the small river called Ellan; when, just at the narrowest part of the glen, whom should I meet full in the face, but the very being in all the universe I would the most gladly have shunned. I had no power to fly from him, neither durst I, for the spirit within me, accuse him of falsehood, and renounce his fellowship. I stood before him like a condemned criminal, staring him in the face, ready to be winded, twisted, and tormented as he pleased. He regarded me with a sad and solemn look. How changed was now that majestic countenance to one of haggard despair—changed in all save the extraordinary likeness to my late brother, a resemblance which misfortune and despair tended only to heighten. There were no kind greetings passed between us at meeting, like those which pass between the men of the world; he looked on me with eyes that froze the currents of my blood, but spoke not, till I assumed as much courage as to articulate—"You here! I hope you have brought me tidings of comfort!"

"Tidings of despair!" said he, "but such tidings as the timid and the ungrateful deserve, and have reason to expect. You are an outlaw, and a vagabond in your country, and a high reward is offered for your apprehension. The enraged populace have burned your house, and all that is within it; and the farmers on the land bless themselves at being rid of you. So fare it with every one who puts his hand to the great work of man's restoration to freedom and draweth back, contemning the light that is within him! Your enormities caused me to leave you to yourself for a season, and you see what the issue has been. You have given some evil ones power over you, who long to devour you, both soul and body, and it has required all my power and influence to save you. Had it not been for my hand, you had been torn in pieces last night; but for once I prevailed. We must leave this land forthwith, for here there is neither peace, safety, nor comfort for us. Do you now and here pledge yourself to one who has so often saved your life, and has put his own at stake to do so? Do you pledge yourself that you will henceforth be guided by my counsel, and follow me whithersoever I choose to lead?"

"I have always been swayed by your counsel," said I, "and for your sake, principally, am I sorry that all our measures have proved abortive. But I hope still to be useful in my native isle, therefore let me plead that your highness will abandon a poor despised and outcast wretch to his fate, and betake you to your realms, where your presence cannot but be greatly wanted."

"Would that I could do so!" said he woefully. "But to talk of that is to talk of an impossibility. I am wedded to you so closely that I feel as if I were the same person. Our essences are one, and our bodies and spirits are so united that I am drawn towards you as by magnetism, and wherever you are there must my presence be with you."

Perceiving how this assurance affected me, he began to chide me most bitterly for my ingratitude: and then he assumed such looks, that it was impossible for me longer to bear them; therefore I staggered out the way, begging and beseeching of him to give me up to my fate, and hardly knowing what I said; for it struck me, that, with all his assumed

appearance of misery and wretchedness, there were traits of exultation in his hideous countenance, manifesting a secret and inward joy at my utter despair.

It was long before I durst look over my shoulder, but when I did so, I perceived this ruined and debased potentate coming slowly on the same path, and I prayed that the Lord would hide me in the bowels of the earth or depths of the sea. When I crossed the Tweed, I perceived him still a little behind me; and my despair being then at its height, I cursed the time I first met with such a tormentor.

After crossing the Tweed, I saw no more of my persecutor that day, and had hopes that he had left me for a season; but, alas! what hope was there of my relief after the declaration I had so lately heard! I took up my lodgings that night in a small miserable inn in the village of Ancrum, of which the people seemed alike poor and ignorant. Before going to bed, I asked if it was customary with them to have family worship of evenings? The man answered, that they were so hard set with the world, they often could not get time, but if I would be so kind as officiate they would be much obliged to me. I accepted the invitation, being afraid to go to rest lest the commotions of the foregoing night might be renewed, and continued the worship as long as in decency I could. The poor people thanked me, hoped my prayers would be heard both on their account and my own, seemed much taken with my abilities, and wondered how a man of my powerful eloquence chanced to be wandering about in a condition so forlorn. I said I was a poor student of theology, on my way to Oxford. They stared at one another with expressions of wonder, disappointment, and fear. I afterwards came to learn, that the term *theology* was by them quite misunderstood, and that they had some crude conceptions that nothing was taught at Oxford but the *black arts*, which ridiculous idea prevailed over all the south of Scotland. For the present I could not understand what the people meant, and less so, when the man asked me, with deep concern, if I was serious in my intentions of going to Oxford. He hoped not, and that I would be better guided.

I said my education wanted finishing;—but he remarked, that the Oxford arts were a bad finish for a religious man's education.—Finally, I requested him to sleep with me, or in my room all the night, as I wanted some serious and religious conversation with him, and likewise to convince him that the study of the fine arts, though not absolutely necessary, were not incompatible with the character of a Christian divine. He shook his head and wondered how I could call them *fine arts*—hoped I did not mean to convince him by any ocular demonstration, and at length reluctantly condescended to sleep with me, and let the lass and wife sleep together for one night. I believe he would have declined it, had it not been some hints from his wife, stating, that it was a good arrangement, by which I understood there were only two beds in the house, and that when I was preferred to the lass's bed, she had one to shift for.

The landlord and I accordingly retired to our homely bed, and conversed for some time about indifferent matters, till he fell sound asleep. Not so with me. I had that within which would not suffer me to close my eyes: and about the dead of night, I again heard the same noises and contention begin outside the house, as I had heard the night before; and again I heard it was about a sovereign and peculiar right in me. At one time the noise was on the top of the house, straight above our bed, as if the one party were breaking through the roof, and the other forcibly preventing it; at another time it was at the door, and at a third time at the window; but still mine host lay sound by my side, and did not waken. I was seized with terrors indefinable, and prayed fervently, but did not attempt rousing my sleeping companion until I saw if no better could be done. The women, however, were alarmed, and, rushing into our apartment, exclaimed, that fiends were besieging the house. Then, indeed, the landlord awoke, and it was time for him, for the tumult had increased to such a degree, that it shook the house to its foundations, being louder and more furious than I could have conceived the heat of battle to be when the volleys of artillery are mixed with groans, shouts, and blasphemous cursing. It thundered and lightened: and there were screams, groans, laughter, and execrations, all intermingled.

I lay trembling and bathed in a cold perspiration, but was soon obliged to bestir myself, the inmates attacking me one after the other.

"O, Tam Douglass! Tam Douglass! haste ye an' rise out fra-yont that incarnal devil!" cried the wife; "ye are in ayont the auld ane himsel, for our lass Tibbie saw his cloven cloots last night."

"Lord forbid!" roared Tam Douglass, and darted over the bed like a flying fish. Then, hearing the unearthly tumult with which he was surrounded, he returned to the side of the bed, and addressed me thus, with long and fearful intervals:

"If ye be the deil, rise up, an' depart in peace out o' this house—afore the bedstrae take kindling about ye, an' than it'll maybe be the waur for ye.—Get up—an' gang awa out amang your cronies, like a good—lad—there's naebody here wishes you ony ill—D'ye hear me?"

"Friend," said I, "no Christian would turn out a fellow-creature on such a night as this, and in the midst of such a commotion of the villagers."

"Na, if ye be a mortal man," said he, "which I rather think, from the use you made of the holy book—Nane o' your practical jokes on strangers an' honest folks. These are some o' your Oxford tricks, an' I'll thank you to be over wi' them.—Gracious heaven, they are brikkin through the house at a' the four corners at the same time!"

The lass Tibby, seeing the innkeeper was not

going to prevail with me to rise, flew toward the bed in desperation, and seizing me by the waist, soon landed me on the floor, saying: "Be ye deil, be ye chiel, ye's no lie there till baith the house an' us be swallowed up!"

Her master and mistress applauding the deed, I was obliged to attempt dressing myself, a task to which my powers were quite inadequate in the state I was in, but I was readily assisted by every one of the three; and as soon as they got my clothes thrust on in a loose way, they shut their eyes lest they should see what might drive them distracted, and thrust me out to the street, cursing me, and calling on the fiends to take their prey and begone.

The scene that ensued is neither to be described, nor believed, if it were. I was momently surrounded by a number of hideous fiends, who gnashed on me with their teeth, and clenched their crimson paws in my face; and at the same instant I was seized by the collar of my coat behind, by my dreaded and devoted friend, who pushed me on, and with his gilded rapier waving and brandishing around me, defended me against all their united attacks. Horrible as my assailants were in appearance (and they had all monstrous shapes), I felt that I would rather have fallen into their hands, than be thus led away captive by my defender at his will and pleasure, without having the right or power to say my life or any part of my will was my own. I could not even thank him for his potent guardianship, but hung down my head, and moved on I knew not whither, like a criminal led to execution, and still the infernal combat continued, till about the dawning, at which time I looked up, and all the fiends were expelled but one, who kept at a distance; and still my persecutor and defender pushed me by the neck before him.

At length he desired me to sit down and take some rest, with which I complied, for I had great need of it, and wanted the power to withstand what he desired. There for a whole morning did he detain me, tormenting me with reflections on the past, and pointing out the horrors of the future, until a thousand times I wished myself non-existent. "I have attached myself to your wayward fortune," said he; "and it has been my ruin as well as thine. Ungrateful as you are, I cannot give you up to be devoured; but this is a life that it is impossible to brook longer. Since our hopes are blasted in this world, and all our schemes of grandeur overthrown, let us fall by our own hands, or by the hands of each other; die like heroes; and throwing off this frame of dross and corruption, mingle with the pure ethereal essence of existence from which we derived our being."

I shuddered at a view of the dreadful alternative, yet was obliged to confess that, in my present circumstances, existence was not to be borne. It was in vain that I reasoned on the sinfulness of the deed, and on its damning nature; he said, self-destruction was the act of a hero, and none but a coward would shrink from it, to suffer a hundred times more every day and night that passed over his head.

I said I was still contented to be that coward; and all that I begged of him was, to leave me to my fortune for a season, and to the just judgment of my Creator; but he said his word and honour were engaged on my behoof, and these, in such a case, were not to be violated. "If you will not pity yourself, have pity on me," added he; "turn your eyes on me, and behold to what I am reduced."

Involuntarily did I turn round at the request, and caught a half glance of his features. May no eye destined to reflect the beauties of the New Jerusalem inward upon the beatific soul, behold such a sight as mine then beheld! My immortal spirit, blood, and bones were all withered at the blasting sight; and I arose and withdrew, with groanings which the pangs of death shall never wring from me.

Not daring to look behind me, I crept on my way, and that night reached this hamlet on the Scottish border; and being grown reckless of danger, and hardened to scenes of horror, I took up my lodging with a poor hind, who is a widower, and who could only accommodate me with a bed of rushes at his fire-side. At midnight I heard some strange sounds, too much resembling those to which I had of late been inured; but they kept at a distance, and I was soon persuaded that there was a power protected that house superior to those that contended for, or had the mastery over me. Overjoyed at finding such an asylum, I remained in the humble cot. This is the third day I have lived under the roof, freed of my hellish assailants, spending my time in prayer, and writing out this my journal, which I have fashioned to stick in with my printed work, and to which I intend to add portions while I remain in this pilgrimage state, which, I find too well, cannot be long.

August 3, 1712.—This morning the hind has brought me word from Redesdale, whither he had been for coals, that a stranger gentleman had been traversing that country, making the most earnest inquiries after me, or one of the same appearance: and from the description that he brought of this stranger, I could easily perceive who it was. Rejoicing that my tormentor has lost traces of me for once, I am making haste to leave my asylum, on pretence of following this stranger, but in reality to conceal myself still more completely from his search. Perhaps this may be the last sentence ever I am destined to write. If so, farewell, Christian reader! may God grant to thee a happier destiny than has been allotted to me here on earth, and the same assurance of acceptance above! *Amen.*

Ault-Righ, August 24, 1712.—Here am I, set down on the open moor to add one sentence more to my woeful journal; and then, farewell all beneath the sun!

On leaving the hind's cottage on the Border, I

hasted to the north-west, because in that quarter I perceived the highest and wildest hills before me. As I crossed the mountains above Hawick, I exchanged clothes with a poor homely shepherd, whom I found lying on a hill side, singing to himself some woeful love ditty. He was glad of the change, and proud of his saintly apparel; and I was no less delighted with mine, by which I now supposed myself completely disguised; and I found moreover that in this garb of a common shepherd I was made welcome in every house. I slept the first night in a farm-house nigh to the church of Roberton, without hearing or seeing aught extraordinary; yet I observed next morning that all the servants kept aloof from me, and regarded me with looks of aversion. The next night I came to this house, where the farmer engaged me as a shepherd; and finding him a kind, worthy, and religious man, I accepted of his terms with great gladness. I had not, however, gone many times to the sheep, before all the rest of the shepherds told my master that I knew nothing about herding, and begged of him to dismiss me. He perceived too well the truth of their intelligence; but being much taken with my learning, and religious conversation, he would not put me away, but set me to herd his cattle.

It was lucky for me, that before I came here, a report had prevailed, perhaps for an age, that this farm-house was haunted at certain seasons by a ghost. I say it was lucky for me, for I had not been in it many days before the same appalling noises began to prevail around me about midnight, often continuing till near the dawning. Still they kept aloof, and without doors; for this gentleman's house, like the cottage I was in formerly, seemed to be a sanctuary from all demoniacal power. He appears to be a good man and a just, and mocks at the idea of supernatural agency, and he either does not hear these persecuting spirits, or will not acknowledge it, though of late he appears much perturbed.

The consternation of the menials has been extreme. They ascribe all to the ghosts, and tell frightful stories of murders having been committed there long ago. Of late, however, they are beginning to suspect that it is I that am haunted; and as I have never given them any satisfactory account of myself, they are whispering that I am a murderer, and haunted by the spirits of those I have slain.

August 30.—This day I have been informed, that I am to be banished the dwelling-house by night, and to sleep in an out-house by myself, to try if the family can get any rest when freed of my presence. I have peremptorily refused acquiescence, on which my master's brother struck me, and kicked me with his foot. My body being quite exhausted by suffering, I am grown weak and feeble both in mind and bodily frame, and actually unable to resent any insult or injury. I am the child of earthly misery and despair, if ever there was one existent. My master is still my friend; but there are so many masters here, and every one of them alike harsh to me, that I wish myself in my grave every hour of the day. If I am driven from the family sanctuary by night, I know I shall be torn in pieces before morning; and then who will deign or dare to gather up my mangled limbs, and give them honoured burial?

My last hour is arrived: I see my tormentor once more approaching me in this wild. Oh, that the earth would swallow me up, or the hill fall and cover me! Farewell for ever!

September 7, 1712.—My devoted, princely, but sanguine friend, has been with me again and again. My time is expired, and I find a relief beyond measure, for he has fully convinced me that no act of mine can mar the eternal counsel, or in the smallest degree alter or extenuate one event which was decreed before the foundations of the world were laid. He said he had watched over me with the greatest anxiety, but perceiving my rooted aversion towards him he had forborne troubling me with his presence. But now, seeing that I was certainly to be driven from my sanctuary that night, and that there would be a number of infernals watching to make a prey of my body, he came to caution me not to despair, for that he would protect me at all risks, if the power remained with him. He then repeated an ejaculatory prayer, which I was to pronounce, if in great extremity. I objected to the words as equivocal, and susceptible of being rendered in a meaning perfectly dreadful; but he reasoned against this, and all reasoning with him is to no purpose. He said he did not ask me to repeat the words unless greatly straitened, and that I saw his strength and power giving way, and when perhaps nothing else could save me.

The dreaded hour of night arrived; and, as he said, I was expelled from the family residence, and ordered to a byre, or cow-house, that stood parallel with the dwelling-house behind, where, on a divot loft, my humble bedstead stood, and the cattle grunted and puffed below me. How unlike the splendid halls of Dalcastle! And to what I am now reduced, let the reflecting reader judge.

September 8.—My first night of trial in this place is overpast. Would that it were the last that I should ever see in this detested world! If the horrors of hell are equal to those I have suffered, eternity will be of short duration there, for no created energy can support them for one single month or week. I have been buffeted as never living creature was. My vitals have all been torn, and every faculty and feeling of my soul racked, and tormented into callous insensibility. I was even hung by the locks over a yawning chasm, to which I could perceive no bottom, and then—not till then, did I repeat the tremendous prayer!—I was instantly at liberty; and what I now am, the Almighty knows! *Amen.*

September 18, 1712.—Still am I living, though liker to a vision than a human being; but this is my last day of mortal existence. Unable to resist

any longer, I pledged myself to my devoted friend, that on this day we should die together, and trust to the charity of the children of men for a grave. I am solemnly pledged: and though I dare to repent, I am aware he will not be gainsaid, for he is raging with despair at his fallen and decayed majesty, and there is some miserable comfort in the idea that my tormentor shall fall with me. Farewell, world, with all thy miseries; for comforts or enjoyments hast thou none! Farewell, woman, whom I have despised and shunned; and man, whom I have hated; whom, nevertheless, I desire to leave in charity! And thou, sun, bright emblem of a far brighter effulgence, I bid farewell to thee also! I do not now take my last look of thee, for to thy glorious orb shall a poor suicide's last earthly look be raised. But, ah! who is yon that I see approaching furiously—his stern face blackened with horrid despair! My hour is at hand.—Almighty God, what is this that I am about to do! The hour of repentance is past, and now my fate is inevitable—*Amen, for ever!* I will now seal up my little book, and conceal it; and cursed be he who trieth to alter or amend!

END OF THE MEMOIR.

What can this work be? Sure, you will say, it must be an allegory; or (as the writer calls it) a religious PARABLE, showing the dreadful danger of self-righteousness. I cannot tell. Attend to the sequel: which is a thing so extraordinary, so unprecedented, and so far out of the common course of human events, that if there were not hundreds of living witnesses to attest the truth of it, I would not bid any rational being believe it.

In the first place, take the following extract from an authentic letter, published in *Blackwood's Magazine* for August, 1823.

"On the top of a wild height called Faw-law, where the lands of three proprietors meet all at one point, there has been for long and many years the grave of a suicide marked out by a stone standing at the head, and another at the feet. Often have I stood musing over it myself, when a shepherd on one of the farms, of which it formed the extreme boundary, and thinking what could induce a young man, who had scarcely reached the prime of life, to brave his Maker, and rush into his presence by an act of his own erring hand, and one so unnatural and preposterous. But it never once occurred to me, as an object of curiosity, to dig up the mouldering bones of the culprit, which I considered as the most revolting of all objects. The thing was, however, done last month, and a discovery made of one of the greatest natural phenomena that I have heard of in this country.

"The little traditionary history that remains of this unfortunate youth is altogether a singular one. He was not a native of the place, nor would he ever tell from what place he came; but he was remarkable for a deep, thoughtful, and sullen disposition. There was nothing against his character that anybody knew of here, and he had been a considerable time in the place. The last service he was in was with a Mr. Anderson of Eltrive (Aultrigh, *the King's burn*), who died about an hundred years ago, and who had hired him during the summer to herd a stock of young cattle in Eltrive Hope. It happened one day in the month of September, that James Anderson, his master's son, went with this young man to the Hope to divert himself. The herd had his dinner along with him, and about one o'clock, when the boy proposed going home, the former pressed him very hard to stay and take share of his dinner; but the boy refused, for fear his parents might be alarmed about him, and said he would go home: on which the herd said to him, 'Then, if ye winna stay with me, James, ye may depend on't I'll cut my throat afore ye come back again.'

"I have heard it likewise reported, but only by one person, that there had been some things stolen out of his master's house a good while before, and that the boy had discovered a silver knife and fork that was a part of the stolen property in the herd's possession that day, and that it was this discovery that drove him to despair.

"The boy did not return to the Hope that afternoon; and, before evening, a man coming in at the pass called the *Hart Loup*, with a drove of lambs on the way for Edinburgh, perceived something like a man standing in a strange frightful position at the side of one of Eldinhope hay-ricks. The driver's attention was riveted on this strange uncouth figure, and as the drove-road passed at no great distance from the spot, he first called, but receiving no answer, he went up to the spot, and behold it was the above-mentioned young man, who had hung himself in the hay-rope that was tying down the rick.

"This was accounted a great wonder; and every one said, if the devil had not assisted him it was impossible the thing could have been done; for in general these ropes are so brittle, being made of green hay, that they will scarcely bear to be bound over the rick. And the more to horrify the good people of this neighbourhood, the driver said, when he first came in view *he could almost give his oath* that he saw two people busily engaged at the hay-rick, going round it and round it, and he thought they were dressing it.

"If this asseveration approximated at all to truth, it makes this evident at least, that the unfortunate young man had hanged himself after the man with the lambs came in view. He was, however, quite dead when he cut him down. He had fastened two of the old hay-ropes at the bottom of the rick on one side (indeed they are all fastened so when first laid on), so that he had nothing to do but to loosen two of the ends on the other side. These he had tied in a knot round his neck, and then slackening his knees and letting himself down gradually, till the

hay-rope bore all his weight, he had contrived to put an end to his existence in that way. Now the fact is, that if you try all the ropes that are thrown over all the outfield hay-ricks in Scotland, there is not one among a thousand of them will hang a collie dog; so that the manner of this wretch's death was rather a singular circumstance.

"Early next morning, Mr. Anderson's servants went reluctantly away, and, taking an old blanket with them for a winding-sheet, they rolled up the body of the deceased, first in his own plaid, letting the hay-rope still remain about his neck, and then rolling the old blanket over all, they bore the loathed remains away to the distance of three miles or so, on spokes, to the top of Faw-law, at the very point where the Duke of Buccleuch's land, the Laird of Drummelzier's, and Lord Napier's meet, and there they buried him, with all that he had on and about him, silver knife and fork and altogether. Thus far went tradition, and no one ever disputed one jot of the disgusting oral tale.

"A nephew of that Mr. Anderson's who was with the hapless youth that day he died says that, as far as he can gather from the relations of friends that he remembers, and of that same uncle in particular, it is one hundred and five years next month (that is September, 1823), since that event happened; and I think it likely that this gentleman's information is correct. But sundry other people, much older than he, whom I have consulted, pretend that it is six or seven years more. They say they have heard that Mr. James Anderson was then a boy ten years of age; that he lived to an old age, upwards of fourscore, and it is two and forty years since he died. Whichever way it may be, it was about that period some way, of that there is no doubt."

"It so happened that two young men, William Shiel and William Sword, were out on an adjoining height this summer casting peats, and it came into their heads to open this grave in the wilderness, and see if there were any of the bones of the suicide of former ages and centuries remaining. They did so, but opened only one half of the grave, beginning at the head and about the middle at the same time. It was not long till they came upon the old blanket —I think they said not much more than a foot from the surface. They tore that open, and there was the hay-rope lying stretched down alongst his breast, so fresh that they saw at first sight that it was made of risp, a sort of long sword-grass that grows about marshes and the sides of lakes. One of the young men seized the rope and pulled by it, but the old enchantment of the devil remained—it would not break; and so he pulled and pulled at it, till behold the body came up into a sitting posture, with a blue bonnet on its head, and its plaid around it, all as fresh as that day it was laid in! I never heard of a preservation so wonderful, if it be true as was related to me, for still I have not had the curiosity to go and view the body myself. The features were all so plain, that an acquaintance might easily have known him. One of the lads gripped the face of the corpse with his finger and thumb, and the cheeks felt quite soft and fleshy, but the dimples remained and did not spring out again. He had fine yellow hair, about nine inches long: but not a hair of it could they pull out till they cut part of it off with a knife. They also cut off some portions of his clothes, which were all quite fresh, and distributed them among their acquaintances, sending a portion to me, among the rest, to keep as natural curiosities. Several gentlemen have in a manner forced me to give them fragments of these enchanted garments: I have, however, retained a small portion for you, which I send along with this, being a piece of his plaid, and another of his waistcoat breast, which you will see are still as fresh as that day they were laid in the grave.

"His blue bonnet was sent to Edinburgh several weeks ago, to the great regret of some gentlemen connected with the land, who wished to have it for a keepsake. For my part, fond as I am of blue bonnets, I declare I durst not have worn that one. There was nothing of the silver knife and fork discovered that I heard of, nor was it very likely it should: but it would appear he had been very near run of cash, which I daresay had been the cause of his utter despair; for, on searching his pockets, nothing was found but three old Scots halfpennies. These young men meeting with another shepherd afterwards, his curiosity was so much excited, that they went and digged up the curious remains a second time, which was a pity, as it is likely that by these exposures to the air, and from the impossibility of burying it up again as closely as it was before, the flesh will now fall to dust."

* * * * * * *

The letter from which the above is an extract, bears the stamp of authenticity in every line; yet, so often had I been hoaxed by the ingenious fancies displayed in that magazine, that when this relation met my eye, I did not believe it; but from the moment that I perused it, I half formed the resolution of investigating these wonderful remains personally, if any such existed; for in the immediate vicinity of the scene, as I supposed, I knew of more attractive metal than the dilapidated remains of mouldering suicides.

Accordingly, having some business in Edinburgh in September last, and being obliged to wait a few days for the arrival of a friend from London, I took that opportunity to pay a visit to my townsman and fellow-collegian, Mr. L——t of C——d, advocate. I mentioned to him the letter, asking him if the statement was founded at all on truth. His answer was, "I suppose so. For my part I never doubted the thing, having been told that there has been a deal of talking about it up in the Forest for some time past. But, God knows! Ebony has imposed as ingenious lies on the public ere now."

I said if it was within reach I should like exceedingly to visit this Scots mummy so ingeniously described. Mr. L——t assented at the first proposal, saying he had no objections to take a ride that length with me; that we would have a delightful jaunt through a romantic and now classical country, and some good sport into the bargain, provided he could procure a horse for me from his father-in-law next day. He sent up to a Mr. L——w to inquire, who returned for answer, that there was an excellent pony at my service, and that he himself would accompany us, being obliged to attend a great sheep fair at Thirlestane.

At an early hour next morning we started for the ewe fair of Thirlestane, taking *Blackwood's Magazine* for August along with us. We rode through the ancient royal burgh of Selkirk—halted and corned our horses at a romantic village, nigh to some deep linns on the Ettrick, and reached the market-ground at Thirlestane-green a little before mid-day.

L——w soon found a guide to the suicide's grave, for he seemed acquainted with every person in the fair. We got a fine old shepherd, named W——m B——e, a great original, and a very obliging and civil man, who asked no conditions but that we should not speak of it, because he did not wish it to come to his master's ears, that he had been engaged in *sic a profane thing*. We promised strict secrecy; and, accompanied by another farmer, Mr. S—t, and old B——e, we proceeded to the grave, which B——e described as about a mile and a half distant from the market-ground.

We soon reached the spot, and I confess I felt a singular sensation when I saw the gray stone standing at the head, and another at the feet, and the one half of the grave manifestly new digged, and closed up again as had been described. I could still scarcely deem the thing to be a reality, for the ground did not appear to be wet, but a kind of dry rotten moss. On looking around, we found some fragments of clothes, some teeth, and part of a pocket-book, which had not been returned into the grave when the body had been last raised, for it had been twice raised before this, but only from the loins upward.

To work we fell with two spades, and soon cleared away the whole of the covering. The part of the grave that had been opened before was filled with mossy mortar, which impeded us exceedingly, and entirely prevented a proper investigation of the fore parts of the body. I will describe everything as I saw it before four respectable witnesses, whose names I shall publish at large if permitted. A number of the bones came up separately; for with the constant flow of liquid stuff into the deep grave, we could not see to preserve them in their places. At length great loads of coarse clothes, blanketing, plaiding, &c., appeared; we tried to lift these regularly up, and on doing so, part of a skeleton came up, but no flesh, save a little that was hanging in dark flitters about the spine, but which had no consistence; it was merely the appearance of flesh without the substance. The head was wanting; and I being very anxious to possess the skull, the search was renewed among the mortar and rags. We first found a part of the scalp, with the long hair firm on it; which on being cleaned is neither black nor fair, but of a darkish dusk, the most common of any other colour. Soon afterwards we found the skull, but it was not complete. A spade had damaged it, and one of the temple quarters was wanting. I am no phrenologist, not knowing one organ from another, but I thought the skull of that wretched man no study. If it was particular for anything, it was for a smooth, almost perfect rotundity, with only a little protuberance above the vent of the ear.

When we came to that part of the grave that had never been opened before, the appearance of everything was quite different. There the remains lay under a close vault of moss, and within a vacant space; and I suppose, by the digging in the former part of the grave, that part had been deepened, and drawn the moisture away from this part, for here all was perfect. The breeches still suited the thigh, the stocking the leg, and the garters were wrapped as neatly and as firm below the knee as if they had been newly tied. The shoes were all opened in the seams, the hemp having decayed, but the soles, upper leathers, and wooden heels, which were made of birch, were all as fresh as any of those we wore. There was one thing I could not help remarking, that in the inside of one of the shoes there was a layer of cow's dung, about one-eighth of an inch thick, and in the hollow of the sole fully one fourth of an inch. It was firm, green, and fresh; and proved that he had been working in a byre. His clothes were all of a singular ancient cut, and no less singular in their texture. Their durability certainly would have been prodigious: for in thickness, coarseness, and strength, I never saw any cloth in the smallest degree to equal them. His coat was a frock coat, of a yellowish drab colour, with wide sleeves. It is tweeled, milled, and thicker than a carpet. I cut off two of the skirts and brought them with me. His vest was of stripped serge, such as I have often seen worn by country people. It was lined and backed with white stuff. The breeches were a sort of striped plaiding, which I never saw worn, but which our guide assured us was very common in the country once, though, from the old clothes which he had seen remaining of it, he judged that it could not be less than two hundred years since it was in fashion. His garters were of worsted, and striped with black or blue; his stockings gray, and wanting the feet. I brought samples of all along with me. I have likewise now got possession of the bonnet, which puzzles me most of all. It is not conformable with the rest of the dress. It is neither a broad bonnet nor a Border bonnet; for there is an open behind for tying, which no gent-

ine Border bonnet, I am told, ever had. It seems to have been a Highland bonnet, worn in a flat way like a scone on the crown, such as is sometimes still seen in the west of Scotland. All the limbs, from the loins to the toes, seemed perfect and entire, but they could not bear handling. Before we got them returned again into the grave, they were all shaken to pieces, except the thighs, which continued to retain a kind of flabby form.

All his clothes that were sewed with linen yarn were lying in separate portions, the thread having rotted; but such as were sewed with worsted remained perfectly firm and sound. Among such a confusion, we had hard work to find out all his pockets, and our guide supposed that, after all, we did not find above the half of them. In his vest pocket was a long clasp knife, very sharp; the haft was thin, and the scales shone as if there had been silver inside. Mr. Sc—t took it with him, and presented it to his neighbour, Mr. R——n of W——n L—, who still has it in his possession. We found a comb, a gimblet, a vial, a small neat square board, a pair of plated knee-buckles, and several samples of cloth of different kinds, rolled neatly up within one another. At length, while we were busy on the search, Mr. L——t picked up a leathern case, which seemed to have been wrapped round and round by some ribbon, or cord, that had been rotten from it, for the swaddling marks still remained. Both L——w and B——e called out that "it was the tobacco spleuchan, and a well filled ane too;" but on opening it out, we found, to our great astonishment, that it contained a *printed pamphlet*. We were all curious to see what sort of a pamphlet such a person would read; what it could contain that he seemed to have had such a care about? for the slough in which it was rolled was fine chamois leather; what colour it had been could not be known. But the pamphlet was wrapped so close together, and so damp, rotten, and yellow, that it seemed one solid piece. We all concluded, from some words that we could make out, that it was a religious tract, but that it would be impossible to make anything of it. Mr. L——w remarked that it was a great pity if a few sentences could not be made out, for that it was a question what might be contained in that little book; and then he requested Mr. L——t to give it to me, as he had so many things of literature and law to attend to, that he would never think more of it. He replied, that either of us was heartily welcome to it; for that he had thought of returning it into the grave, if he could have made out but a line or two, to have seen what was its tendency.

"Grave, man!" exclaimed L——w, who speaks excellent strong broad Scots: "My truly, but ye grave weel! I wad esteem the contents o' that spleuchan as the most precious treasure. I'll tell you what it is, sir: I hae often wondered how it was that this man's corpse has been miraculously preserved frae decay, a hunder times longer than ony other body's, or than even a tanner's. But now I could wager a guinea, it has been for the preservation o' that little book. And Lord kens what may be in't! It will maybe reveal some mystery that mankind disna ken naething about yet."

"If there be any mysteries in it," returned the other, "it is not for your handling, my dear friend, who are too much taken up about mysteries already." And with these words he presented the mysterious pamphlet to me. With very little trouble, save that of a thorough drying, I unrolled it all with ease, and found the very tract which I have here ventured to lay before the public, part of it in small bad print, and the remainder in manuscript.

With regard to the work itself, I dare not venture a judgment, for I do not understand it. I believe no person, man or woman, will ever peruse it with the same attention that I have done, and yet I confess that I do not comprehend the writer's drift. It is certainly impossible that these scenes could ever have occurred, that he describes as having himself transacted. I think it may be possible that he had some hand in the death of his brother, and yet I am disposed greatly to doubt it; and the numerous distorted traditions, &c., which remain of that event, may be attributable to the work having been printed and burned, and of course the story known to all the printers, with their families and gossips. That the young Laird of Dalcastle came by a violent death, there remains no doubt; but that this wretch slew him, there is to me a good deal. However, allowing this to have been the case, I account all the rest either dreaming or madness; or, as he says to Mr. Watson, a religious parable, on purpose to illustrate something scarcely tangible, but to which he seems to have attached great weight. Were the relation at all consistent with reason, it corresponds so minutely with traditionary facts, that it could scarcely have missed to have been received as authentic; but in this day, and with the present generation, it will not go down, that a man should be daily tempted by the devil, in the semblance of a fellow-creature; and at length lured to self-destruction, in the hopes that this same fiend and tormentor was to suffer and fall along with him. It was a bold theme for an allegory, and would have suited that age well, had it been taken up by one fully qualified for the task, which this writer was not. In short, we must either conceive him not only the greatest fool, but the greatest wretch, on whom was ever stamped the form of humanity; or, that he was a religious maniac, who wrote and wrote about a deluded creature, till he arrived at that height of madness, that he believed himself the very object whom he had been all along describing; and in order to escape from an ideal tormentor, committed that act for which, according to the tenets he embraced, there was no remission, and which consigned his memory and his name to everlasting detestation.

SOME REMARKABLE PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF AN EDINBURGH BAILLIE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR. [J. H.]

[An Edinburgh Baillie, a notable person, often mentioned in Scottish history as the stanch friend of reform, and the constant friend and abettor of Argyle, was of northern descent, and the original name of his family is said to have been Sydeserf. The first who wrote his name Sydeserf, was one always styled Clerk Michael, who was secretary, chamberlain, and steward, to the earl marischal. His second son, Andrew, was made procurator of the Marischal College, where, it is presumed, he remained during his life, as it appears that our hero, Archibald, with eight other brothers and sisters, were born in that place. On the death of this Andrew, the family appears to have been all scattered abroad; and about that period Archibald was translated to Edinburgh, as under-secretary to the governor of the castle. He was a learned youth as times then went, and so were his brethren, for one of them was afterwards made a bishop, and one of them a professor, not to mention the subject of this memoir, who arrived at the highest distinction of them all. Two or more of those brothers left written memoirs of their own times, as was the fashion of the age, with all who could indite a page a-day; witness the number of voluminous tomes that lie piled in every college of the Continent, as well as in some of the public libraries of Britain. Archibald's memoir, of which I have with much difficulty got possession, is insufferably tedious and egotistical; but I have abridged it more than one half, retaining only the things that appeared to me the most curious; for all relating to borough politics appeared to me so low and so despicable, that I cancelled them utterly, although they might have been amusing to some.

But the great and sanguine events in which the Baillie was so long engaged, in which he took so deep an interest, and acted such a distinguished part, are well worth the keeping in record. Some of his personal adventures certainly bear tints of romance, but every part of his narrative relating to public events may implicitly be relied on. I have compared them with all the general as well as local histories of that period, and with sundry family registers relating to marriages, &c., which one would often think were merely brought in for effect, yet which I have uniformly found correct; and his narrative throws a light on many events of that stirring age, hitherto but imperfectly known. These, with the simplicity of the narration, will recommend the memoir to every candid and judicious reader. I pass over the two long chapters relating to his family and education, and begin transcribing where he commences his difficult career of public life.]

The difficulties which I had to encounter on coming into Edinburgh Castle, were such as I could not have believed would have fallen to the lot of man: all which were occasioned by the absurdity of the deputy-governor, Colonel Haggard. He was a tyrant of the first magnitude, and went about treating the various subordinate officers as if they had been oxen or beasts of burden. He was never sober, either night or day, and as for me, my heart quaked, and my loins trembled, whenever I came into his presence. I had what was called a writing chamber assigned to me.—But such a chamber!—it was a mere cell, a vile dungeon, in which I could not discern darkness from light—I was inclosed in a medium between them.

When I came first there, Haggard, who had great need of me, promised me this good thing and the other good thing, so that my heart was lifted up:—but, alas! soon was it sunk down again in gall and bitterness, for everything was in utter confusion. In that dark abode I had the whole accounts of the expenditure of the fortress to keep, and the commissariat department to conduct. There were the state prisoners sending proudly for their allowances, the soldiers cursing for their pay, and clerks every hour with long accounts of which they demanded payment. I had nothing to pay them with, and in the meantime our caterers in the city took the coercive measures with us of stopping all our supplies until their arrears were paid up. Haggard did no more than just order such and such things to be done, without considering in the least how they were to be done. Then every one came running on me, while I had for the most part little or nothing to

give them, and all that I could do was to give them orders on this or the other fund, which orders never were executed, and of course matters grew worse and worse every day.

As for Colonel Haggard, he was a beast, a perfect bull of Bashan—he came daily with open mouth upon me, roaring and swearing like a maniac. It was in vain to reason with him; that made him only worse; and had he held with cursing and damning me, although I abhorred that custom, it would not have been so bad. But he thought nothing of striking with whatever came to his hand, and that with such freedom, that it was evident he cared nothing at all for the lives of his fellow-creatures.

One day he came upon me fuming and raging as usual, and without either rhyme or reason inquired, "why I did not pay this debt?" and, "why I did not pay the other debt?" and, "was he to be dunned and plagued eternally by the carelessness and indifference of a beggarly clerk—a dirty pen-scraper, a college weazel, a northern rat?" and called me many other beastly names besides.

"Sir," says I, "if your honour will suffer the whole of the funds to come through my hands, I will be accountable for every fraction of them. But as you draw the largest share yourself, and spend that as you think fit, how am I to carry on my department? Let them all be paid to you if you choose, and make the payments through me, of which I shall keep a strict account: unless they come all through my hands, I will neither receive nor remit any more."

He paid no attention, but went on as if he had not even heard the remonstrance: "If the onward detail of the business of the castle is to be interrupted in this manner by your obstinacy and awkwardness—by the absurdity of such a contemptible urchin—then, it is evident, that all subordination and prerogative is at an end, and there must be a regular turn out. But before this shall happen, you may depend on it, Mr. Puppy, that you shall suffer first. We are not all to lose our places for you."

"I have paid all that I have, your honour, I have not even retained a merk for my own outlay; therefore, I will trouble your goodness for my own arrears, else I give the business up forthwith."

"You? You give the business up? You, the bound servant and slave of the state, as much as the meanest soldier under my command? Such another word out of your mouth, and I'll have you whipped. Hint but to go and leave your post, and I'll have you hung at the castle gate. *You* go and desert your post?—Let me see you attempt it. I would indeed like to see you run off like a norland tike! Pah! You gimcrack!—You cat. Pay up the arrears of the garrison instantly, I say.—Are the state prisoners, the first men of the land, to lack their poor allowance, that you may lay up the king's money by you, and make a fortune? Are the military to starve, that a scratchpenny may thrive? Is this business to go to sixes and sevens for your pleasure? I will have you tried for your life, you dog, before a military tribunal."

There was no reasoning with such a beast, therefore I was obliged to hold my peace: I cared for no trial, for my books were open to any who chose to examine them, and I could account for every bodle that had been paid to me; and as for the superior of whom I was the substitute, he never showed face at all, nor was he even in Scotland. He merely enjoyed the post as a sinecure, while the toil and responsibility fell on me. From that time forth, I had a disgust at our king James and his government, and considered him no better than an old wife, and from that time to this on which I write down the memorial of these things, I have never been reconciled to him or one of his race.

But to return to my business at the castle; I was very miserable. My state was deplorable, for I had not one of the comforts of life; and so jealous was the governor, that for the most part neither ingress nor egress was allowed. My bed was a mat in the corner of my chamber, and my bed-clothes consisted of a single covering not thicker than a worm-web. If I had worn it as a veil, I could have seen all about me. It may be considered how grievous this was to me, who had all my life been used to a good rush or heather bed in my father's house, and a coverlet worked as thick as a divot. How I did long to be at home again!—Ay, many a salt tear did I shed when none out of Heaven saw but myself, and many an ardent prayer did I put up for the kind friends I left behind me. At the same time, I resolved every day and every night to have some revenge on my brutal tyrant. I cherished the feeling with delight, and was willing to undergo any hardship, so that I might see my desire fulfilled on mine enemy. An opportunity at length offered, which proved a hard trial for me.

Among many illustrious prisoners we had no less a man than the Marquis of Huntly; and, as the lord-chancellor was his great friend, his confinement was not severe. By the reforming party it was meant to be rigid; but by the Catholic and high-church party quite the reverse. With them it was merely a work of necessity, and they had resolved to bring the marquis off with flying colours, but a little time was necessary to ripen their schemes. He was a great and powerful nobleman, and had struggled against the reformers all his life, plaguing them not a little, but ran many risks of his life notwithstanding. And had our king, with all his logic, not been, as I said, merely an old wife in resolution, he never would have suffered that obstreperous nobleman to live so long as he did; for he thought nothing of defying the king and all his power; and once, in the Highlands, came against the king's forces and cut them all to pieces. He also opposed the good work of reformation so long

and so bitterly, that the General Assembly were obliged to excommunicate him.

My forefathers being men of piety, I was bred in the strictest principles of the Reformation; consequently, the Marquis of Huntly was one whom I had always regarded with terror and abhorrence; so that when I found him, as it were, under my jurisdiction, I was anything but grieved, and I thought to myself that, with God's help, we might keep him from doing more ill for a time.

But lo and behold, a commission of the lords was summoned to meet at Edinburgh, headed by young Argyle and Hamilton, and it being obvious that the interest of the reformers was to carry everything before it, the malignant party grew terribly alarmed for the life of the old marquis, their most powerful support, and determined on making a bold effort for his delivery. Accordingly, a deputation of noblemen came to our worthy deputy one evening, with a written order from the lord-chancellor for Huntly's liberation. Haggard would not obey the order, but cursed and swore that it was a forgery, and put all the gentlemen in ward together, to stand a trial before the lords commissioners.

The marquis's family had been allowed to visit him, for they lived in the Canongate, and were constantly coming and going; and that night Lady Huntly comes to me, and pretends great friendship for me, names me familiarly by name, and says that she has great respect for all the Sydeserfs. Then she says, "That deputy-governor of yours is a great bear."

"We must take him for the present as he is, madam, for lack of a better," says I.

"That is very wisely and cautiously spoken by you, young gentleman," said the marchioness. "But it *is* for lack of a better. How would you like to be deputy-governor yourself, and to have the sole command here? I have the power to hang your scurvy master over a post before to-morrow night."

"That would be a very summary way of proceeding certainly, madam," said I.

"I can do it, and perhaps *will* do it," added she; "but in the meantime I must have a little assistance from you."

Aha! thinks I to myself, this is some popish plot. Now Bauldy Sydeserf, since ladies will have your name, take care of yourself; for well do you know that this old dame is a confirmed Papist, and wide and wasteful has the scope of her malignancy been! Bauldy Sydeserf, take care of yourself.

"You do not answer me," continued she. "If you will grant me a small favour, I promise to you to have your tyrannical master made away with, and to better your fortune one way or another."

"You are not going to murder him, I hope, please your highness?" said I.

"Made away with from his post, I mean only," said she, "in order that one better and younger, and more genteel than he, may be endowed with it."

"Oh! is that all, madam?" said I.

"Why?" said she, "would you wish to have him assassinated? I have a hundred resolute men in my husband's interest within the castle that will do it for one word."

Being horrified for Papists, I thought she was come merely to entrap me, and get my head cut off likewise; and though I confess I should not have been very sorry to have seen the Catholics wreak their fury on my brutal tyrant, I thought it most safe to fight shy. "Pray in what can I serve you, madam?" said I; "if it is by betraying any trust committed to me, or bringing any person into danger but myself, do not ask it, for, young as I am, nothing shall induce me to comply."

"What a noble and heroic mind in one so very young! You were born to be a great man, Mr. Secretary!" said the cunning dame; "I see it, and cannot be mistaken. Pray tell me this, brave young gentleman—Is my lord's correspondence with Spain, and with the Catholic lords in 1606, in your custody?"

"They are both in my custody at present, madam," said I; "but I have no power to show you those letters, it being solely by chance that the keys happen to be in my possession. I got them to search for a certain warrant, and they have not been again demanded."

"I want to have those papers up altogether, that they may be destroyed," said she; "that is my great secret. If you will put them into my hands to-night, you have only to name the conditions."

"I put them into your hands, madam!" said I: "Good Lord! I would not abstract those documents for all the wealth of the realm."

"Pray of what value are they?" returned she. "Of none in the world to any one, save that they may bring ruin on my lord and his family, at his approaching trial. Your wretched governor will never miss them; and if he should, the blame of losing them will fall on him."

This last remark staggered me not a little, because it was perfectly true; but I held my integrity, and begged her not to mention the subject again, for no bribe should induce me to comply: she then tossed her head, and looked offended, and added that she was sorry I was so blind to my own interest, though I was so to the very existence of the greatest family of my own country; and then, with an audible sigh, she left me, muttering a threat as she went out. I was so much affected by it, that I have never forgot her words or manner to this hour.

"Oh—oh—oh! and is it thus?" said she, drawing up her silken train: "Oh—oh—oh! and is it thus? Well, young man, you shall be the first that shall rue it," and with that she shut the door fiercely behind her.

"Lord preserve me from these Papists!" said I, most fervently. "What will become of me now? I would rather come under the power of the devil

than under their power any time, when they have their own purposes to serve." I however repented me of this rash saying, and prayed for forgiveness that same night. This conversation with the marchioness made so deep an impression on my mind, that I durst not lie down on my wretched bed, but bolted my door firmly, and sat up, thrilled with anxiety at having run my head into a noose by offending the most potent family in the land, and one, for all its enemies, that had the greatest power. Had they been true Protestants and reformers, I would have risked my neck to have saved them; as it was, I had done my duty, and no more.

While I was sitting in this dilemma, reasoning with myself, behold a gentle tap—tap—tap came on the door. My heart leaped to my shoulder-bone, and stuck so fast that I could not speak. Another attack of the Papists, thought I, and that after the dead hour of midnight too! I am a gone man! Tap—tap—tap! "Come in," said I, that is, my lips said it, but my voice absolutely refused its office; for instead of the sound coming out, it went inwards. I tried it again like one labouring with the night-mare, and at last effected a broken sound of "come in, come in."

"I cannot get in," said a sweet voice outside the door. "Pray are you in bed?"

"N—n—no," said I, "I am not in bed."

"Then open the door directly," said the same sweet voice; "I want to speak with you expressly."

"What do you wish to say?" said I.

"Open the door and you shall hear," said she.

"Jane, is that you?" said I.

"Yes, it is," said she. "You are right at last. It is indeed Jane."

"Then what the devil are you seeking here at this time of the morning?" said I, pulling back the bolts and opening the door, thinking it was our milkwoman's daughter, when behold there entered with a smile and a curtsey the most angelic being I ever saw below the sun. I at first thought she was an angel of light; a being of some purer and better world; and if I was bamboozled before, I was ten times worse now. I could not return her elegant curtsey, for my backbone had grown as rigid as a thorn, and my neck, instead of bending forward, in token of obeisance, actually cocked backward. I am an old man now, and still I cannot help laughing at my awkward predicament, for there I stood gaping and bending, and my eyes like to leap out of my face, and fly on that of the lovely object that stood smiling before me.

"I think you do not recollect Jane now when you see her," said she, playfully.

"N—n—no, ma'am," said I, utterly confounded. "I t—t—took you for the skudjie. I beg pardon, ma'am, but I am very muckle at a loss." That was my disgusting phrase, I have not forgot it. "I am very muckle at a loss, ma'am," says I.

"*Muckle* at a loss are you?" said she. "*Verra* muckle too. That's what you *maunna* be, honest lad." (She was mocking me.) "My name is Jeanie Gordon. You may, perhaps, have heard tell of Jeanie Gordon. I am the youngest daughter of the Marquis of Huntly, and your name is, I presume, Bauldy Sydeserf. Is that it?"

I bowed assent, on which she fell into such a fit of laughter, and seemed to enjoy the sport with such zest, that I was obliged to join her, and I soon saw she had that way with her that she could make any man do just what she pleased.

"It is a snug, comfortable sort of name," said she; "I like the name exceedingly, and I like the young gentleman that wears it still better. My mother told me that you were exceedingly genteel, sensible, and well-bred! She was right. I see it—I see it. Verra muckle in the right."

My face burned to the bone at the blunder I had made, for in general I spoke English very well, with haply a little of the Aberdeen accent, and there was a little bandying of words passed here that I do not perfectly recollect, but I know they were not greatly to my credit. As for Lady Jane, she went on like a lark, changing her note every sentence; but she had that art and that winning manner with her, that never woman in this world shall again inherit in such perfection. So I thought, and so I think to this day; for even when she was mocking me, and making me blush like crimson, I could have kissed the dust of her feet. She brought on the subject of the refusal I had given her mother, ridiculed it exceedingly, flew from it again, and chatted of something else, but still as if she had that and everything else in the nation at her control. Heaven knows how she effected her purpose, but in the course of an hour's conversation, without ever letting me perceive that she was aiming at any object, she had thoroughly impressed me with the utter insufficiency of the king in all that concerned the affairs of the state, and the uncontrollable power of the house of Huntly. "My father is too potent not to have many enemies," said she, "and he has many, but it is not the king that he fears, but a cabal in the approaching committee of the estates. Not for himself, but for fear of the realm's peace, does he dread them; for there is not a canting hypocrite among them that dares lift his eye to Huntly. He can lead a young man to fortune, as many he has led, but how can the poor caballing lords do such a thing, when every one is scratch, scratching for some small pittance to himself. His enemies, as you know, have brought a miserable accusation against him, of hindering his vassals from hearing such ministers as they chose, and with former correspondence which was all abrogated in open court they hope to ruin the best, the kindest, and the greatest man of the kingdom. The letters are already cancelled by law, but when subjects take the law into their own hand, right and justice are at an end. Do you give these papers to me. You

will never again have such an opportunity of doing good, and no blame can ever attach to you."

"I would willingly lay down my life for you, madam," said I, "but my honour I can never."

"Fuss! honour!" said she, "your honour has no more concern in it than mine has, and not half so much. You say you would lay down your life for me; but if you would consider the venerable and valuable life which you are endangering! If you would consider the opulent and high-born family which you are going to sacrifice out of mere caprice!" I could not help shedding some tears at this bitter reflection: she perceived my plight, and added, "Did you ever see the nobleman whose life and domains you now have it in your power to save from the most imminent risk?" I answered that I never had had that honour. "Come with me, then, and I will introduce you to my father," said she.

"No—no—no—ma'am!" said I, mightily flustered. "No—no—no—I would rather be excused if you please."

"What?" said she, "refuse the first step to honour that ever was proffered to you? Refuse the highest honour that a commoner can hope for, an introduction to George, Marquis of Huntly?"

"But then, ma'am, I have nothing ado with his highness," said I; "I have no favour to ask of him, and none to grant."

"Hold your peace," said she, "and if you have any wish that you and I should ever be better acquainted, come with me."

That was a settler; I could make no answer to that, for my heart was already so much overcome by the divine perfections of the lady, that I viewed her as a being of a superior nature—a creature that was made to be adored and obeyed. She took my hand, and though, perhaps, I hung a little backward, which I think I did, I nevertheless followed on like a dog in a string! There were two guards in attendance, who, lifting their bonnets, let Lady Jane pass; but the second seized me by the breast, thrust me backward, and asked me whither I was going so fast? I was very willing to have turned, but in a moment Lady Jane had me again by the hand, and with one look she silenced the sentinel. "This is the secretary of the castle," said she, "who has some arrears to settle with my father before he leaves his confinement, which he does immediately."

I had now, as I thought, got my cue, and so, brightening up, I says, "Yes, sir, I am the secretary of the castle, and I have a right to come and go where and how I please, sir," says I.

"The devil you have, sir," says he.

"Yes, the devil I have, sir," says I; "and I will let you know, sir——"

"Hush," said Lady Jane, smiling, and laying her delicate hand on my mouth, "this is no place or time for altercation." I however gave the guardsman a proud look of defiance, and squeezed some words of the same import through the lady's fingers, to let him know whom he had to do with, for I was so proud of 'squiring Lady Jane Gordon down the stair and along the trance, that I wanted to make the fellows believe I was no small drink.

In one second after that we were in the presence of the great Marquis of Huntly, and in one word I never have yet seen a sight so venerable, so imposing, and at the same time so commanding, as that old hero, surrounded by the ladies of his family and one of his sons whom he called Adam. I shall never forget the figure, eye, and countenance of the marquis. He appeared to be about fourscore years of age, though I was told afterwards that he was not so much. His hair was of a dark, glittering, silver gray, and his eyes were dark, and as piercing, haughty, and independent as those of the blue hawk. They were like the eyes of a man in the fire and impatience of youth, and yet there appeared to be a sunny gleam of kindness and generosity, blended with all the sterner qualities of human nature. If ever I saw a figure and face that indicated a mind superior to his fellow-creatures, they were those of George, the first Marquis of Huntly. And more than that, he seemed almost to be adored by his family, which I have found on long experience to be a good sign of a man. Those that are daily and hourly about him are the best judges of his qualifications, and if he is not possessed of such as are estimable, he naturally loses the respect due to inherent worth. He wore a wide coat of a cinnamon colour, and he was ruffled round the shoulders and round the hands. He received me with perfect good nature, ease, and indifference, in much the same way any gentleman would receive a neighbour's boy that had popped in on him; and spoke of indifferent matters, sometimes to me and sometimes to his daughters. He spoke of my father and grandfather, and all the Sydeserfs that ever lived: but I remember little that passed, for to my astonishment I found that there were two Jeanie Gordons—two young ladies so exactly the same that I thought I could have defied all the world to distinguish the one from the other. There was not a shade of difference that eye could discern, neither in stature nor complexion: and as for their dresses, there was not a flower-knot, a flounce, nor a seam in the one that was not in the other. Everything was precisely the same. Whenever I fixed my eyes on one, I became convinced that she was my own Lady Jane, to whom I looked for a sort of patronage in that high community; but if ever by chance my look rested on the face of the other, my faith began to waver, and in a very short time again my direction centred on that one. It was the most extraordinary circumstance that I had ever seen or heard of. It seems these two young ladies were twin sisters, and as they surpassed all their contemporaries of the kingdom in beauty, insomuch that they were the admiration of all that beheld them, so were they also

admired by all for their singular likeness to each other. For the space of six months after they came from nursing, their parents could not distinguish them from each other, and it was suspected they had changed their names several times. But after they came home from Paris, where they were at their education for seven years, neither their father nor brothers ever knew them from each other again. They generally, at their father's request, wore favours of different colours on their breast, but by changing these and some little peculiarities of dress, they could at any time have deceived the whole family, and many a merry bout they had at cross purposes on such occasions. It was often remarked that Huntly, when fairly mistaken, would never yield, but always persisted in calling Mary—Jane, and Jane—Mary, till deceived into the right way again. So much beauty and elegance I have never seen, and never shall contemplate again; and I found that I had lost my heart. Still it was to Lady Jane that I had lost it, although I could not distinguish the one from the other.

I must now return to my narrative, taking up the story where I can, as I really never did recollect almost aught of what passed in that august presence, where one would have thought I should have remembered everything. The marchioness, I noticed, showed no condescension to me, but appeared proud, haughty, and offended; and when she spoke of me to her lord, she called me *that person*. My angel Lady Jane (whichever was she) had now lost all her jocularity and flippancy of speech; there was nothing but mimness and reserve in the marquis's presence. At length, on my proposing to retire, the marquis addressed me something to the following purport:—

"I believe, sir, Lady Huntly and one of my daughters have been teasing you for some old papers at present in your custody. I will not say that they might not have been of some import to me in the present crisis, but I commend your integrity and faith in the charge committed to you. You are doing what is right and proper, and whatever may be the consequence, take no more thought about the matter."

Here Lady Jane made some remark about the great consequence of these papers, on which he subjoined rather tartly, "I tell you, Jane, I don't regard the plots of my enemies. I can now leave this place when I please, and I shall soon, very soon, be beyond their reach."

The young lady shed a flood of tears, on which I said, that if I had the deputy-governor's permission, I would with pleasure put these papers into his lordship's hand. "No," said he; "I would not be obliged to such a bear for them, though certain that they were to save my head."

Lady Huntly said something bitterly about asking favours of low people, but he checked her with—"No, no, Henny! not another word on the subject. You have acted quite right, young man. Good night."

I was then obliged to take myself off, which I did with one of my best bows, which was returned only by Lady Mary: all the rest remained stiff and upright in their positions. Lady Jane followed me, saying, "I must conduct him through the guards again, else there will be bloodshed." My heart thrilled with joy. She went with me to my apartment, and then asked me, with tears in her eyes, if I was going to let that worthy and venerable nobleman suffer on a scaffold for such a trifle. I tried to reason, but my heart was lost, and I had little chance of victory; so at length I said, I durst not for my life give them up, unless I instantly made my escape out of the castle. She said that was easily effected, for I should go out in her father's livery to-morrow morning, and for that part, she could conceal me for the remainder of the night; she added, that once I was out, and under Huntly's protection and *hers*—I waited for no more;—"once you *are* out, and under Huntly's protection and *mine*," said she—I flew away to the register chest, where I had seen the papers but the day before, and soon found them in two triple sealed parcels, with these labels, HUNTLY'S TREASONABLE CORRESPONDENCE WITH SPAIN. DITTO WITH THE CATHOLICK LORDS, &c.,—and flying away with them, I put them into the hands of Lady Jane Gordon.

That was the most exquisite moment of my life—true, I had played the villain; but no matter; I have never enjoyed so happy a moment since that time. Lady Jane seized the papers with an eagerness quite indescribable—she hugged them—she did not know where to hide them, but seemed to wish them within her breast. Gratitude beamed, nay it flashed in every angelic feature, till at length unable to contain herself, she burst into tears, flung her arms round my neck, and kissed me! Yes, I neither write down a falsehood, nor exaggerate in the least degree; I say the beauty of the world, the envy of courts, and the mistress of all hearts, once, and but once, kissed my lips! kissed the lips of the then young, vain, and simple Bauldy Sydeserf. It was a dear kiss to me! but no more of that at present.

After this rapturous display, Lady Jane looked me no more in the face, but flew from me with the prize she had obtained, bidding me good night without looking behind her. It was evident she deemed she had got a boon of her father's life. But there was I left in my dark hateful chamber all alone, to reflect on what I had done.

May the Lord never visit any of his faithful servants with such a measure of affliction as it was my lot that night to bear. I cannot describe it, but I think I was in a burning fever, and all for perfect terror. I had forfeited life and honour, and all to serve an old Papist, the greatest enemy of the blessed work of reformation in the whole kingdom; and what gratitude or protection was I to expect from

the adherents of that cursed profession? Alas! not to the extent of a grain of mustard-seed. Then I fell into a troubled slumber, and had such dreams of Haggard hanging me and cutting off my head, until waking, I lay groaning like one about to expire until daylight entered. I then rose and began to cast about how I should make my escape; for I knew if I remained in my situation another day I was a gone man. The castle being a state prison at that time, there was no possibility of making an escape from it without a warrant from the authorities; and I had begun to patch up a speech in my defence, which I was going to deliver before my judge, as soon as the papers were missed. But then, on considering that there would as certainly be another speech to compose for the scaffold, full of confessions and prayers for my enemies, Haggard among the rest, I lost heart altogether, and fell to weeping and lamenting my hard fate.

While I was in the midst of this dilemma, behold there was a sharp surly rap came on my door. I opened it in the most vehement perturbation of spirits, and saw there for certain an officer of justice, clad in his insignia of office. "Master," says he, "is your name Mr. Secretary Sidesark?"

"Yes sir," says I, "that is—no; my name is not Sidesark, although it sounds a little that way."

"Well, well, back or side, short or long, it makes little difference," says he; "I have a little business with you. You go with me."

"What! to prison?" says I.

"Yes, to the prison," says he; "to be sure, where else but to the prison in the *mean* time?"

"Very well, sir," says I; "show me your warrant then," says I.

"Certainly," says he; "here is *my* warrant," and with that he turned into a corner of the trance, and lifted a large bundle—"there it is, master; you understand me now."

"No, on my faith and honour and conscience, I do not," said I. "What warrant is that?"

"Open and see, master, open and see," said he, wiping his brow; "pray have you anything in the house that will drink? Yes, open and see; ay, that way, that way. Now you will soon get into the heart and midriff of the mystery."

On opening the parcel, I found a splendid livery complete, of green and gold, and my heart began to vibrate to the breathings of hope. "Now, sir, make haste," said my visitor; "make haste, make haste. You understand me; now dress yourself instantly in these habiliments, and go with me. The family waits for you. You are to walk behind Lady Jane, and carry her fardel, or mantle perhaps, or some trifle. We two shall likely be better acquainted. My name is David Peterkin, Mr. Peterkin you know; of course, Mr. Peterkin. I am head butler in the family, steward's butler that is. You are to be gentleman-usher to the young ladies, I presume!"

Thus his tongue went on without intermission, while I dressed myself, unable to speak many words, so uplifted was my heart. I left my clothes, linens, everything—my key in my desk—and the key of the register-chest within the desk, lying uppermost; and bringing all the public money that was in my possession away with me, as part of my arrears of wages, I followed Mr. David Peterkin to the apartments where I had been the night before.

Huntly's power and interest had been very great in the state at that time, notwithstanding his religious tenets, of which the popular party, his sworn enemies, made a mighty handle in order to ruin him. They had got him seized and lodged in the castle, thinking to bring him to his trial, at which fair play was not intended; but he had the interest to procure the lord-chancellor's warrant for the removal of himself and suite from the castle, without lett or hindrance, on condition that he confined himself three weeks to his own house in the Canongate, to wait the charges brought against him. Haggard, the deputy-governor, who was the tool of the other party, refused to act on this warrant, pretending it was forged; but the very next day Huntly's interest again prevailed. He was not only liberated, but the outrageous Haggard was seized and lodged in jail, on what grounds I never heard exactly explained. Indeed it was long ere I knew that such an event had taken place, and if I had, it would have saved me a world of terror and trouble.

I followed the family of Huntly to the Canongate, but to my grief found that I had nothing to do save to eat and drink. I was grieved exceedingly at this, weening that they had no trust to put in me; as how could they well, considering that I had come into their service by playing the rogue! I kept myself exceedingly close, for fear of being seized for the malversation committed in the castle, and never went out of doors, save when the young ladies did, which was but seldom. A great deal of company flocked to the house. It was never empty from morning to night; for my part, I thought there had not been so many nobility and gentry in the whole kingdom, as came to pay court to the marquis, his sons, his lady, and his daughters; for all of them had their suitors and that without number. That house was truly like the court of a sovereign; and there were so many grooms, retainers, and attendants of one kind and another, that to this hour I never knew how many there were of us. We were an idle, dissipated, loquacious set, talking without intermission, and never talking anything but nonsense, low conceits, ribaldry, and all manner of bad things; and there neither was man nor woman among them all that had half the education of myself. I would have left the family in a short time, had it not been for one extraordinary circumstance—I was in love with my mistress! Yes, as deeply in love with Lady Jane Gordon as ever man was with maid, from the days of Jacob and Rachel unto this day on which I write. I had likewise strong hopes of reciprocal

affection, and ultimate success; but an humble dependant as I then was, how could I declare my love, or how reward my mistress if accepted? No matter. A man cannot help that strongest of all passions. For my part, I never attempted it; but finding myself too far gone in love to retreat, I resolved to give my passion full swing, and love with all my heart and soul, which I did. Strange as it may appear, I loved only Lady Jane—she that embraced me, and gave me a kiss—but yet I never could learn to distinguish her from her sister; and I was almost sure that whenever I began to declare my passion, I was to do it to the wrong one. I hated Lord Gordon, her eldest brother, who was the proudest man that I had ever seen, and dreaded that he never would consent to an union between his sister and one of the Sydeserfs. I was sure he would shoot me, or try to do it, but thought there might be means found of keeping out of his way, or of giving him as good as he gave. Lady Jane Gordon I was determined to attempt, and her I was determined to have.

All this time I heard no word from the castle, and began to be a little more at my ease; still I never ventured out of doors, save once or twice that I followed the young ladies, for I always attached myself to them and to Lady Jane, as far as I could distinguish. Having saved a share of money in the castle, I ordered a suit of clothes befitting a gentleman, and whenever a great dinner occurred, I dressed myself in that, and took my station behind Lady Jane's chair, but without offering to put my hand to anything. Lord Gordon, or Enzie, as they called him, noted me one day, and after I went out inquired who I was. This was told me by one of the valets. Neither the Marquis nor Lady Huntly answered a word, but both seemed a little in the fidgets at the query: but Lady Jane, after glancing round the whole apartment, answered her brother, that I was a young gentleman, a man of education and good qualities, who had done *her* a signal piece of service: that I had since that time attached myself to the family, but they did not choose to put me to any menial employment. On this the proud spirit of Lord Enzie rose, and he first jeered his angelic sister spitefully for requiring secret pieces of service from young gentlemen and men of education; and then he cursed me and all such hangers-on.

I never was so proud of any speech in the world as that of Lady Jane's, which made my blood rise still the more at the pride and arrogance of Lord Gordon; and I hoped some time in my life to be able to chastise him in part for his insolence. Whether or not these hopes were realized, I leave to all who read this memoir to judge.

Shortly after that, Lady Jane went out to walk one fine day, with her brother Lord Adam Gordon; I followed as I was wont at a respectful distance, clad in my splendid livery. In the royal bounds east of the palace, Lord Adam had noted me, for I saw him and his sister talking and looking back to me alternately. He was the reverse of his elder brother, being an easy, good-natured, and gentlemanly being as ever was born, with no great headpiece as far as I ever could learn. Lady Jane called me up to her, and asked me if we could pass over to the chapel on the hill at the nearest. I saw Lord Adam eyeing me with the most intense curiosity, as I thought, which made me blush like crimson; but I answered her ladyship readily enough and in proper English, without a bit of the Aberdeen brogue. I said, "I cannot tell Lady Jane, as I never crossed there, but I suppose it is quite practicable."

"Humph!" exclaimed Lord Adam, rather surprised at so direct and proper an answer.

"Then will you be so good as carry this fur mantle for me, Mr. Archibald?" said she, "as I propose to climb the hill with Auchendoun."

"Yes, Lady Jane," said I.

"But will it not warm you too much?" added she. "Because, if it will, I'll make my brother Adam carry it piece about with you."

I could make no answer, I was so overcome with delight at hearing that she put me on an equality with her brother; but taking the splendid mantle from her, I folded it neatly, took it over my arm, and took my respectful distance again. It was not long before the two were stopped by the extreme wetness of the bog, on which Lady Jane turned back; Lord Adam took hold of her, and would not let her, but wanted to drag her into the bog. She struggled with him playfully, and then called on me. "This unreasonable man will insist on my wading through this mire," said she; "pray, Mr. Archibald, could you find me a few steps, or contrive any way of taking me over dry shod."

"Yes, I can, Lady Jane," said I, throwing off my strong shoes, and setting them down at her ladyship's feet in one moment.

"Humph!" said Lord Adam, more surprised at my cleverness and good breeding than ever.

I believe she meant me to have carried her over in my arms, a practice very common in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh then. I believed so at the time, but I contrived a far more genteel and respectful method. She put on the shoes above her fine ones, smiling with approbation, and stepped over dry and clean, while I was obliged to wade over in my white stockings, which gave them an appearance as if I had on short boots. As soon as she got over to the dry hill, she returned me my shoes, thanked me, and said I was a much more gallant man than Auchendoun, who had so small a share of it, that she was sure he would live and die an old bachelor; but that *I would not.*

It is impossible at this time of life, when my blood is thin, and the fire of youth burning low, to describe the intensity of my love, my joy, and my delight after this auspicious adventure. I walked on springs—I moved in air—the earth was too vulgar

for my foot to tread on, and I felt as if mounting to the clouds of heaven, and traversing the regions and spheres above the walks of mortality. Yea, though clothed in a livery, and carrying her cloak over my arm (vile badges of slavery!)—though walking all alone, and far behind the object of all my earthly hopes, I remember I went on repeating these words to myself, "She is mine! she is mine!" The flower of all the world is my own! She loves me, she adores me! I see it in her eyes, her smile, her every feature: that beam only foretastes of heaven and happiness! She shall yet be mine! to walk by my side, smile in my face when there is none to see, rest in my bosom! Oh that it were given me to do some great and marvellous action, to make me worthy of so much gentleness and beauty!"

In this strain did I go on till it came to my reflection that she was older than I, and that I had no time for the performance of any of these great actions, as all the young noblemen of the three kingdoms were at cutting one another's throats about her and her sister already. This was a potion so bitter that I could not swallow it, nevertheless I was compelled to do it, and then I lifted up my voice and wept.

I was three weeks in the family before I knew that the whole of its members were confirmed Papists, and Huntly himself an excommunicated person, given over to Satan; and grievously was I shocked and tormented about it; particularly to think of the beautiful, angelic, and immaculate Lady Jane being a proselyte to that creed. For my life, I could not think the less of her for this misfortune; for she was indeed all gentleness, kindness, and humanity; but I deplored her calamity, and resolved to spend life and blood to effect her conversion to the truth, and then I knew the consolation she would experience would knit her inviolably to me for ever. Full of this great scheme, I set to the studying night and day how I might accomplish my purpose; but my plans were deranged for the present by an announcement that the family was to remove to the Highlands, in consequence of which all was bustle and confusion for several days.

The day of our departure at length arrived, and that was such a cavalcade as Scotland hath but rarely witnessed, when the Gordons rode out at the West Port of Edinburgh. The marquis wanted to show a little of his power, and to crow over his enemies that day, for he had no less than forty noblemen in his company, including the sons of earls, every one of whom had numerous attendants, while he himself had five hundred gallant yeomen of Strathbogie as a guard. The gentlemen rode all in armour, and the ladies on palfreys, and without doubt it was a noble sight. As we rode through the Grassmarket, the crowd was excessive, and there was some disposition manifested of an attack on the noble family, which was very unpopular among the true reformers of that period; but we appeared in such strength that they durst do nothing but stand and gaze, while the adherents of the old principles rent the air with shouts of applause.

I had for my steed a good black country nag, with a white girth round his neck. He was lean, but high-spirited, and I made a considerable figure among the multitude. After we were fairly out of the town, the ladies did not keep all together, but rode in pairs or mixed with the gentlemen. I then formed the design of watching an opportunity, and slipping a religious letter that I had penned into Lady Jane's hand; but I watched in vain, for she was the whole day surrounded by suitors, every one striving to get a word of her; so that I felt myself as nobody among that splendid group, and fell into great despondency. The more so, that I thought I discovered one who was a favourite above all others that day. He was tall, comely, and rode a French steed of uncommon beauty and dimensions, and being seldom or never from her side, I perceived a triumph in his eyes that was not to be borne; but I was obliged to contain my chagrin, not being able to accomplish anything for the present.

[Mr. Sydeserf then goes on to relate every circumstance attending their journey, and the places at which they halted, which narrative is tedious enough, for he seems neither to have been in the confidence of masters nor servants. He complains greatly of want of accommodation and victuals by the way, and adds, that as for the troopers and common attendants, he could not discover what they subsisted on, for he neither perceived that they got any allowance, or that they had any victuals along with them. The only thing worth copying in the journal (and it is scarcely so) is his account of a dinner which appears to have been at Glammis Castle, and the pickle David Peterkin was in for meat and drink.]

At Perth, we lodged at a palace of our own (I am ignorant what palace this was), but it was not stored with dainties like our house in Edinburgh. All the establishments of the town were ransacked for viands, and a good deal of fish and oaten meal were procured; nevertheless the people were very hungry, and everything vanished as fast as presented. Of the whole group there was not one so badly off as my old friend, Mr. David Peterkin, who could not live without a liberal supply of meat and drink, although, honest man, he was not very nice with regard to quality. The marquis dined at one, the head attendants at half-past one, and the lower servants at two, with David Peterkin at their head: but this day it was five before the first class sat down, and by the eager way in which the various portions were devoured, I saw there would not be much left for the second table, not looking so far forward as the third. At our table, every remnant of fish, fowl, meat, and venison vanished; the bones were picked as clean as peeled wood, and even the oatmeal soup went very low in the bickers. I could not help then noting the flabby and altered features

of poor Peterkin, as he eyed the last fragment of every good bit reaved from his longing palate. His cadaverous looks were really pitiful, for he was so much overcome that his voice had actually forsaken him, and I have reason to believe, that saving a little gruel, he and his associates got nothing.

The next night we were at the castle of old Lord Lyon, where I witnessed a curious scene, at least it was a curious scene to me. The dinner was served in a long dark hall, in which the one end could not be seen from the other, and the people took all their places, but nothing was set down. After the nobility were placed, two orderly constables came down among us, and pulling and wheeling us rudely by the shoulders, pointed out to us our various places. Down we sat, hurry-scurry, lords, ladies, servants, all in the same apartment, but all in due rank and subordination. Thinks I to myself, Lord Huntly will not like this arrangement, and Lady Huntly will like it still worse; but casting my eyes toward him at the head of the board, I never saw the old hero in better humour, and the suavity or sternness of his countenance spread always like magic over all that came within its influence, consequently I knew at once that that would be a pleasant party. It was the first time I had sat at table with my mistress, and I being among the uppermost retainers, my distance from her was not very great. I was so near as to hear many compliments paid to her beauty; but how poor they were compared with the idea that I had of her perfections!

To return to the dinner. The two officers with white sticks having returned back to our host, he inquired at them if all was ready, and then a chaplain arose and said a homily in Latin. Still nothing was presented save a few platters set before the nobility, and David Peterkin being placed within my view, I looked at him, and never beheld a face of such hungry and ghastly astonishment. Presently, two strong men, with broad blue bonnets on their heads, came in, bearing an immense roasted side of an ox, on a wooden server, like a baxter's board, and this they placed across the table at the head. Then there was such slashing and cutting and jingling of gullies, helping this and the other!

From the moment the side of beef made its appearance, David Peterkin's tongue began to wag. I looked to him again, and his countenance was changed from a cadaverous white into a healthy yellow, and he was speaking first to the one side then the other, and following every observation of his own with a hearty laugh. The two men and the broad bonnets kept always heaving the board downward until it came by the broad part of the table, and then there were no more wooden plates or knives. At first I thought our board was sanded over as I had seen the floors in Edinburgh, which I thought would be very inconvenient, but on observing again, I found that it was strewed thickly over with coarse salt. Then a carver-general supplied every man with his piece, with a despatch that was almost inconceivable, and he always looked at every one before he cut off his morsel. When he eyed Peterkin, he cut him a half-kidney, fat and all, with a joint of the back. How I saw him kneading it on the salted board! After the carver and beef, came one with a bent knife two feet in length, and cut every man's piece across, dividing it into four, then leaving him to make the best of it he could. A board of wedders, cut into quarters, was the next service, and the third course was one of venison and fowls, but that passed not by the broad table. After the first service, strong drink was handed round in large wooden dishes with two handles, and every man was allowed as much as he could take at a draught, but not to renew it; the same the next service, and thus ended our dinner. The party was uncommonly facetious, owing I was sure to the marquis's good humour, which never for an instant forsook him, and convinced me that he had often been in similar situations. I enjoyed it exceedingly; but everything came on me by surprise, and the last was the most disagreeable of all. No sooner had we taken our last sup above mentioned, than the two imperious constables with the long white staves came and turned us out with as little ceremony as they set us down, hitting such as were unmindful of their warning a yerk with their sticks. They actually drove us out before them like a herd of Highland cattle; and then the nobility and gentry closed around the broad table for an evening's enjoyment.

I never felt the degrading shackles of servitude and dependency so much as I did at that instant. To be placed at table with my mistress, with her whom I loved above all the world; to eat of the same food and drink of the same cup, and then, when it suited the convenience of my superiors in rank, (though in nothing else), and of my rivals, to be driven from her presence like a Highland bullock, and struck on the shoulders with a peeled stick! Why, sirs, it was more than the spirit within a Sydeserf could brook! and but for love—imperious love—but for the circumstance that I was utterly unable to tear myself away from the object of my devotion, I would never have submitted to such humiliation, or the chance of it a second time.

[On the marquis and his retinue reaching Huntly Castle, it appears from the narrative that by some mutual understanding all the gentlemen visitors withdrew, and left the family at leisure for some great preparation, the purport of which Mr. Sydeserf was utterly at a loss to comprehend; but it freed him of his rivals in love, and afforded him numerous opportunities of divulging the hidden passion that devoured him. Every day he attempted something, and every attempt proved alike futile; so that to copy the narration of them all would be endless. But at length he accomplished his great masterstroke of getting his religious epistle into Lady Jane's

hands by stratagem, which, he says, was filled with professions of the most ardent esteem and anxiety about her soul's well-being, and with every argument that ever had been used by man for her conversion from Popery. While waiting with the deepest anxiety the effect of this epistle, things were fast drawing to a crisis with him, therefore a few of the final incidents must be given in his own words.]

Some days elapsed before I noted any difference in her manner and disposition; but then I saw a depth and solemnity of thought beginning to settle on her lovely countenance. I then knew the truth was beginning to work within her, and I rendered thanks to Heaven for the bright and precious prospect before me, regretting that I had not subscribed my name to the momentous composition. She now began to retire every day to a little bower on the banks of the Deveron, for the purpose, as I was at first positively convinced, of pouring out her soul in prayer and supplication at the footstool of grace. As soon as I found out her retreat, I went and kissed the ground on which she had been kneeling I know not how oft. I then prostrated myself on the same sanctified spot, and prayed for her conversion; and also, I must confess, that the flower of all the world might in time become my own. I then spent the afternoon in culling all the beautiful flowers of the wood, the heath, and the meadow, with which I bedded and garnished the spot in a most sumptuous manner, arranging all the purple flowers in the form of a cross, which I hung on the back of the bower, so as to front her as she entered, thinking to myself that since the epistle had opened the gates of her heart, this device should scale its very citadel. I could not sleep on the following night; so arising early, I went to the bower and found everything as I had left it. My heart had nigh failed me at the greatness of the attempt, but not doubting its ultimate success, I let everything remain.

Then a thought struck me how exquisite a treat it would be to witness the effect of my stratagem unseen. This was easy to be done, as the bower was surrounded by an impervious thicket; so I set about it and formed myself a den close behind the bower, cutting a small opening through the leaves and branches, that without the possibility of being seen, I might see into the middle of her retreat. I thought the hour of her arrival would never come, and my situation and sufferings were dreadful. At length the entrance to the bower darkened, and on peeping through my opening, I saw the lovely vision standing in manifest astonishment. Her foot was so light that no sound for the listening ear escaped from the sward where that foot trode. She came like a heavenly vision, too beautiful and too pure for human hand to touch or even for human eye to look on; and there she stood in the entrance to the bower, the emblem of holy amazement. My breast felt as it would rend at both my sides with the pangs of love, and my head as if a hive of bees had settled on it. As soon as her eye traced the purple cross, she instantly kneeled before it, and bowed her head to the ground in prayer; but her prayer was the effusion of the soul, few words being expressed audibly, and those at considerable intervals. In these intervals she appeared to be kissing the cross of flowers; but I was not positive of this, for I saw but indistinctly; she then took a small picture of some favourite sweetheart from her bosom, looked at it with deep concern and affection, kissed it, and put it again in its place. This grieved me, but I took notice of the mounting of jewels round the miniature so as that I was certain of knowing it again, and curious I was to see it.

She then sat for a space in the most calm and beatific contemplation, and I shall never forget the comeliness of that face, as she looked about on the beauties of nature. How fain I would have dashed through the thicket, and embraced her feet and kissed them, but my modesty overcame me, and I durst not for my life so much as stir a finger; so she went away, and I emerged from my hole.

My head being full of my adventure, I dressed up the bower anew with flowers that night; and as I lay in my bed I formed the bold resolution of breaking in upon her retirement, casting myself at her feet, and making known to her my woeful state. I resolved also to ravish a kiss of her hand—nay, I am not sure but I presumed further, for I once or twice thought, have not I as good a right to kiss her as she had to kiss me? So the next day I did not betake myself to my concealment but waited till she was gone, and until I thought she had time to finish her devotions, and then I went boldly on the same track, to cast myself on her pity and learn my fate. Alas! before I reached the bower my knees refused to carry me, every joint grew feeble, my heart sunk into my loins, and instead of accomplishing my glorious feats of love, I walked by the entrance to the bower without so much as daring to cast my eyes into it—I walked on, and in a short time I saw her leave it with a hurried step.

That evening when I went to dress up the bower, behold I found the picture which I had before seen, and a small ebony cross which she had left in her perturbation at being discovered, and having her sanctuary broken in upon. I seized the picture eagerly, to see if I could discover the name or features of my rival, but behold it was the image of the Virgin Mary, with these words attached to it—MOTHER OF GOD, REMEMBER ME! I almost fainted with horror at this downright idolatry in one of the most amiable of human beings, and for once thought within my heart, Is it possible that a God of mercy and love will cast away a masterpiece of his creation, because she has been brought up in error, and knows no better? It was but a passing thought and a sinful one, for I knew that truth alone could be truth; yet though I deplored the lady's misfortune, I loved her rather the better than the worse for it,

for my love was seasoned with a pity of the most tender and affectionate nature.

I put these sinful relics carefully up in my pocket, determined to have a fair bout with the conscience and good sense of their owner at the delivery of them. But the next day she cheated me, going to her bower by a circuitous route, and about an hour and a half earlier than she was wont, for she had missed her costly relics and been quite impatient about them. I discovered that she was there, and knew not how to do to come in contact with her. But I was always a man of fair and honourable shifts; so I went and turned a drove of the marquis's fat bullocks into the side of the Deveron to get a drink, for the day was very warm. The animals were pampered and outrageous, but still more terrible in appearance than reality; and now, Lady Jane could not return home in any other way than either by wading the stream, or coming through the middle of the herd, neither of which she durst do for her life. Now, thinks I, my dear lady, I shall make you blythe of my assistance once more; so I concealed myself, keeping in view the path by which she was necessitated to emerge from the wood. She appeared once or twice among the bushes, but durst not so much as come nigh the stile. I kept my station, but was harassed by Lady Jane's maid coming to look after her mistress, who had been longer than her usual time absent.

"Go away hame, you giglet," said I. "The lady is without doubt at her devotions. I am watching lest she fall among these dangerous animals. A fine hand you would be to conduct her through them. Go away hame, and mind your broidery and your seam."

"Oh mee gracioso Monsieur Longshirte," said the French taupie, "how monstrouse crabeede you are dis day! me do tink you be for de word of de pretty bride yourself. Ah you sly doag, is it not soa? Ha, come tell me all about it, cood Monsieur de Longshirte;" and with that she came and placed herself close down beside me. I was nettled to death, and knew not what way to get quit of her.

"Go away hame, I tell you, you foreign coquette," said I, as good naturedly as I could; "you mousetrap, you gillie-gawkie, I say go away hame."

"How very droll you be, good Monsieur de Longshirte," said she; "but de very night before one you called me de sweet, sweet rose, and de lily, and de beautiful maamoselle Le Mebene; and now I am de giglet, and trap-de-moose, and gillygawky? And den it was come, come, come wid me, sweet Le Mebene; but now it is go, go home vid you de French coquette! How very droll you be, kind Monsieur Longshirte."

After a great deal of tattle of the same sort, and finding it impossible to get rid of her, I ran off and left her, ensconcing myself in the middle of the herd of bullocks. I did not want to hear any recapitulations of idle chit-chat. Domestics in high life have ways and manners not much to boast of, and my heart was set on higher game. So I fled from the allurements of a designing woman, into the fellowship of the bulls of Bashan. They gathered round me, staring with their great goggle eyes, and made a humming noise as if to encourage one another to the attack, but none seemed to have courage to be the first beginner, but always as their choler rose to a height, they attacked one another either in sport or real earnest, and altogether they made a hideous uproar. Le Mebene fled towards the castle, and afraid that she would raise the affray, I was forced to proceed to the only entrance by which Lady Jane could emerge from the wood, and cutting myself a great kebir, I took my stand there, and whistled a spring with great glee to keep my courage up, and let my mistress hear that her protector was at hand.

She was not slack in taking the hint, for she came to me with a hurried step, and a certain wildness in her looks that showed great trepidation. She commended me for my attention, blessed me, and took my hand in hers, which I felt to be trembling. This I took to be the manifestation of an ardent and concealed love, and seizing it in both mine, I kissed it kneeling at her feet; at the same time beginning a speech which I choose not here to relate, till looking up I perceived a blush on her face. I believe to this day it was the blush of restrained affection, but at the moment it had the effect of sealing my lips, having taken it for the red frown of displeasure.

"Do not mar the high sentiments I entertain of you, Mr. Archibald," said she.

"My esteem for you is such, honoured lady," said I, "that it knows no boundaries either in time or eternity."

"I know it, I know it, young man," said she, interrupting me again: "you have put my faith sorely to the test; but, blessed be the mother of our Lord, I have overcome."

My heart trembled within me with a mixture of grief and awe, love and disappointment, and I lost the only chance ever I had of working the conversion of that most angelic of women, by sinking into utter silence before her eye. She seized the opportunity by momently reverting to her critical and dangerous situation, and asked if I durst undertake to conduct her through the herd?

I shouldered my great stick, answered in the affirmative, and assured her it was only a sense of her imminent danger that had brought me there.

"There is nothing in this world for which I have such a horror as bulls," said she. "They are the most ferocious of all animals, and so many accidents occur every season from their untameable fierceness, that I declare my blood runs cold to encounter their very looks."

The animals as far as I understood were oxen, not bulls, but I chose not to give the lie to a lady's discernment, and acquiesced with her in affirming that our country contained no animals so dangerous and

terrible, and I added, "But what does the heart and arm of man fear when put to the test in defence of beauty?"

"Bravo!" said she, "lead on, and God be our shield!"

I offered my protecting hand, but she declined it and took shelter behind me. She was covered with a tartan mantle, the prevailing colour of which was a bright scarlet, a colour that provokes the fury of these animals, but which circumstance was then unknown to me. They came on us with open mouths, bellowing and scraping with their fore feet on the earth, and always as they gazed at us the reflection of the mantle made their eyes as of a bloody red. I thought the animals were gone mad altogether, and never was so terrified from the day that I was born. Lady Jane clung to me, sometimes on the one side and sometimes on the other, uttering every now and then a smothered scream, and looking as pale as if she had been wrapped in her winding-sheet.

"No fear, no fear, madam," said I. "They had better keep their distance. Stand off, you ugly dog! stand off!" and I shouldered my tree. "Stand off, or I will teach you better manners." No, they would not stand off, but in place of that came nearer and nearer, until they had us so completely beleaguered that we could neither advance nor retreat. "Collie, choke a bull!" cried I, trying every method to disperse our adversaries, but trying them all in vain. I gave us up for lost, and I fear Lady Jane beheld my changing cheer, for she actually grew frantic with terror, and screamed aloud for assistance as from some other quarter.

It was now high time for me to repent of my stratagem of the bullocks, which I did in good sincerity, and made a vow to God in my heart, if he would but deliver me, thenceforward to act openly and candidly with all mankind, and womankind into the bargain. I made this experiment the more readily that Lady Jane was at the same time calling on the holy Virgin, on whose intercession having no manner of reliance, but dreading the vengeance of Heaven for such palpable idolatry, I put up such a petition as a Christian ought, and sealed it with a vow. When lo! wonderful to relate! the outrageous animals fell a-tossing their heads and tails in a wild and frantic manner, and in one minute they galloped off in every direction, as if under the influence of some charm. They cocked their heads, rolled their tails up in the air, and ran as if for a prize; some of them plunging into the Deveron, and others dashing into the woods. Our relief was instantaneous. I say nothing but the truth, and deny not that the phenomenon might have been accounted for in a natural way, therefore, as a humble sinner, I take no merit to myself, but describe things precisely as they occurred. Whether the animals only came to gaze on us for their amusement, and started off simultaneously in pursuit of some higher fun, or if an army of hornets was sent by Heaven to our relief, I pretend not at this distance of time to determine. But sorry have I been a thousand times that I could not keep that vow made in my greatest extremity. The times in which I have lived rendered it impracticable. Everything was to be done by plot and stratagem, and he that could not yield his mind to such expedients was left in the lurch. True, it was a sin to break my vow, nevertheless it was a sin of necessity, and one of which I was compelled to be guilty every day. May the Lord pardon the transgressions of his erring servant!

One would have thought that now, when our danger was clean gone, Lady Jane would have brightened up; but, in place of that she grew quite faint, and leaned on my arm without being able to speak. I bore her on for some time with great difficulty, and at last was obliged to let her sink to the earth, where for some time I had the ineffable delight of supporting her head on my bosom; and so much was I overcome with violent emotion, that for a long time I could not stir to attempt any means for her recovery. At length I judged it necessary to my credit to attempt something, so I cut the lacings of her stays, and soon after that she recovered.

I had not well raised her up, and was still supporting her with both my arms, when on an instant her brother, the Lord Gordon, and the Marquis of Douglas appeared close at our hands. I expected Lady Jane to faint again, but the surprise acted like electricity on her, and after an alternate blush of the rose and paleness of the lily she quite recovered. Madam Mebene had raised the alarm in the family, and the two lords came on the look out for her who was the darling of the whole house. But the proud eye of Enzie burned with rage as he approached us. He had seen me rise first myself, raise the lady in my arms, and support her for a small space on the way, and it was manifest that his jealous nature was aroused, and that if it had not been for the presence of Lord Douglas, he would have run me through the body. I'll never forget the look he gave me when he threw me from his sister's side and took my place. As for the attack made on her by bulls, as she related it, and of her fainting away, I could perceive that he regarded it all as a made-up story, and thought more than he choose to express.

Lady Enzie was not at Castle Huntly on our arrival there from Edinburgh; for the castle being then in ruins, and our residence only temporary barracks, we remained at our own home till about this time of which I am writing, when she came on a visit. Her maiden name was Lady Anne Campbell, she being eldest sister to the good Earl of Argyle; she had been married at an early age, and now looked like an old woman, her health and heart being both broken. She had been compelled to

marry into a Catholic family, in order to effect some mighty coalition in the Highlands which failed, and I fear she had little pleasure of her life, for her husband was the sworn enemy of her house, and a perfect demon in pride and irritability. She was a true Protestant, and had all the inherent good qualities of her noble lineage; she had learned to temporize with those of a different persuasion, and all her sisters-in-law loved her with great tenderness and affection.

Now it so fell out that my religious epistle to Lady Jane had troubled that lady a great deal, and put her Catholic principles sore to the rack; therefore, as a grateful present to her Protestant sister, she put the writing into her hands, at which she was greatly amazed, and not less delighted, testifying the strongest desire to forward the views of the writer. By what means this paper fell into her husband's hands, I do not know, but so it did, and I suspect its history along with it. He had been jealous of my attentions to his sister of late, and this bold attempt at her conversion raised that jealousy to an exorbitant pitch. So one evening when I was standing in a circle of an hundred men and women, listening to a band of music, out comes Lord Enzie with my identical paper in his hand. I had heard of his lady's high approbation, and judged that now the time was come for my advancement; and though I would rather have taken it from any other nobleman in the kingdom, yet knowing my epistle afar off by its form, I resolved on acknowledging it. It was a holiday, and we were all clothed in our best robes, when out comes the haughty and redoubted George Gordon, Lord of Enzie and Badenach, into the midst of us, and reading the address and superscription of the paper, he held it up and inquired if any in the circle could inform him who was the author of such a sublime production. Judging that to be my time, I stepped forward, kneeled on the green at my Lord Enzie's feet, and acknowledged myself the unworthy author, on which the proud aristocrat struck me unmercifully on the shoulders and head with his cane, accompanying his blows with a volley of the most opprobious epithets. I was altogether unarmed, otherwise I would have made a corpse of the tyrant; so I fled backward and said, "My lord, you shall rue what you have now done the longest day you have to live. Do you know whom you have struck?"

"Know whom I have struck? Puppy! vagabond!" exclaimed he, and breaking at me, he struck me with such violence that he knocked me down. I fell quite insensible; but he had inflicted many kicks and blows on me after I was down, which I felt for many a day; and, as I was informed, dashed my epistle in my face, and left me lying

When I came to myself I was lying in a bed in the house of a poor weaver in the village, and a surgeon was dressing my head, which was fractured. I was extremely ill, and the violence of my rage at Lord Enzie made my distemper a great deal the worse.

As soon as I was able I wrote to the marquis complaining of the usage I had received in recompense for all I had ventured for him. He was a man of the highest honour, and sent me a sum of money with an assurance that he would provide for me in a way that suited both my talents and inclination. He regretted what his son had done, whom no man could keep in bounds, but was willing to make me all the reparation that lay in his power, which I should soon see; so I was obliged to keep my humble bed and wait the issue.

A few days subsequent to that I was visited by Lady Enzie and Lady Jane Gordon, who both condoled with me in a most affectionate manner, and reprobated the outrage committed by Lord Enzie, who had the day before that set off for France on some military expedition. After a great deal of kind commiseration, Lady Enzie said, "The plain truth is, Clerk Archimbald, that you can never rise to eminence either in my husband's family, or under the patronage of any of its members, for (begging my lovely sister's pardon) every one of that family are Catholics at heart, however they may have been compelled to disguise their sentiments, and they will never raise a man to wealth or power who is not confirmed in their own religious tenets. It is a part of their principle rather to retard him. But to my brother, the Lord Argyle, you will be quite a treasure. You will instruct his two noble sons in the principles of the reformed religion, for which no young man in the kingdom is so well fitted; learn them the art of composition in the English tongue; travel with them into foreign parts, and form their hearts and their minds to follow after truth. Or you can assist my brother in his great plans of furthering the Reformation. If you consent to this arrangement, as soon as you are able to travel, I will despatch you to my brother with a letter which will insure your good reception."

I testified my obligation to her ladyship, but added that I loved my young mistress and her father so well, I had no heart to leave them.

"The old marquis, my father-in-law, is one of the noblest characters that ever bore the image of his Maker," said she, "but he is necessarily on the verge of life; and then under my husband your hopes are but small. As for Jane, she leaves her father's house immediately as bride to a young Catholic lord, who would not have a Protestant in his family for half his estate."

Here my heart sank within me, and I could not answer a word.

Lady Enzie went on. "In order that you may not refuse my offer, I tell you some of the secrets of the family without leave, of which I know you will make no ill use. These two young dames, so far celebrated for their beauty, as they were born on the same day, and christened on the same day, so they

are to be wedded on the same day, and in the same church; the one to a Scottish, the other to an Irish nobleman. Poor Lady Jane is destined for Ireland, to worship St. Patrick and the Virgin Mary, in a due preparation for purgatory, as long as she lives."

"I'll go to the Earl of Argyle to-morrow or the next day at the furthest," said I.

The two ladies applauded my resolution, settling their plans between them, but seeing me unfit for further conversation they took their leave. Lady Jane gave me her hand and bade me farewell; but I retained that dear hand in mine and could not part with it, neither did she attempt to force it away. "Stay still with us a few moments, Lady Gordon," said I, "for I have something to give my young mistress before we part for ever."

"What have you to give me, Archy?" said Lady Jane.

"I have to give you first my blessing," said I, "and afterwards something you will value more. Farewell, most lovely and fascinating of all thy race. May the Almighty God, who made thee so beautiful, make thee as eminently good, and endow thy mind with those beauties that shall never decay. And may he fit and prepare thee for whatever is his will concerning thee—for conjugal bliss or sorrow of heart; for life, for death, for time, or for eternity."

"Amen!" said both ladies, bowing; "and may thy blessings return double on thy own head."

"I will henceforth revere thy religion for thy own sake," continued I; "for the tenets that have formed such a mind must have something of heaven in them. May you be beloved through life as you are loving and sincere, and may your children grow up around you the ornaments of our nature, as you have yourself been its greatest. For me, bereaved as I hence must be of the light of your countenance, I care no more what fortune betide me, for I must always be like a blind man, longing for the light of that sun he is never more to see. Of this be sure, that there is always one who will never forget you, and of whose good wishes and prayers you shall through life have a share. And now here are some relics, too precious in your sight, which I fain would have ground to powder, and stamped the residue with my feet, but seeing the line that Providence has marked out for you, I restore them, and trust you to the mercy of Him who was born of a virgin."

So saying I gave into her hands the graven image of the Virgin, and the purple cross set with gold and diamonds, on which she gave me a last embrace, while tears of gratitude choked her utterance, and Lady Enzie hurried her out, and left me a being as forlorn of heart as any that the light of heaven visited.

[Thus ended the baillie's first love, which seems to have been most ardent and sincere, yet chastened by that respect due to one so much his superior. This he never seems to take into account; the reason of which appears to be, that when he acted these things, he was in a very different station than when he wrote of them, and felt that at this latter time he was very nigh to Lady Jane's rank in life.

We must now skip over more than a hundred pages of his memoirs, as affording little that is new or amusing. He was engaged by the Earl of Argyle as his secretary, and assisted that nobleman with all his power and cunning in bringing about a reformation both in church and state. He was likewise tutor to his two sons, and went over to Holland with Lord Lorn, and afterwards to London with Lord Neil Campbell; but in the tedious details of these matters, although there is a portion of good sense, or sly speciousness in its place, yet there is very little of it so much better than the rest as to be worth extracting. There is one anecdote which he pretends to give from report, which appears not a little puzzling. He says:]

"While at this place (Armaddie) there were strange reports from Huntly Castle reached mine ears. The two lovely twin Gordons were married on the same day to two widowers, but both young and gallant gentlemen, Lady Mary to the Marquis of Douglas, and Lady Jane to Lord Strathbane—(who in the world was this?); but on the evening of the wedding, the latter missed his bride, and following her out to her bower, he found her in company with a strange gentleman, who was kneeling and clasping her knees; on which Lord Strathbane rushed forward, and ran the aggressor through the body with his sword. The utmost confusion arose about the castle. Lady Jane fainted, and went out of one fit into another, but would never tell who that gentleman was, denying all knowledge of him. The body was likewise instantaneously removed, so that it was no more seen; but Lord Strathbane, supposing he had committed a murder, fled that night, and the marriage was not consummated for full seven weeks. The story was never rightly cleared up."

We do not much wonder at it, considering how quickly the body, or rather the wounded gentleman, made his escape; but even at this distance of time we have a shrewd suspicion that it might be the baillie himself, especially as he says in another place—"The marquis (of Argyle) would fain have had me putting on sword-armour that day, both for the protection of my own person, and for the encouragement of the covenanters. But by reason of a *wound in my right side*, which I got *by accident* more than a dozen of years before, I could never brook armour of any sort," &c.

The getting of this wound is never mentioned, and we find by his own confused dates, that the marriages he mentions took place about twelve years previous to this engagement of which he is speaking; so that without much straining, I think we may set down the baillie as the strange gentleman whom

the jealous bridegroom ran through the body in the wood.

There is another incident he records which marks in no ordinary degree the aristocratic tyranny of that day.]

When I arrived at Edinburgh, says he, I still felt a little suspicion that the affair of the castle would come against me, and the first thing I did was to make inquiry who was deputy-governor of the fortress at the time being, and what was become of the former one, my old tyrant Haggard. I soon found out that Ludovico Gordon, one of the house of Huntly, occupied that station, so that there I was quite safe; but how was I amazed at finding that Huntly's influence had actually brought Haggard to the gallows—at least so far on the way that he then lay under condemnation. Whether it was through fear of the history of the papers that I stole being discovered, or merely out of revenge for some small indignity offered, I know not, but the marquis and the rest of the Catholic party got him indicted. The other prevailing party did not think it worth their while to defend him, and so the fellow strapped. But the oddest circumstance of the matter was, that my disappearance from the castle was made one of the principal reasons for bringing on his condemnation. It was proved to the satisfaction of the judges, that he had frequently threatened me with his utmost vengeance, to have me whipped and hung at the flag-staff, &c., and that I had disappeared all at once in the dead of the night, while all my clothes, even to my shirt and nightcap, were found lying in my chamber next day, so that there was no doubt I had been made away with, in order to cover his embezzlement of the public monies. Haggard was in great indignation at the charge, but not being able to prove aught to the contrary, the plea was admitted, and he was cast for execution, a circumstance not much accounted of in those days.

I was greatly tickled with this piece of information, and he having been the man who of all others used me the worst, save Lord Gordon or Enzie, as he was called, so I resolved never either to forgive the one or the other. Of course I made no efforts towards a mitigation of the brute Haggard's sentence.

His execution had been fixed for the 26th of May, but before that period, I had been called express to Stirling on the marquis's business, in order to further the correspondence on the Antrim expedition, of which Argyle my patron was in great terror. However, I took a horse on the 25th, and riding all night, reached the Grassmarket in good time to see the ruffian pay kane for all his cruelties and acts of injustice; and from that day forth, I was impressed with a notion that Providence would not suffer any man to escape with impunity who had wronged me, and inherited my curse and malison. I had done nothing against Haggard, saving that at one time I had wished ill to him in my heart, and now, behold, I saw even more than my heart's desire on mine enemy. I enjoyed the sight a good deal, nor was I to blame;—a man should always do that which is just and proper. I never saw such a woe-begone wretched being as he looked on the scaffold; no man could have believed that a character so dissipated and outrageous could ever have been reduced to such a thing of despair. He harangued the multitude at great length, and in my opinion to very little purpose, merely, I was persuaded, for the purpose of gaining a few more minutes of miserable existence. Again and again did he assert his innocence relating to the murder of the young man commonly called Clerk Archibald, wished well to the Marquis of Huntly, and prayed for his forgiveness.

During the time of this harangue, and when it drew nigh to a close, I chanced to come in contact with Mr. Alexander Hume, baker, with whom I had some settlements to make while I was in the castle. He was one whom I esteemed as an honourable man, and I could not help speaking to him, asking how he did?—and what he thought of this affair? He answered me in some confusion, so that I perceived he did not know me, or was greatly at a loss to comprehend how I should be there. Judging it therefore as well to be quit of him, I made off a little, but he stuck by me, and the crowd being so great, I could not get away, for I was close to the foot of the gallows.

"Think of it, squire?" said he, "Why I suppose I think of it as others do; that the fellow was a rascal, and brought himself under the lash of the law, and is suffering justly the penalty of his iniquities. Our judges are just, you know, and our exacters righteous—do you not think the same?"

"You had a good deal of business with Haggard, Mr. Hume," says I, "and must know. Did you find him an arrant rascal in his dealings?"

"No—I do not say so, I was not called to give oath to that effect, and if I had, I could not have sworn he was."

"Then you know that, as to the murder, he *must* have been innocent of that."

"How?—What?—How can you prove that? Good and blessed Virgin, is not this Clerk Archy himself?"

I nodded assent, when he seized my hand as if it had been in a vice, and went on without suffering me to rejoin a word—"How are you? Where have you been? You have been kidnapped, then! Come this way—this way a wee bit. Colonel Haggard! Hilloa, colonel, speak to me will ye."

The colonel had taken farewell of the world, of the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and the spires of Edinburgh Castle. The bedesman and executioner were both sick of his monotonous harangues, and waited with impatience the moment when he should give the signal. Still he had not power, and at that terrible crisis Hume fell a bawling out to him—"Hilloa, colonel, speak to me, will ye? speak to me, just for a wee bit—hilloa, you there, Mr.

Sheriff and Mr. Chaplain, loose the colonel's een will ye?

The sheriff shook his head, on which Hume saw there was not a moment to lose, and having resolved to save Haggard's life, merely, I dare say, for the novelty of the thing, he called aloud to the sheriff to stop the execution till he, Mr. Hume, spoke a word in his ear. With that he sprang to the ladder with an agility of which no man would have supposed him possessed—the sheriff beckoned the sentinel to let him pass, on which he intimated something very shortly to that dignitary, and flew to the prisoner, who, poor man! stood with his eyes covered, the tow about his neck, his hands hanging pendulous, and the fingers of the right one closed on the signal with the grasp of death. The officious baker, who seemed to have lost his reason for a space, instantly fell to relieving the culprit, turned the napkin up from his eyes, and would also have loosed the tow from about his craig had he been permitted, and all the while he was speaking as fast as his tongue could deliver. I could not hear all he said, but these were some of the words—"It's a fact that I tell you, sir, look to yoursel—he's stannin there at the fit of the gallows. You're a betrayed man, sir. See there he is, sir, looking you in the face, and witnessing the whole affair. Mind yoursel, sir, for, holy Virgin! there's nae time to lose, ye ken."

The poor wretch tried to look, and to find me out in the crowd, but he only stared, and I could easily perceive that he saw nothing, or at least distinguished no one object from another—his eyes were like those of a dead person, casting no reflection inwardly on the soul. Mr. Hume, as I said, in the height of his officiousness, had begun unloosing the cord from about the convict's neck, but was withstood by the executioner. That was a droll scene, and contributed no little to the amusement of the tag-rag and bob-tail part of the citizens of Edinburgh. "Let abee, sir," said the executioner; "wha bade ye tak that trubble. Naebody's fingers touch tow here but mine, honest man. Stand back an it be your wull. Who the muckle deevil are ye?"

"Wha am I, sir?" cried the baker—"Wha am I, say ye?—My name, sir, is Alexander Hume, I'm one o' the auld baillies, and deacon convener o' the five trades o' the bee Calton, a better kind o' man than you, Mr. Hangie, or ony that ever belanged to you, an' never kend for ony ill yet—mair than some focks can say! Wha am I, troth!—Cornel, look to yoursel, sir, or you're a murdered man. I'll stand by you, I like to see a man get justice."

The poor colonel judging it necessary to do or say something for himself in this extremity, appeared like a man struggling in a horrible dream, but his senses being quite benumbed, he could only take up the baker's hint, and a bad business he made of it, for he began with—

"O good Christian people, it is true, it is true. I am a murdered man; an innocent murdered man; and as a proof of it, the man whom I murdered is standing here looking me in the face, and laughing at my calamity. And is not this, good Christians, such usage as flesh and blood cannot endure—to be murdered by spiteful Papists and enemies—murdered in cold blood!—O murder!—murder!—*murder!*"

"What's all this for!" exclaimed the hangman and turned the poor wretch off. The baker called out. "Stop, stop!" and caught wildly at the rope, but he was taken into custody, and the colonel, after a few wallops, expired. In an hour after, I left the city to attend the marquis's business, but the matter caused a great deal of speechification in Edinburgh for a season, the most part of the lieges trowing that it had been my ghost that the baker had seen at the foot of the gallows; for it was affirmed that my naked corpse had been taken from a well in the castle, along with other two bodies, all murdered by Haggard. I did not believe that Haggard murdered one of them; me I was sure he did not murder, and I was very glad that it was so.

[Argyle, as the head and chief of the reformers, now carried everything before him; and we find that, principally for political purposes, he placed the baillie in Edinburgh as a great wine and brandy merchant, and by that means got him elected into the council of the city, where he seems to have had great influence, both with ministers and magistrates. The king nominating the baillies then, Argyle or Huntly, precisely as their parties prevailed, had nothing further to do than go to the king, or the commissioners, after the king's restraint, and bring down the list, in which case the honourable council seems never to have objected to any of those named: but if we take the baillie's word for it, he seems to have been a conscientious man, for he says:]

From the time I entered the council, I considered myself as acting for others. Not for others abstract from myself, but at all events for others besides myself; and oftentimes was I greatly puzzled to forward the views of my party without injuring my own interest. I determined to support the reformers against all opposition, but the first time I was in the council and the magistracy, we were sorely kept in check by the great influence of the old Marquis of Huntly. The combined lords would gladly have brought him to the scaffold, for he was a bar in their progress which it was impossible to get over. I believe there was never a nobleman in Scotland who had so many enemies, and those so inveterate: but his friends being so much attached to him, on the other hand, the Protestant party could make little progress as long as he lived. I felt this, and though I had the offer of being made lord provost, and knighted in 1633, I declined the honour, and retired from the magistracy until I saw a more favourable season for furthering the views of the reformers, and of my own great and amiable patron in particular. Besides, I really had such a respect for the old man-

quis, Papist as I believed him to be at heart, that I could not join in the conspiracies against him, which I heard broached by one or other every day. I could not bear to see the noble old veteran dogged to death, which was the real cause why I left co-operating with the violent part of the reformers for several years. I never refused Argyle's suggestions, but those of all others I received with great caution.

In the beginning of the year 1635, the worthy old marquis was again brought before the council, on a charge of harassing and wasting the lands of his Protestant neighbours. I attended the examinations of the witnesses, and was convinced in my mind that the marquis had no hand in the depredations complained of. True, he had not punished the aggressors, but that I considered no capital charge; and was grieved when I saw him shut up once more in close confinement in the castle, in the very same apartment from whence I had before been the means of delivering him. Then a fair trial by jury was instituted, and among all the forty-eight nominated by the sheriff, there was not one to my knowledge who was not of the party opposed to Huntly. Though ever so zealous in forwarding the reformation, I did not like to see it forwarded by unjust means; for in such cases, men can hardly expect the blessing of Heaven to attend their labours. There were only four commoners named as jurymen, and I being chosen and sworn as one of the most stanch reformers, yet I determined within myself to give my voice for nothing of which I was not fully convinced. Wariston's indictment represented the old marquis as the most notorious tyrant and offender living. He was accused of murder, fire raising, and every breach of order, and all the witnesses sworn spoke to the same purpose; but there were two, Major Creighton and John Hay, whom as a juryman, I took the liberty of questioning over again. The marquis looked fiercely at me, quite mistaking my motive; nor did I at all explain myself then, but being chosen foreman of the jury, as I knew I would, I refused to retire till I heard three men of the Gordons shortly examined, and then I made it clear to the jurymen, on our retiring, that Major Creighton and Mr. John Hay had both man-sworn themselves, for that neither the marquis nor one of his family had been proved in the foray; and as for Patrick Gordon, who had been proven there, it was *almost* proven that he could not possibly have had instructions from Huntly.

I then put the question, first to Sir William Dick, a just man and a good, who at once gave his voice —*not guilty*. My coadjutors were thunderstruck, for they all knew we were placed there to condemn the Marquis of Huntly, not to justify him. The next in order tried to reason the matter over again with Dick and me, but got into a passion, and at length voted guilty. Several followed on the same side, and it was merely the influence which Sir William and I possessed in the city, and with the reformers in particular, that caused some of those present to vote the marquis not guilty—now when they found they had their greatest opponent in their power. I was certain they thought there was some scheme or plot under it, which they did not comprehend, and that Sir William Dick and I were managing it, whereas we had nothing at heart but justice. Our point was a while very doubtful, so much so that I feared the marquis was lost, which would have been a great stain on our court of justice; but everything was managed by intrigue, and the power or advantage of one party over another was the ruling cause that produced the effect.

When the vote came to Baillie Anderson of Leith, I looked in his face. I saw he was going to vote guilty in support of our faction, but I gave him a look that staggered him, and I repeated it at every turn of his eye. He called the state of the vote to gain time; then I saw that Patie durst not vote against me, and accordingly his voice decided it by one.

I then returned joyfully into the court, with the state of the vote in my hand, and said, "My lord, the jury by a plurality of voices find George Gordon, Marquis of Huntly—Not guilty." Never did I see a whole bench so astounded; the matter had been settled, and over again settled with them all, and the justice's clerk had composed, it was said, a condemning speech of so tremendous a nature, that it was to astonish all the nations of the world, and even convert the Pope of Rome; but I balked them all for once, and my lord justice clerk's speech was lost.

The marquis had had a powerful party in the house, all desponding; for when the sentence of the jury was heard, the voices of the audience rose gradually to a tumult of applause, at which the judges were highly offended; but the old hero, turning round, and bowing to the crowd with the tear in his eye, the thunders of approbation were redoubled. I never rejoiced more, nor was prouder of anything than of the brave old peer's acquittal, and I perceived that his feelings nearly overcame him. He looked at me with an unstable and palsied look, as if striving in vain to recognize me; but that very afternoon he sent his chariot to my house, with a kind request that I would visit him, which I did, and found himself surrounded by the chief men of his clan, all crazed with joy, and almost ready to worship me. He showed them the state of the vote with pride, proving that my two votes and influence saved his life. I did not deny it, but acknowledged that I had striven hard for it, and at one time had given him up for lost. I then told him the story of Patie Anderson, at which he laughed very heartily, but still he did not recognize me as his old attendant.

At length when we were going to part, he said, "You have indeed saved my life, baillie, from a combination of my inveterate enemies, and if ever it lie in my power to confer a benefit on you or yours,

you shall not need to ask it, but only find means of letting me know of such a thing."

"I have saved your life before now, my lord," said I; "and though I got no reward then, nor look for any now, yet if it lie in my power I would do the same again."

He looked unsteadily and anxiously at me, and bit his lips as if struggling with former reminiscences; and I then noted with pain, for the first time, how much the old chief was altered. He seemed, both in body and mind, no more than the wreck of what he once was.

"I think I remember the name," said he; "but it is so long ago, and my memory is so often at fault now-a-days. Yet the name is a singular one. Are you not brother to the Bishop of Galloway?"

"I am, my lord," returned I; "and the same who risked his honour and his neck in saving your life from imminent danger the last time you were a prisoner in Edinburgh Castle. You cannot have forgot that adventure?—at least I never shall."

"I remember every circumstance of it quite well," said he; "and I thought you were the man, or nearly connected with him; but I thought it degrading to you to allude to it. I could not believe that the young adventurer who escaped with me, and followed me to the north, could now be the first man in Edinburgh, both in influence and respectability. Well, I cannot help being struck at the singularity of this case. It is very remarkable that I should have been twice indebted for my life to one who had no interest in preserving it, and in whom I took no interest. I fear I requited you very indifferently, for as I remember nothing of our parting, I am sure I must have used you very ill."

"Your son used me very ill, my lord," said I; "yea, behaved to me in a most brutal manner; but I never attached any of the blame of that to your lordship. Be assured that I shall live to pay him back in his own coin, and that with interest. None have ever yet escaped me, either for a good turn or a bad one. As for you, my lord, I have always admired your character for bravery and for honour; and, dreaded as you are by the party whose principles I have espoused, yet I scorned to see you wronged and persecuted to the death. You and I are quits, my lord, but not so with your son Enzie."

"George is a hot-headed obstinate fool," said he. "But no more of that. I leave him to take care of himself. In the meantime, you shall accompany me to the north once more, and I will let you see some little difference about Castle Huntly since the last time you saw it. I want to introduce my deliverer to all my friends."

"I fear I shall lose credit with my own party if I attach myself thus closely to your lordship," said I. "I have already astounded them a good deal by my efforts for your acquittal, and must not kick at them altogether."

"I understand, I understand," said he thoughtfully. "Well, that may alter the view I took of the matter. But I really wish it had been otherwise, and that you had gone. It might—it *should* have turned out for your good."

"Nay, my lord, I am not established here on a foundation so shallow as to fear any party for an act of justice. I will think of your invitation, and probably accept of it."

I then took my leave, for I saw the old man like to drop from his chair with frailty and fatigue of spirits. He squeezed my hand, and held it for a good while in his without speaking, and he could not so much as say good night when I went away. I saw now that he was fast waning away from this life; and judging from his manner that he meant to do me some favour, I judged it prudent to put myself in the way, and accompany his lordship home. I was never a man greedy of substance, but I account every man to blame who keeps himself out of fortune's way; so the very next day I called on his lordship, but he was confined to bed, and engaged with two notaries; therefore I saw him not. He grew worse and worse, and I was afraid he never would see Castle Huntly again. It was in the spring of 1636 that the above-mentioned trial and acquittal took place; and about the beginning of summer, the marquis supposing himself better, requested the fulfilment of my promise, and again repeated that it should be for my good. I did not think him better, for I thought him fast descending to the grave, as he looked very ill, and had the lines of death deeply indented on his face; but judging that it might be requisite for my behoof that he should be home before his demise, to arrange and sign some documents, I urged his departure very much, and as an inducement, stated that unless he went immediately, I could not accompany him, nor see him in the north for the space of a whole year.

Accordingly we set out, as far as I remember, on the 3d of June; but we made poor speed, for the marquis could not bear his chariot to go much faster than at a snail's pace, and only on the most level ways. So, after a wearisome course, we arrived at Dundee on the 10th, and the next day the marquis could not be removed. There were none of his family but one son-in-law of our retinue, and I was applied to for everything, so that I had a poor time of it. "Ask the baillie." "Inquire at the baillie." "The baillie must procure us this thing and the other thing;" was in everybody's mouth. Had I been six baillies, not to say men, I could not have performed all that was expected of me.

I had now lost all hope of my legacy, and would gladly have been quit of my charge, but could not think to leave the old hero in so forlorn a state: for Lord Douglas having posted on to Castle Huntly, I had the sole charge, as it were, of the dying man. I rode with him in his chariot the last day he was on the road; after that, he took all his cordials from my hand, and on the afternoon of the 13th, he died

in my arms in the house of Mr. Robert Murray, a gentleman of that place; for though his lady had arrived the day before, she was so ill she could not sit up.

He was a hero to the last, and had no more dread of death than of a night's quiet repose; but I was convinced he died a true Catholic, for all so often as he had been compelled to renounce his religion by the Committee of Estates and the General Assembly.

Mr. Bannerman and Mr. Stewart, two notaries public, arrived from Edinburgh, and took charge of the papers and deeds which the deceased carried with him. I wanted to return home, but these gentlemen dissuaded me, and I confess that some distant hopes of emolument prevailed on me to await that splendid funeral, which certainly surpassed all I have ever yet beheld, and which I shall now attempt to describe as truly as a frail memory retains it.

[The baillie's description of the funeral procession from Dundee to the cathedral at Elgin is minute and tedious; but if true, it is utterly astonishing in such an age of anarchy and confusion. Some part of the management of the charities having been assigned by appointment to the baillie, his old friend Lord Gordon of Enzie, now the Marquis of Huntly, and he came once more in contact. But honest Archy, now being head baillie and chief moving spring in the council and city of Edinburgh, and in the hope of being lord provost next year, all by the influence of Argyle, also a privileged man, went through his department without taking the least notice of the heir and chief of the family for whom he was acting; but the marquis discovered in the end who he was and all their former connection, and certainly treated him scurvily. I must copy his account of this.]

On the Tuesday following, the will and testament of the late marquis was read in the great hall, and all the servants and officers were suffered to be present: but when the new marquis cast his eyes on me, he asked "what was my business there?"

I answered "that his lordship would perceive that by and by; and that at all events I had as good a right to be there as others of his father's old servants:" and being a little nettled, I said what, perhaps, I should not have said, "for," added I, "it is possible that neither yourself nor any of them ever had the honour of twice saving your father's life as I have had."

"You saved my father's life, sir? you saved *my* father's life?" said he disdainfully. "You never had the power, sir, to save the life of one of my father's cats. Leave the mansion immediately. I know you well for a traitor and a spy of the house of Argyle."

A sign from Mr. Bannerman, the agent, now brought me up to him, before I ventured a reply. He gave me a hint of something that shall be nameless, and at the same time waved me toward the door, that the marquis might think I was ordered out by the notary as well as himself. So I went toward the hall door, and before going out, I turned and said—

"This castle and hall are your own, my lord, and you must be obeyed. I am therefore compelled reluctantly to retire, but before going I order you, Mr. Robert Bannerman and Mr. Robert Stewart, again to close up these documents and proceed no further; no, not so much as in reading another word, until you do it in my house in Edinburgh, before a committee of the lords of session."

The marquis laughed aloud, while his face burned with indignation; but to his astonishment the men of law began folding up their papers at my behest.

"Gentlemen, pray go on with the business in hand," said he; "sure you are not going to be silenced by this mad and self-important citizen?"

The men after some jangle of law terms, declared they could not go on but in my presence, as I was both a principal legatee, and a trustee on many charities and funds. The great man's intolerable pride was hurt: he grew pale with displeasure; and as far as I could judge, was within a hair's-breadth of ordering his marshal to seize both the men and their papers, and myself into the bargain. The men thought so too, for they began enlarging on the will being registered and inviolable, save by a breach of all law and decorum; and that same dame Decorum at length came to the proud aristocrat's aid, and with a low bow, and a sneer of scorn on his countenance, he pointed to one of the chairs of state, and requested me to be seated.

I did as I was desired, for in a great man's presence I accounted it always the worst of manners to object to his request, and I saw by the faces of the assembly that I had more friends at that moment than the new-made marquis himself.

Well, the men went on with the disposal of lands, rents, and fees; all of which seemed to give great satisfaction, till they came to the very last codicil, wherein the late worthy marquis bequeathed to me his palace in the Canongate with all that it contained; and all because I had, at two different times, saved him from an immediate and disgraceful death. It has been alleged by some that I have been a proud and conceited man all my life; but it is well known to my friends that the reverse of this is the truth. I never was, however, so proud of worldly recommendation and worldly honours as I was at that moment. Mr. Stewart, who was then reading, when he came to the clause, made a loud hem, as if clearing his voice, and then went on in a louder tone—

"I give, leave, and bequeath to the worthy and honourable Baillie Archibald Sydeserf, my house in the Canongate, with all its appurtenances, entrances, and offices, and all within and without the houses that belongeth to me, save and except the two stables above the Water-gate, and the bed of state in the southern room, all of which were presents from the Duke of Chatelherault, my grandfather, to me

and mine, and must therefore be retained in my family. The rest I bequeath, &c., to the worthy Mr. Sydeserf, and all for having twice, of his own accord and free-will, and without any hope of reward, further than the love of honour and the approbation of a good conscience, delivered me from immediate death by the hands of my implacable enemies."

I confess when I heard this read out in a strong, mellow, and affecting tone, I could not resist crying; the tears ran down my cheeks, and I was obliged to dight them with my sleeve, and snifter like a whipped boy. I at length ventured to lift my eyes through tears to the face of the new marquis, sure of now spying symptoms of a congenial feeling; but instead of that, I perceived his face turned half aside, while he was literally gnawing his lip in pride and vexation; and when the clerk had finished, he said with a burst of breath, as if apostrophizing himself—"Never shall he inherit it, or aught that it contains."

Now, thought I, surely the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience hath taken full and free possession of his haughty mind, else he could never be so void of all respect both for the dead and living.

After this proud exclamation there was a pause. "Humph!" said the clerk; "humph," said a dozen and more of voices throughout the hall. "Humph!" said I, by way of winding up the growl, and gave my head a significant nod, as much as if I had said, "We'll see about that, my lord." My heart again burned within me, and I resolved once more to be even with this haughty chief, if ever it lay in my power.

I lodged that night in the town of Huntly, waiting on Messrs. Bannerman and Stewart, for we had conjointly hired a guard to attend us to Aberdeen; but in the middle of the night, my landlord came in to me with a crazed look, and asked me if I was sleeping. I said, "Yes." "Then," said he, "you must waken yourself up as fast as you can, for there is a gentleman in the house who has called expressly to see you. For God's sake, sir, make haste and come to him."

"A gentleman called on me!" said I; "pray, sir, who takes it on him to disturb me, a stranger, at these untimeous hours? Tell him I'll see him to-morrow as early as he likes."

"Oh, God bless your honour, it is to-morrow already," said mine host with apparent trepidation, "and therefore you must come to him without a moment's delay."

"What is the matter, sir?" said I. "Who is it?—what is the matter?"

"Oh, it is one of the chieftains of the Gordons," said he; "and that you will find. I know very well who it is, but as to what is the matter, there you puzzle me; for unless it be some duel business, I cannot conceive what it is. All that I can come at is, that your life is in danger—hope you have not offended any of the Gordons, sir?"

"I will not leave my room, sir, at this untimeous hour," said I, rather too much agitated. "It is my domicile for the present, and I debar all intrusions. If it is on an affair of duelling, you may tell the gentleman that I fight no duels. I am a magistrate, a Christian, and an elder of the Reformed church; and therefore it does not become such a man as me to fight duels."

"God bless your honour," said the fellow, laughing with the voice of a Highland bull: "Come and tell all this to the gentleman himself; I am no judge of such matters. An elder of the Reformed church are you? What church is that? Are you for the king or the covenant? I should like to know, for all depends on that here."

I have forgot what answer I made to this, for while I was speaking, a furious rap came on my chamber door; I was so much alarmed that I could neither breathe nor speak for a short space, nevertheless, I took the matter with that calm resolution that became a man and a magistrate.

"Yes, sir, yes; coming, sir," cried mine host. Then whispering me—"For mercy's sake get up and come away, sir," said he; and he actually took hold of my wrist, and began a-pulling to bring me over the bed. I resisted with the resolution of keeping my ground, but a voice of thunder called outside the door. "George, you dog, why don't you bring the gentleman away as I ordered you?"

"He will not come, sir. He'll not stir a foot," said the landlord.

"But he must come, and that without a moment's delay," said the same tremendous voice.

"I told him so, sir," said the landlord: "but for all that he will not stir. The gentleman, sir, is a magistrate, and an elder of the Reformed kirk, and never fights any duels."

"G—d's curse!" cried the impatient monster, and burst open the door. He was a man of gigantic stature, between sixty and seventy years of age, and covered with a suit of heavy armour. "I'll tell you what it is, sir," said he; "you must either arise on the instant, and dress yourself and come along with me, else I will be under the disagreeable necessity of carrying you off as you are. Don't ask a single question, nor make a single remark, for there is not a moment to lose."

"Well, well, sir, since it must be so, it shall be as you desire," said I, rising and dressing myself with perfect coolness. I even joked about the Gordons, and their summary mode of proceeding with strangers; and hinted at some of the late decrees in council against them.

"The Gordons care very little what is decreed against them in Edinburgh," replied he: "particularly by a set of paltry innovators."

"I fear they are much altered for the worse since I lived among them," said I.

"It is the times that are altered for the worse, and not we," said he. "The character of men must conform to their circumstances, Mr. Sydeserf. Of that you have had some experience, and you will have more ere long."

He said this in sullen and thoughtful mood, and I was confounded at thinking whereto all this tended, though I was certain it could not be towards good. The most probable conjecture I could form was, that the marquis had sent for me, either to shut me up in one of the vaults of the old castle, or throw me off the bridge into the river, to let me know how to speak to a Gordon in the hows of Strathbogie. But there was no alternative for the present; so I marched down stairs before the venerable and majestic warrior, in perfect good humour; and lo and behold! when I went to the door, there was a whole company of cavalry, well mounted, with drawn swords in their hands, and my horse standing saddled in the midst of them, held by a trooper standing on foot.

"Good morrow to you, gentlemen," said I heartily.

"Good morrow, sir," growled a few voices in return.

"Now mount, sir, mount," said the chief of this warlike horde; I did so, and away we rode I knew not whither.

It was about the darkest time of a summer night when we set out, but the night being quite short, it soon began to grow light, and I then could not but admire the figure of the old chieftain, who still kept by my left hand, and at the head of the cavalcade. He appeared sullen and thoughtful, was clad in complete heavy armour, rode with his drawn sword in his hand, a pair of pistols in his belt, and a pair of tremendous horse pistols slung at his saddle-bow. He appeared likewise to be constantly on the look-out, as if afraid of a surprise; but all this while I took matters so coolly, that I never so much as inquired where he was conveying me.

However about the sun rising, to my great wonder, I came into the ancient town of Inverury, which I knew at first sight, and in which I had friends. This was the very way I wanted to go, and I could not comprehend to what fate I was destined. We halted behind a thicket on the right bank of the way, and a scout was sent into the town, who instantly returned with the information that it was occupied by a party of the rebels. How heartily I wished myself in the hands and power of these same rebels; but such a thing was not to be suffered. The veteran ordered his troop to make ready for a charge, and putting me from his right hand into the middle of the body, he made choice of some of his friends to support him, and we went into the town at a sharp trot. No man meddled with us, but we saw there was a confusion in the town, and people running as if mad here and there. However, when we came to the old bridge over the Don, it was guarded, and a party of infantry were forming on the other side. To force the bridge was impossible, for scarcely could two troopers ride abreast on it, and they had scaffolds on each side, from which they could have killed every man of us. I was terrified lest our leader should have attempted it, for he hesitated; but, wheeling to the left, he took the ford. The party then opened a brisk fire on us, and several of the Gordons fell, one of them among my horse's feet, to my great hazard. I thought the men were mad, for I could not at all see what reason they had for fighting, and am certain a simple explanation on either side would have prevented it. The Gordons rode out of the river full drive on the faces of their enemies, discharged their carbines and pistols, though not with much effect, as far as I could judge, for few of the party fell; however, they all fled toward a wood on the rising ground close by, and a few were cut down before they entered it. From that they fired in safety on the Gordons, who were terribly indignant, but were obliged to draw off, at which I was exceedingly glad, for I expected every moment for more than an hour to be shot, without having it in my power either to fight or flee.

We rode into Kintore, and the old veteran, placing a guard at each end of the town, led me to the hostel along with six of his chief men and friends, and entertained us graciously. The strong drink cheered up his grave and severe visage, and I thought I never saw a face of more interest. All men may judge of my utter amazement, when he addressed me in a set speech to the following purport.

"No wonder that my heart is heavy to-day, worthy sir; hem! I have had a most disagreeable part to perform."—I trembled.—"So I have, hem! I have lost my chief, who was as a brother, a father to me from my childhood—who was a bulwark around his friends, and the terror of his enemies. Scotland shall never again behold such a nobleman as my late brave kinsman and chief. You may then judge with what feelings I regard you, when I tell you that I have met you before, though you remember me not. I was in the mock court of justice that day when the old hero was tried by a jury of his sworn enemies, and when your unexampled energy, honour, and influence alone saved his life. I met you at his house that evening, and had the pleasure of embracing you once. I had nothing to bestow on you but my sword; but I vowed to myself that night, that if ever you needed it, it should be drawn in your defence. The usage you received yesterday cut me to the heart. I heard more than I will utter. Lord Gordon is now my chief, and I will fight for him while I have a drop of blood to spend; but he shall never be backed by old Alexander Gordon in any cause that is unjust. I neither say that your life was in imminent danger, nor that it was not; but I trembled for it, and resolved to make sure work. You are now out of the territory of the Gordons, and lose not a moment's time until you are fairly in Edinburgh. You will find some there from Castle Huntly before you. It cuts me to the heart

that I should ever have been obliged to do a deed in opposition to the inclinations and even the commands of my chief; but what I have done I have done. Farewell; and God be your speed. You and old Glen-bucket may haply meet again."

My heart was so full that I could not express myself, and it was probably as well that I did not make too great a palaver; for I merely said in return, that there was nothing in nature that I revered or admired, so much as a due respect for the memory of the good and the great that had been removed from this scene of things; and on that ground principally, I took this act of his as the very highest compliment that could have been paid me.

[The baillie then hasted to Edinburgh, where he found matters going grievously to his injury. His party had combined against him, in the full persuasion that he had joined the adverse side, and for all his former interest he could never force himself forward again until Argyle's return from London. The Marquis of Huntly had moreover taken possession of his father's house, and shut the doors of it in the baillie's face, and then a litigation ensued, which perhaps more than anything renovated his influence once more in the city.

Argyle never lost sight of his dependant's interest, and appears to have paid a deference to him that really goes far to establish the position which the baillie always takes in the estimation of himself. There is at all events one thing for which he cannot be too much praised. The king had been accustomed to nominate the provost and baillie of Edinburgh each year. From this we may infer, that some favourite nobleman engaged in the administration of Scottish affairs, and who had some object to gain in and through the magistrates of Edinburgh, gave the king in such list as he wanted, and then that his majesty signed this list, and sent it to the council, with order to choose their men. The baillie was the first man to withstand this arbitrary procedure, and he carried his point, not perhaps by the fairest and most open means, but he *did* gain it, which was a privilege of high moment to the city, if the inhabitants had made a good use of it; but the tricks of one party against another were not more prevalent nor more debasing than it appears they are at this day of boasted freedom and enlargement; only the nobles had then to canvass for the magistrates, whereas the magistrates have now to canvass for themselves. But in fact, some of the baillie's narratives, if copied, would be regarded as satires on the proceedings of the present age.

We shall therefore pass over this part of the memoirs, and proceed to one of greater import, which commences with the beginning of the civil wars in Scotland. The baillie had taken the covenant at an early period, and continued firm and true to that great bond of reformation. The great Montrose was, it seems, at one time, a strenuous Covenanter; for the baillie says he was present at St. Andrew's when the said Montrose swore the covenant; and that there was a number of gentlemen and noblemen took it on the same day of April, 1637, and that forthwith he began to raise men in his own country, all of whom he forced to take the covenant before they were embodied in his army.]

The Marquis of Huntly, continues the baillie, having raised an army in the north for the avowed purpose of crushing the Covenanters, I was very strenuous at that meeting that they should take him in time, and rather carry the war into his own country than suffer him to wreak his pride and vengeance on his covenanting neighbours. The thing being agreed to, the gentlemen of Fife and Angus instantly set about raising men, and I returned to Edinburgh, and engaging Sir William Dick, the lord-provost, and all the council in the same cause, in the course of nine days we raised a hundred and seventy-two men, whom I undertook to lead to our colonel, which I did with the assistance of two good officers—but I had a captain that was worse than nobody.

If it had not been for Lieutenant Thorburn, who had served abroad, these men would never have been kept in subordination by me, for they were mostly ragamuffins of the lowest order; drinkers, swearers, and frequenters of brothels; and I having the purse a-keeping, never engaged in such a charge in my life. Truly I thought shame of our city Covenanters, for they were a very bad-looking set of men. They had good arms, which they did not well know how to use, but save a cap they had no other uniform. Some had no shoes, and some had shoes without hose, while others had no clothing at all save a ragged coat and apron. We lodged a night at Inverkeithing, and there being no chaplain, I said prayers with them, and desired to see them all at worship again by six in the morning. I then paid them at the rate of half a merk a-piece for two days. But next morning at the appointed time, of my whole army only thirteen appeared at head-quarters to attend worship. I asked of these where all the rest were, and they replied that the greater part of them were mortal drunk. I asked if my officers were drunk likewise, and they told me that Thomas Wilson, the tallow-chandler, was the drunkest of any; but as for Thorburn, he was doing all that he could to muster the troop to no purpose.

I then stood up and made a speech to the few men that I had, wherein I represented to them the enormous impropriety in men, who had risen up in defence of their religion and liberties, abandoning themselves to drunkenness, the mother of every vice. I then begged Heaven for their forgiveness, in a short prayer, and forthwith despatched my remnant to assist the lieutenant in rousing their inebriated associates.

"You must draw them together with the cords of men," said I; "and if necessary, you must even use the rod of moderate correction; I mean you must strip off their clothes, and scourge them with whips."

The men smiled at my order, and went away promising to use their endeavour. I followed and found Thorburn in a back ground to the west of the town, having about the half of the men collected, but keeping them together with the greatest difficulty. As for Wilson, he was sitting on an old dyke laughing, and so drunk I could not know what he said. I went up and began to expostulate with him, but all the apology I could get was vacant and provoking laughter, and some such words as these—"It is really grand!" then "he, he, he, baillie. I say, baillie, it is really grand! What would Montrose say if he saw—if he saw this? Eh? Oh, I beg his pardon; I do, I do, I beg his pardon. But after all it is really grand! he—he—he," &c.

Those who were at all sober continued to drag in their companions into the rendezvous; but some of them were so irritated at being torn from their cups, that they fought desperate battles with their conductors. One of them appeared so totally insubordinate that I desired he might be punished, to which Thorburn assenting at once, he was tied to a tree, and his shirt tirled over his head. He exclaimed bitterly against this summary way of punishment, and appealed to the captain. I said to Thorburn, I certainly thought it as well to have Wilson's consent; and then a scene occurred that passes all description. Thorburn went up to him, and says, "Captain, shall I or shall I not give John Hill a hundred lashes for rioting and insubordination?"

"For what?" says Wilson, without lifting his head that hung down near his knee—"some board in the nation? what's that?"

"He has refused to obey orders, sir, and rebelled."

"Lick him, lick him weel! thrash him soundly. Refused to obey orders and rebelled! he's no blate! Thorburn, I say, lick him weel; skelp him till the blood rins off at his heels."

The order was instantly obeyed, but the troop, instead of being impressed with awe, never got such sport before. They laughed till they held their sides, and some actually slid off at a corner to have a parting glass in the meantime.

"Thorburn, what shall be done to get these men once more embodied and set on the way?" said I.

"Faith, sir, there are just two ways of doing it and no more," said he. "We must either wait patiently till their money is spent or set the town on fire; and on mine honour, I would do the latter; for it is a cursed shabby place, and the people are even worse than ours."

"That would be a desperate resource, sir," says I: "It is not customary to sloken one fire by kindling another. Cause proclamation to be made at the drum's head that every man who does not join the troop in marching order in a quarter of an hour, shall be taken up and punished as a deserter."

This brought together the greater part, but sundry remained, and I left a party to bring them up as deserters; unluckily the captain was one of them. Him I reprimanded very severely, for he was in the council, and being a poor spendthrift, had got this office for a little lucre, which I considered no great honour to our fraternity.

Nothing further occurred during the next two days, and the third we reached the army, which was drawing to a head about Brechin, Fettercairn, and Montrose. Our colonel, who was then only Earl of Montrose, met me at Brechin, and many were the kind things he said to me. I told him I was ashamed to meet him, for that I had brought him a set of the greatest reprobates that I believed ever breathed since the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, and that I really was afraid they would entail a curse on the army of the church.

He smiled good-naturedly, and said, "Keep your mind at ease about that, baillie; if the church and the land in general can both establish their rights and purge themselves at the same time, there are two great points gained. Are they able well-bodied men?"

"Their bodies are not so much amiss, my lord," said I, "but as to their immortal part I tremble to think of that." He joked with me, and said something about soldiers' souls which I do not choose to repeat, as it had rather a tincture of flippancy and irreverence for divine things. He expressed himself perfectly well pleased with the men, saying "he would soon make them excellent fellows, and begged that we would send him thrice as many greater ragamuffins if I could get them, for that he would reform them more in one year than all the preachers in Scotland would do in twenty." I said he did not yet know them, and gave him a hint of their horrid insubordination. My lord was not naturally a merry man, but mild, gentlemanly, and dignified, nevertheless he laughed aloud at this; saying "it was I that did not know them, for he would answer to me for their perfect subordination."

I then sounded him on his plans of carrying on the war, and tried all I could to induce him to an instant attack on the Marquis of Huntly. But I found him not so easily swayed as the town council of Edinburgh, for when I could not manage them by reason, I found it always possible to do so by intrigue and stratagem; but here my reasoning failed me, and I had no further resource. He assured me that Huntly was more afraid of us than we were of him, and though he was encouraging the Aberdeenians to their own destruction, he would take care not to meddle with our levies; and, therefore, that these should not be led into his bounds until they were fairly drilled, so as to be a match for the best men in Strathbogie. "How could I lead these men into battle at present?" added he.

"If you could, my lord," said I, for I wanted to lose my arguments with as good a grace as I could; "if you could, my lord, you could do more than I could, for, notwithstanding all the influence I seemed to have possessed with our people, notwith-

standing threats and scourges, I could not get them out of Inverkeithing, where there was some wretched drink, almost for a whole day; nay, not till Lieutenant Thorburn came to me with a grave face, and requested permission to fire the town about them."

He laughed exceedingly at this; nay, he even laughed until he was obliged to sit down and hold a silk napkin to his face. Thus were all my arguments for instant and imperious war with Huntly lost, in the hopes of which alone I had taken the charge of these recruits to the north, yea, even though I assured Montrose, from heaven, that in any engagement with Huntly in which I took a part there was a certainty of ample and absolute success, so perfectly assured was I of having day about with him. He answered me that there was no gentleman of whose counsel and assistance he would be happier to avail himself in such an emergency, but that the harvest was not yet ripe, nor the reapers duly prepared; but whenever these important circumstances fitted, I should be duly apprised, and have his right ear in the progress of the war.

I have dwelt rather longer on these reminiscences, because he turned out so great a man, and so great a scourge to the party he then espoused with so much zeal. Sorry was I when he deserted the good cause, and though some of our own side were the primary cause of his defect, yet I comforted myself with this, that he had not been chosen by the Almighty to effect the freedom of this land. But often did I think with deep regret that if the covenanting party had still been blessed with Argyle's political talents, and Montrose's warlike and heroic accomplishments, we had remained invincible to all sects, parties, and divisions. As for the great and supreme Marquis of Huntly, I despised him as much as I hated him, well knowing that his intolerable pride would never suffer him to co-operate with any other leader, and what could the greatest chief of the kingdom do by himself?

Montrose was as good as his word, for early in the spring he wrote for some ammunition and mortars, and requested that I might be permitted to bring the supplies, as a siege of Aberdeen and a battle with Huntly could be no longer postponed; and he added in a postscript, "Inform my worthy friend the baillie that Captain Thorburn and a detachment of the Edinburgh troop shall meet him at Inverkeithing, as a suitable escort to the fireworks."

Accordingly, on the 3d of February, 1639, I again took the road to the north, at the head of a good assortment of warlike stores, the most of which our new General Leslie had just taken out of the castle of Dalkeith. Money was sorely awanting, but some of the leading men of the committee contrived to borrow a good round sum. My friend Sir William Dick lent them in one day no less than 40,000 merks, against my counsel and advice. They likewise applied to me, but I only shook my head; Argyle was even so ungenerous as to urge it, but I begged his lordship, who was at the head of the committee, to show me the example, and I would certainly follow it to the utmost of my power. This silenced his lordship, and pleased the rest of the committee well, for the truth is that Argyle would never advance a farthing.

Well, north I goes with the supplies, and, as our colonel had promised, a detachment of my former rascals under Thorburn met me at Inverkeithing. Had all the committee of estates sworn it, I could not have believed that such a difference could have been wrought on men. They were not only perfect soldiers, but gentlemen soldiers; sober, regular, and subordinate, and I thenceforward concluded, that no one could calculate what such a man as Montrose was capable of performing.

He welcomed me with the same gentlemanly ease and affability as formerly, but I could not help having a sort of feeling, that he was always making rather sport of me in his warlike consultations. He had a field-day at Old Montrose, on a fine green there, and at every evolution he asked my opinion with regard to the perfectness of the troops in the exercise. I knew not what to say sometimes, but I took the safe side; I always commended.

At our messes we spoke much of the approaching campaign. The men of Aberdeen had fortified their city in grand style, and depending on Huntly's co-operation without, they laughed at us, our army, and tenets, beyond measure. There was a young gentleman, a Captain Marshall, in our mess, who repeated their braggs often for sport, and as he spoke in their broad dialect, he never failed setting the mess in a bray of laughter. Montrose always encouraged this fun, for it irritated the officers against the Aberdeen people and the Gordons beyond measure. I positively began to weary for the attack myself, and resolved to have due vengeance on them, for their despite and mockery of the covenant.

On the 27th of March, we set out on our march in the evening. The two regiments trained by Montrose took the van; men excellently appointed, most of them having guns, and the rest long poles with steel heads as sharp as lancets, most deadly weapons. Lord Douglas's regiment marched next, and the new-raised Fife and Mearns men brought up the rear. I went with the artillery and baggage. During our march, men were placed on all the roads that no passenger might pass into Aberdeen with the news of our approach. Parties were also despatched to the north roads, who got plenty to do; for the heroes of Aberdeen having got notice of our advance, sent messengers off full speed by every path, to apprise Huntly of their danger, and request his instant descent. Our men caught these fellows galloping in the most dreadful desperation, and took all their despatches from them. One after another they came, and no doubt some of them would find their way, but never one came from Huntly in return. I saw

one of these heralds of dismay caught myself by our rear guard, near a place called Banchary, for they were trying even that road, and I was a good deal diverted by the lad's cunning, which, had it not been for his manifest alarm, would have deceived some of us. They brought him to me in the dusk of the evening, no chief officer being nigh at the time. He was mounted on a gray pony, and both that and he were covered over with foam and mud. Something of the following dialogue ensued:—

"Where may you be bound, my good lad, in such a hurry and so late?"

"Oo fath, sur, am jeest gaun a yurrant o' mee muster's. That's a', sur: jeest a buttie yurrant o' mee muster's."

"Who is your master?"

"Oo he's a juntlemun o' the town, sur."

"The provost?"

"The previce! Him a previce! Nhaw."

"You are not a servant of the provost's, then?"

"Am nae a survunt to nee buddy."

"How far are you going?"

"Oo am jeest gaun up to the brugg o' Dee yunder."

"What to do?"

"Oo am jeest gaun to bring three or four horse lads o' bruggs and sheen that's needit for the wars. There will mawbe be some beets among them tee—aw cudna be saying for that, for they ca't them jeest bruggs and sheen. But aw think its lukely there will be some beets. Me muster was varra feared that the rubels wud chuck them fra ma is aw cum down, but he was no feared for them tucking mysel."

This was a great stretch of low cunning. He perceived we needed the shoes, and thought we would let him pass, that we might catch him with them on his return, and some of our sergeants winked to me to let him go, but I suspected the draught.

"Have you no letters or despatches about you, young man?" rejoined I; "for if you have you are in some danger at present, notwithstanding all your lies about the brogs and shoes and small mixture of boots."

"Oo aw wut weel, sur, I ha nee duspatches, nor naithing o' the kind, but jeest a wee buttie lattur to the sheemuker."

"Show it me."

"Fat have ye to dee wi' the peer sheemuker's buttie lattur?"

I ordered two officers to search him, but they that had seen his looks when a packet was taken from his bosom with this direction!

"TO THE MOST HONOURABLE
AND MOST NOBLE
THE MARQUIS OF HUNTLY."

I read out the direction in his hearing. "Ay, my lad!" added I, "this is a head shoemaker with whom your people deal for their *bruggs* and their *sheen*."

He scratched his head. "Dumm them!" said he; "they tulled mee that lutter was till a sheemuker."

What more could be said to the poor fellow? He was taken into custody, and the packet forwarded to our commander.

All the despatches manifested the utmost trepidation in the good folks of Aberdeen. They urged the marquis by every motive they could suggest, to come down on Montrose's rear while they defended their city against him; and that between two fires, he and his army would be easily annihilated, while if he (Huntly) suffered that single opportunity to pass, their city would be sacked and burned, and then Montrose would turn his victorious arms against him, and root out him and his whole clan.

Montrose perceived from these the necessity of despatch, and accordingly on the morning of the 30th of March, he invested the city at three points with a celerity of which I had no conception. There were likewise detachments put to guard the two ferries of the Don and Dee, so that none might escape. As I took no command on me in the battle, I went with the laird of Cairn-Greig and a few others to the top of an old ruin to see the bombardment, and truly I never beheld such an uproar and confusion, as there prevailed on the first opening of our mortars and guns. Their three entrances were all palisaded and made very strong with redoubts, and without dispute they might have defended themselves against an army double our strength, and so perhaps they would, could they have depended on Huntly, which no man ever did who was not disappointed. But moreover, the attack from within was more violent than that from without. There were thousands of women and children came rushing on the rear of the defenders of their city, screaming, and crying to get out to throw themselves on the mercy of Montrose, rather than stay and be burned to ashes. The provost, who stood at the post of honour, and commanded the strongest phalanx at the place of greatest danger, was so overpowered by ladies, apparently in a state of derangement, that he was driven perfectly stupid. Reasoning with them was out of the question, and the provost could not well order his garrison to put them to the sword.

Montrose led his own two regiments against the provost. Lord Douglas attacked the middle part, and the Fife and Strathmore regiments the north one, defended by the brave Colonel Gordon. All the points were attacked at once; the agonized cries of the women rose to such an extent that I actually grew terrified; for I thought the uproar and confusion of hell could not be greater. It was impossible the provost could stand out, though he had been the bravest man on earth. I must say so much for him. Colonel Gordon withstood our men; boldly repelled them, and had even commenced a pursuit. Montrose either had some dread or some wit of this, for he pushed the provost with such force and vigour, that in a very short time, maugre all his efforts, men and women in thousands were seen tearing down the fortifications, levelling them with the soil; and a

deputation was sent to Montrose to invite him to enter. But first and foremost he had measures to take with Colonel Gordon, who in a little time would have turned the flank of our whole army, but that hero being now left to himself, was soon surrounded and obliged to capitulate.

Our men were now drawn up in squares in all the principal streets, and stood to arms, while a council of war was held, in which the plurality of voices gave it for the city to be given up to plunder. The soldiers expected it, and truly the citizens, I believed, hoped for nothing better. I confess I voted for it, thinking my brave townsmen would have enjoyed it so much. I know it was reported to my prejudice, that I expected a principal share of the plunder myself; and that it was for that single purpose I went on the expedition. Whoever raised that report, had no further grounds for it than that I voted with the majority; several of them ministers and servants of the Lord. I did vote with them, but it was for an example to the other cities and towns of our country, who still stood out against emancipation.

Montrose would, however, listen to none of us. His bowels yearned over the city to spare it, and he did spare it; but to please us, he made magistrates, ministers, and every principal man in the city, swear the covenant on their knees, at the point of the sword; and also fined them in a sum by way of war charges, of which he did not retain one merk to himself.

We now turned our face toward the Highlands, to take order with Huntly, and with a light and exulting heart did I take the way, assured of victory. I missed no opportunity by the way of reprobating that chief's conduct in first stirring up the good Aberdeenians to resist the measures of the Scottish parliament and the committee of estates, and then hanging back and suffering them to lie at our mercy, when, in truth, he might have come with the whole Highlands at his back to their relief; for at that time, save the Campbells and the Forbes's, there was not a clan in the whole Highlands sided with us.

Montrose could say nothing for Huntly, but neither would he say much against him, till he saw how he would behave. The honest man had, however, most valiantly collected his clansmen (who had long been ready at an hour's warning) for the relief of Aberdeen on the evening after it was taken! Ay, that he had! He had collected 1700 foot, and 400 gallant horsemen, under the command of old Glen-bucket, and his son Lord Gordon, and had even made a speech to them; and set out at their head a distance of full five miles, to create a stern diversion in favour of the gallant and loyal citizens of Aberdeen. At the head of this gallant array he marched forth, until, at a place called Cabrach, he was apprised by some flyers whom he met on the way, that the Earl of Montrose with a gallant army was in full march against him; that Aberdeen was taken and plundered, and all the magistrates, ministers, and chief men put to the sword.

I would have given a hundred pounds (Scots I mean), to have been there to see my old friend Enzie's plight, now the invincible Marquis of Huntly. He called a parley on the instant; ordered his puissant army to disappear, to vanish in the adjoining woods, and not a man of them to be seen in arms as the invaders marched on! and having given this annihilating order, he turned his horse's head about, and never drew bridle till he was at the castle of Bogie, in the upper district of the country. Thence he despatched messengers to our commander, begging to know his terms of accommodation.

But these messengers would have been too late to have saved Huntly and the castle, had it not been for the valour and presence of mind of old Glen-bucket and his young chief, the Lord Gordon, who, venturing to infringe the marquis's sudden orders, withstood Montrose, and hovering nigh his van, kept him in check for two whole days and a night. Montrose perceiving how detrimental this stay would be to his purpose of taking his redoubted opponent by surprise, sent off a party by night round the Buck, to come between the Gordons and the bridge. The party led by one Patrick Shaw, who knew the country well, gained their point and began to fire on the Gordon horse by the break of day. Glen-bucket, somewhat astounded at this circumstance, drew aside to the high ground, but perceiving Montrose coming briskly up on him from the south-east, he drew off at a sharp trot, and tried to gain the town, but there he was opposed by the foot that had crossed by the hill path. There was no time to lose. We were coming hard up behind them when Glen-bucket and Lord Gordon rushed upon our foot at the head of their close body of horse. They could not break them, although they cut down a number of brave men, and the consequence was that all the men of the three first ranks were unhorsed, and either slain or taken prisoners amongst the latter were both young Lord Gordon and old Glen-bucket; the rest scattered and fled, and easily made their escape. The conflict did not last above six minutes, yet short as it was it was quite decisive.

I addressed old Glen-bucket with the greatest kindness and respect, but with a grave and solemn aspect regretted his having taken arms against so good a cause. He seemed offended at this, smiled grimly, and expressed his wonder how any good man could be engaged in so *bad* a cause as that of the covenant. He seemed much disappointed at the coldness of my manner. I knew it would be so, but I had to take the measure of him and his whole clan ere I parted with them, and behaved as I did on a principle of consistency.

We took in the town of Huntly, and there we received Huntly's messengers. Montrose's conditions were absolute, namely that the Gordon and all his clan should take the covenant, and acquiesce in every one of the measures of the committee; and

the very next day Huntly came in person, with a few of his principal friends, and submitted. I was sorry for this, for I wanted to humble him effectually; however, he and I had not done yet.

Montrose, anxious to deal with him in a manner suiting his high rank, did not oblige him to take the covenant on his knees like the burgesses of Aberdeen, but causing me to write out a paper, he told me he would be satisfied if the marquis signed that on oath, in name of himself, his clan, and kinsmen. I made it as severe as I could, nevertheless he signed it, subscribing the oath.

Matters being now adjusted, and the two great men the greatest of friends, Huntly and his followers, accompanied us to Aberdeen on our way home, everything being now settled for which we took up arms: but when the marquis came there, and found that the city was *not* plundered, nor the ladies outraged, nor the magistrates put to the sword, nor even so much as the tongues of the ministers cut out that preached against the covenant, why, the marquis began to recant, and rather to look two ways at once. He expected to be at the lord-provost's grand funeral. Lord help him! the provost was as jolly, as fat, and as loquacious as ever! He expected to find all the ladies half deranged in their intellects, tearing their hair, and like Jephthah's daughter, bewailing their fate on the mountains; he never found the ladies of Aberdeen so gay, and every one of their mouths was filled with the praises of Montrose, his liberality, his kindness, and his gallantry! This was a hard bone for the proud marquis to chew—a jaw-breaker that he could not endure; for the glory of a contemporary was his bane; it drove all the solemn league and covenant in his galled mind to a thing little short of blasphemy. Moreover, he expected to have found all the college professors and ministers of the gospel running about the streets, squeaking and jabbering with their tongues cut out, and instead of which the men seemed to have had their tongues loosed, all for the purpose of lauding his adversary, and preaching up the benefits of the new covenant. Huntly saw that the reign of feudalism was at an end, and with that his overbalancing power in the realm; and then reflecting how easily he might have prevented this, he was like to gnaw off his fingers with vexation: and perhaps the thing that irritated his haughty mind most of all, was the finding of that worship and reverence formerly paid to him in Aberdeen now turned into scorn, while the consciousness of having deserved it made the feeling still more acute.

In a word the marquis took the strunt, and would neither ratify some further engagements which he had come under, nor stand to those he had subscribed on oath, but begged of Montrose, as a last favour, that he would release him from the bond of the covenant, the tenor of which he did not understand, and the principle of which he did not approve.

Montrose tried to reason calmly with him, but that made matters worse. Then he told him, that he would yield so far to him as release him from his engagement for the present, but that indeed he feared he would repent it. Grahame then rose, and bringing him his bond in his hand, presented it to him with some regretful observations on his noble friend's vacillation.

Huntly began to express his thanks, but was unable; his face burned to the bone, for he was so proud he could never express gratitude either to God or man; but he was mightily relieved from his dilemma when Montrose, with a stern voice, ordered him to be put in confinement, and conducted a close prisoner to Edinburgh! I could hardly contain myself at the woeful change that this order made on his features. It was marrow to my bones to see him humbled thus far at the moment. I thought of his felling me down, and kicking me in the mud, when I was in a situation in which I durst not resist; I argued likewise of the way he used me with regard to his worthy father's bequest. So as Montrose was striding out with tokens of displeasure on his face, I called after him, "My Lord Montrose, as I lie under some old obligation to the noble marquis your prisoner, may I beg of you to be honoured with the charge of conducting him to the jail of Edinburgh?"

"With all my heart, baillie," returned he; "only remember to see him strictly guarded; for it is now manifest that he is a traitor to our cause."

Having till now shunned the marquis's presence, he never knew till that moment that I was at his right hand amongst the number of his enemies; and then he cast such a look of startled amazement at me! It was as if one had shouted in the other ear, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson! I was cheated if at that moment the marquis would not have signed ten solemn leagues and ten covenants of any sort, to have been fairly out of his friend the baillie's clutches, and at the head of his clan again. But it would not do; he was obliged to draw himself up, and submit to his fate.

Lord Aboyne and the Lords Lewis and Charles Gordon of Glen-levit, and other three of the name, took the oaths for themselves, and were set at liberty; but Lord Gordon and old Glen-bucket, having been taken in arms fighting against the army of the estates, were likewise conducted in bonds to Edinburgh.

[The baillie's inveteracy against the Marquis of Huntly continues the string on which he delights to harp through the whole of these memoirs, and it is perhaps the most amusing theme he takes up. I hope the character of that nobleman is exaggerated; indeed it must be so, drawn by one having such a deadly prejudice against him. For my part, having never, as far as I remember, learned anything of that nobleman further than what is delineated in these manuscripts, I confess they have given me

an idea of him as unfavourable as that of his father is exalted. It is a pity the baillie should have been a man possessed of such bitter remembrances, and a spirit of such lasting revenge, for otherwise he seems rather to have been a good man, if measured with the times. An acute and clear-headed man he certainly was in many respects, but of all men the worst fitted for that which he appears to have valued himself most on, *the conducting of a campaign against the enemies of the covenant.* Indeed I cannot be sure for all that I have seen, for what purpose the leaders took him always to be of their council on such occasions, but there can be no doubt of the fact. We must give one further little relation in his own words, before we have done with him at this time, and then we shall accompany him into actions of greater moment.]

I had settled everything with my Lord Montrose how I was to act when I came to Edinburgh; accordingly I committed Huntly and his gallant son to the castle, where they were put into close confinement as state prisoners. Glen-bucket besought me to suffer him to accompany them, but I informed him that my strict orders were to take him to a common jail in the High Street. He said it was but a small request that he might be suffered to accompany his chief, which he knew my interest could easily procure for him, and he again intreated me to use it. I promised that I would, but in the meantime he must be content to go as directed, to which he was obliged to submit, but with his accustomed gravity and gloominess.

When we came to the gate of the castle, I perceived Sir William Dick, our provost, and Baillie Edgar, whom I had appointed to meet us, so I turned and said to my prisoner, "Sir Alexander, I do not choose to expose you in bonds on Edinburgh street at noonday."

"It does not signify, sir," said he; "I am quite indifferent."

"I cannot yield to have it so," said I. "Soldiers, take off his chains! and do you walk on before us as a guard of honour. Yes, as a guard of honour, for honour is a sufficient guard for the person of Sir Alexander Gordon of Glen-bucket."

Morose and sullen as he was, he could not help being pleased with this: he rose as it were a foot higher, and as soon as the soldiers removed his bonds I returned him his sword. At that moment the lord-provost accosted him, but his mind being confused he made a slight obeisance, and was going to pass on.

"Sir Alexander," said I, "this is my friend, the Honourable Sir William Dick, lord-provost of Edinburgh!"

Glen-bucket started, and then with the politeness of two courtiers, the two old knights saluted one another. I then introduced Baillie Edgar and Mr. Henderson, and after that we walked away, two on each side of Glen-bucket. He did not well understand this apparent courtesy, for I perceived by his face that he thought it a species of mockery. He spake little. I only remember of one expression that dropped from him as it were spontaneously. It was an exclamation, and came with a burst of breath—"Hah! on my honour, this is a guard of *honour* indeed!"

As we approached the Tolbooth he cast a look at the iron gratings, and was going to stop at the principal entrance, but I desired him to walk on, for his apartment was a little farther this way. When we came to my house, which was one short stair above the street, I went before him to lead the way, and on opening the house door the trance (passage) was completely dark by chance, none of the doors leading from it being open. "Come this way, sir," said I, "follow me, and take care of the *steps*." I looked behind me, and saw, between me and the light, his tall athletic form, stooping as if aware of some danger by a quick descent: he had an arm stretched out and a hand impressed against each wall, and was shovelling his feet along the trance for fear of precipitating himself down some abyss or dungeon. I could hardly help bursting out into a fit of laughter, but I stood at the inner door till his great hands came upon my head grasping his way. I then threw open my dining-room door and announced my prisoner by name, Sir Alexander Gordon of Glen-bucket, and he walked in.

Nothing could equal the old warrior's surprise, when he was welcomed by nine of the most elegant and most respectable ladies of the land. Some of them even took him in their arms and embraced him, for none present were ignorant of the noble part he had acted with regard to me. All were alike kind and attentive to him. I introduced several of them to him by name. "This, Sir Alexander, is my sister, Lady Sydeserf; this, sir, is Lady Campbell, younger, of Glenorchy; this is Lady Dick," &c., &c. His bow to each was the most solemn and profound imaginable, at length he bolted straight up as with a jerk, and turning to me said, in what he meant for a very sprightly manner, "On mine honour, sir baillie, but you have a good assortment of state prisoners at present. Are these, sir, all rebels against this new government, called the 'committee of estates?' Hey? If so, sir, I am proud to be of the number."

"These are all my prisoners for the day and the night, and all happy to see you are of their number, Sir Alexander."

Nothing could give me greater pleasure than the hilarity of the old warrior that night. He was placed next to my sister-in-law at the head of the table; the company consisted of twenty-three, the wine circulated freely, and Glen-bucket fairly forgot for that evening the present cloud under which the Gordons lay, and that there were such things as covenanters and anti-covenanters in the realm.

After the ladies retired, he took fits of upright thoughtfulness; (these are the baillie's own words)

as still not knowing how he was to act, or what state he occupied. I perceived it, and taking him aside into a private room, told him that he was free and at liberty to go and come as he chose, either to his chief, or to his home, or to remain at large in Edinburgh, where my house and all my servants should be his own.

He thanked me most politely, but refused to accept of his freedom, save on the condition, that he should be at liberty to fight for his king and his chief whenever called upon. This was rather above my commission, but seeing that good manners compelled me, I conceded, without hesitation taking the responsibility on myself, and we then joined our jovial friends, and spent the evening in the utmost hilarity.

[It is well known that the annals of that day are of a sanguine description. The baillie took a deep interest in the struggle, and often describes the incidents manifestly as he felt them. The amazement of the country on learning that the king was coming with a powerful army to invade it; the arrival of his navy in the Firth of Forth, and the wiles made use of to draw the king's commander-in-chief, the Marquis of Hamilton, over to the covenanting party, in which they apparently succeeded—for there seems to have been no faith kept in that age, and less with the king than any other person; these are all described by the baillie with his usual simplicity. He describes two meetings which he and some others had with the marquis, one on board his ship, and one at midnight on shore, and these disclosures show how the poor king's confidence was abused. He had 3000 soldiers on board, and twenty large ships well manned, yet the marquis would not suffer one of them to stir a foot in support of the king. The Lord Aboyne hearing of this strong armament, and grieved that his father and elder brother should still be kept in bonds by the Covenanters, raised the Gordons once more, and sent word to Hamilton to join him, and they could then get such conditions for the king as he should require of the Covenanters. But the latter worthies had made sure of Hamilton before. He sent evasive answers to Aboyne, suffering him to raise his clan and advance southward in hopes of support, till lo! he was met by his late adversary Montrose, at the bridge of Dee, with a great army, though not very well appointed.

The baillie was not personally in this battle, for the best of reasons, because the Marquis of Huntly was not there in person to oppose him. The baillie had his great enemy safely under lock and key, else there is little doubt that he would have been at the battle, which he however describes as taken from the mouth of his friend Captain Thorburn.

He says the army of the Gordons amounted to about 2500 men, among whom were two strong bodies of horse. Montrose had 4000, but all new-raised men, though many of them inured to battle in former times. The Gordons were well posted on the two sides of the river Dee, but Montrose took them somewhat by surprise, which he seldom failed to do with his enemies. The battle was exceedingly fierce. Three times did the body of the Gordons on the south side of the river repel the attack of Montrose's squadrons, and defend the bridge; and the third time, if the Gordons durst have left their station, they had so far disordered the main or middle column of the Covenanters, that without all doubt they might have put them to the rout. Montrose was terribly alarmed at that instant for a general attack of the Gordons, which he half confessed would have been ruin. But the young Lord Aboyne, with all the bravery of a hero, wanted experience; he lost that opportunity, and with it the battle. For Montrose being left at leisure, new-modelled his army; and some field-pieces which he had formerly left at Brechin Castle arriving at that instant, he advanced once more, won the bridge of Dee, and in a short time gained possession of the field of battle. Still the young lord drew off his troops to the high grounds with such skill, that the conquerors could make no impression on them. The carnage was nearly equal on both sides.

The baillie never speaks favourably of the king. He says, in one place, they were more plagued with him than anything else. They never derived good from his plans, which tended always much more to derange their measures than cement them. But of the jealousies and heartburnings of the covenanting lords, he expresses himself with real concern.]

The falling off of Montrose from our party (says he) was a great grief of mind to me, though some of our leaders seemed to rejoice at it. Leslie and Argyle bore all the blame, for they were jealous of his warrior fame and brilliant successes, and took every opportunity that occurred to slight him. Yea, and as I loved the man, I was not more sorry at his loss to us than for the loss of his soul; for he had now broken his most solemn oaths and engagements, and lifted up the heel against the Most High, setting him as it were at defiance, after all the zeal he had shown in his cause. I had great fears that a curse was gone forth against us, because of the leaguing of men together whom I knew to be of very different principles; and, among other things, it was matter of great grief when Hamilton and General Ruthven, leaguing together, set the Marquis of Huntly and his son the Lord Gordon both at liberty; whereas it was manifest to every well-disposed Christian, that the good cause would have been much better served by cutting off both their heads. Argyle might have hindered this, but chose not to intermeddle, Huntly being his brother-in-law; but it was all sham, for he both dreaded him and hated him as much as I did. Indeed, I was so much displeased with my Lord Argyle's carriage at this season, that I at one time resolved to decline his patronage for the future, and also to cease supporting him in his political views, which I had uniformly done hitherto. He cheated the men of Athol, and falsifying his honour, took

their leaders prisoners, and then marching a whole army of hungry Highlanders down among the peaceable inhabitants, plundered and laid waste the whole country, burned Castle Farquhar, belonging to the Earl of Airly, and also sacked Airly Castle, spoiling some even of Montrose's own kin. Was it any wonder that the latter was disgusted at such behaviour? But the country was now getting into a state of perfect anarchy and confusion, so that after Montrose's imprisonment and hard trial about signing the Cumbernauld bond, I perceived that we had for ever done with him."

[We must now pass over several years, the history of which is entirely made up of plot and counterplot, raising and disbanding of armies, projects of great import all destroyed by the merest accidents; truculent treaties, much parade, and small execution; and follow our redoubted baillie once more to the field of honour, the place of all others for which he was least fitted, and on which he valued himself most. Indeed, if we except his account of the last parliament which the king held in Scotland, and the last dinner which he gave to his nobility, there is nothing very original in the memoir. The description of these is affecting, but as the writer was a professed opponent to the king's measures, it might not be fair to give such pictures as genuine.]

In April, 1644, being then one of the commission of the General Assembly, I was almost put beside myself, for we had the whole business of the nation to manage; and my zeal both for our religious and civil liberties was such I may truly say that I was eaten up with it. The committee of estates attempted nothing without us, *with* us they could do everything. We had been employed the whole of the first day of our meeting in receiving the penitences and confessions of the Earl of Lanark, who had taken a decided part against the covenant. We dreaded him for a spy sent by the king, and dealt very severely with him; but at length he expressed himself against the king with so much rancour, that we knew he was a true man, and received him into the covenant with many prayers and supplications.

On retiring to my own house, I sat down all alone to ponder on the occurrences of the day, and wondered not a little when a chariot came to my door, and softly and gently one tapped thereat. I heard some whispering at the door, as with my servant maid, and then the chariot drove off again. I sat cocking up my ears, wondering what this could be, until a gentleman entered wrapped in an ample cloak. He saluted me familiarly, but I did not know him till he had laid aside his mantle and taken me by the hand. It was my lord the Marquis of Argyle; I was astonished, and my cogitations troubled me greatly. "My lord," said I, "God bless you! Is it yourself?"

"Did you not know me, my dear baillie?"

"How could I, not knowing you to be in this country? I took you to be in London, watching over our affairs there in parliament, and I was very loath to believe it was your ghost."

"Well, here I am baillie, post from thence, and on an affair that much concerns every friend to the covenant and the reformed religion. Our affairs with his majesty are all blown up. This we expected and foresaw, and we must now arm in good earnest for our country and religion. Our affairs go on well in general; but, O baillie! I have received heavy news since my arrival. Montrose has set up the king's standard on the Border, and is appointed governor and commander-in-chief in Scotland, and my brother-in-law Huntly, that most turbulent and factious of all human beings, is appointed lieutenant-general for the whole realm under him; and while the former is raising all the malignants on the two sides the Border, the latter is raising the whole north against us. What think you of these news, baillie! Have we not great reason to bestir ourselves, and unite all our chief men together, in interest as well as principle, and that without loss of time?"

"I tremble at the news, my lord," returned I, "but merely for the blood that I see must be shed in Scotland; for I am no more afraid of the triumph of our cause than I am of a second deluge, having the same faith in the promises relating to them both. Besides, my lord, the danger is not so great as you imagine from the coalition. The Marquis of Huntly, friend as he is of yours, will never act in subordination with any created being, for his pride and his jealousy will not let him. He may well mar the enterprises of the other, but never will further them. The other is a dangerous man, I acknowledge it. His equal is not in the kingdom; but he is a forsworn man, and how can such a man prosper! I blame you much, my lord, for the loss of him. Your behaviour there has been so impolitic, that I could never trust you with the whole weight of our concerns so well again."

"Why, baillie," returned he impatiently, "that man wanted to be everything. I made all the concessions I could ultimately, but they would not do; the time was past. He was a traitor to the cause at heart, so let that pass. Let us now work for the best. To-morrow the danger must all be disclosed, both in the committee and the Assembly's commission, and I desired this private conference with you, that what I propose in the one, you may propose in the other."

"It was prudently and wisely considered, my lord," said I; "for our only safeguard in this perilous time, is a right understanding with one another. That which either of us proposes will not be put off without a fair trial; and when it turns out that we have both proposed the same thing and the same measures, these must appear to our coadjutors as founded in reason and experience."

"Exactly my feelings," added he; "and neither of us must give up our points, but bring them to a fair trial by vote, should there be any opposition. There

must be two armies raised, or embodied rather, without delay. Who are to be the commanders?"

"Your lordship is without doubt entitled to be the commander of one," said I.

"Granting this, whom are we to propose for the other?" said he.

"Not having previously thought of the matter, I am rather at a loss," said I.

"It rests between the Earls of Callander and Lothian," said he.

"Then I should think the latter the most eligible," returned I: "Callander has already refused a command under our auspices."

"We *must not* lose that nobleman, baillie, make what sacrifice we will. Besides he has the king's confidence, and the circumstance of his being our general will be an excellent blind to those who are still wavering. Do you take me, baillie? Did your clear long-winded comprehension never take that view of the matter?'

"You are quite right, my lord," said I. "The justice of your remark is perfectly apparent. I shall then propose you for the northern army, and Livingstone for the southern."

"Very well," said his lordship, "and I shall propose Livingstone, as you call him, for the south, and Lothian for the north; for I'll rather give up my privilege to him than lose his interest. It is most *probable* I will be nominated in his place. On this then we are agreed. But there is another thing, my dear baillie, which I want done without delay, and I beg you will have the kindness to propose and use it to-morrow. We must loose all the thunders of the church against our enemies. I have already seen how it weakens their hands. We must have the great excommunication pronounced on them all without delay; and as the proposal will come better from you than me, I intrust you with it."

"It is a dreadful affair that, my lord," said I; "I am not very fond of the honour. It leaves no room for repentance. Neither do I as yet know on whom to have it executed."

"The church is at liberty to take it off again on the amendment of the parties," said he; "and as I have full intelligence of all, I will give you a list of the leading malignants, against whom to issue the curse."

I was obliged to acquiesce rather against my inclination, and he gave me the list from his pocket. "Now be sure to fix on a divine that will execute it in the most resolute manner," added he. "It will mar their levies for once."

"It is a terrible affair," said I, "to be gone deliberately about for any sinister purpose."

"It is what they justly deserve," said he. "They are renegades and reprobates, every man of them; liars and covenant-breakers; let the curse be poured out on them. And now, my dear friend, if it turns out that I must lead the covenanting army against my brother-in-law, I will not proceed a foot without your company. You shall be my chief counsellor, and next to myself both in honour and emolument. In short you shall command both the army and me. Give me your promise."

"I think I can serve you more at home, my lord," said I.

"No, you cannot," said he. "You have an indefinable power over Huntly. I have seen extraordinary instances of it. He has no more power to stand before you than before a thunderbolt. Your very name has a charm over him. I was in his company last year when your name chanced to be mentioned. To my astonishment every lineament of his frame and feature of his countenance underwent a sudden alteration, becoming truly diabolical. 'Wretch! poltroon! dog that he is!' exclaimed he furiously; 'I'll crush the varlet with my foot, as I would do the meanest reptile!'"

"I will go with you, my lord," said I. "There shall be nothing more of it. We will let him see who can crush best. Crush me with his foot! The proud obstreporous changeling! I will let him see who will take the door of the parliament-house first, ere long! They would not cut off his head when they had him, though I brought him in chains to them like a wild beast, and told them what he was."

"That's right," said the marquis; "I like to see you show a proper spirit. Now remember to push home the excommunication. The great one let it be. Give them it soundly."

"It shall be done, my lord," said I, "if my influence and exertion can bear it through. And moreover, I will lead the van of your army in the northern expedition myself in person. I shall command the wing or centre against Huntly, wherever he is. It is not proper that two brothers command against each other."

We then conversed about many things in a secret and confidential manner till a late hour, when I likewise muffled myself up in a cloak and conveyed his lordship home.

The very next day, as soon as the prayer was ended, I arose in my seat, and announced the news of the two risings in opposition to the covenant, and all our flourishing measures; and proposed that we should, without a moment's delay, come to a conclusion how the danger might be averted. I was seconded by the Rev. Mr. Blair, who confirmed my statement as far as related to the north. Of Montrose none of them had heard. I assured them of the fact, and proposed the Earl of Callander to levy and lead the army of the south and Argyle that of the north; at the same time stating my reasons for my choice, which I deemed unanswerable. There was not one dissentient voice, provided the convention of estates acquiesced in the choice.

I then made a speech of half an hour's length, recommending that the sword of the Spirit should likewise be unsheathed against them, and that as a terror to others, these rebels against the true re-

formed religion should be consigned over to the spirit of disobedience, under whose influence they had thus raised the bloody banner of civil war. I was seconded by Mr. Robert Douglas, a great leader of our church; but we were both opposed by Sir William Campbell, another ruling elder like myself, and that with such energy that I was afraid the day was lost, the moderator, Mr. David Dickson, a silly man, being on his side. We carried it, however, by a majority, and Mr. John Adamson was chosen for the important work.

The crowd that day at the High Church was truly terrific, and certainly Mr. Adamson went through the work in a most imposing and masterly manner. My heart quaked, and all the hairs of my head rose on end; and I repented me of having been the moving cause of consigning so many precious souls to endless perdition. I could sleep none all the following night, and had resolved to absent myself from the commission the next day, and spend it in fasting and humiliation; but at eleven o'clock I was sent for on express to attend, and on going I found new cause for grief and repentance.

I had given in a list of eight for excommunication, precisely as Argyle gave them to me. I did not so much as know some of them, but took them on my great patron's word. They were the Marquis of Huntly, of course he was the first; the two Irvines of Drum; the Laird of Haddo, and his steward; the Lairds of Skeen and Tipperty; and Mr. James Kennedy, secretary to Huntly. Judge then of my grief and confusion, when on going into my place I found Mr. Robert Skeen there, entering a protest against our proceedings, in as far as related to his brother, the Laird of Skeen, whom he assured us was as true to the cause as any present; and he gave us, as I thought, indubitable proofs of it.

I was overcome with confusion and astonishment, and wist not what to say for myself, for I could not with honour disclose the private communication between Argyle and me. I got up to address the meeting, but my feelings and my conscience were so much overcome, that I could not come to any point that bore properly on the subject. Whereon Sir William Campbell, who had opposed the motion from the beginning, rose and said, "Mr. Moderator, it is evident the gentleman is nonplussed, and cannot give any proper explanation. I'll do it for him; the gentleman, sir, is like ourselves, he acts by commission: yes, sir, I say like us he acts by commission. We do so with our eyes open, in the name and by the appointment of all our brethren; but he acts, sir, with his eyes shut; he acts, sir, blindfolded, and solely by the direction of another. Is it any wonder, sir, that such a man should run into blunders? But since the thing hath happened, why let it pass. What is a man's soul to us? Let him go to the devil with the rest; I see very little difference it makes."

This raised a laugh in the court at my expense, so loud, and so much out of reason, that the moderator reprimanded the court at large, and called Sir William to order. But I stood corrected, humbled, and abashed, never having got such a rub before. After all, the gentleman turned out a rank malignant, and was as active against the covenanting principles as any man of the day.

Argyle, whose influence with the churchmen was without a parallel, and almost without bounds, soon raised three strong regiments, and could have raised as many more. The ministers of Fife and Angus preached all the Sunday on the glory of standing up for the good work of the heart, and that whosoever did not rise for the work of the Lord, and contribute less or more according to his means, would be blotted out of the book of life; they likewise, every one of them, announced the eternal curse laid on their enemies. It was a time of awe and dread, and fearful workings of the spirits of men.

The consequence of these preachings and anathemas was, that on the Monday whole multitudes of the people came to the ministers to enrol themselves for the war, so that the latter had nothing ado but to pick and choose. Many came with forties and fifties, one or two with a hundred, and the minister of Cameron, honest man, came with three. Accordingly, some day early in May, I have forgot the day, we proceeded once more to the north, against the Marquis of Huntly. We had 3000 foot, and nearly 500 horse, and I believe every man's blood in the army, as well as my own, was boiling with indignation and resentment against the disturber of the public peace.

I went in the character of Argyle's friend and counsellor, but he was so kind, that he frequently caused me to issue the general orders myself, and all his servants were at my command. We had three companies of the black coats with us, raised by the church, and dressed in her uniform; and, though the malignant part of the country laughed exceedingly at them, my opinion was that they were a very valuable corps — mostly the sons of poor gentlemen and farmers, well educated, fearless resolute fellows, excellent takers of meat, and good prayers. I looked on their presence as a great safeguard for the army.

Well, as soon as we crossed the Tay, I took one of these fellows, named Lawrence Hay, a shrewd clever fellow, and dressing him smartly up as an officiating clergyman, with cloak, cocked hat, and bands, I despatched him away secretly into the middle of the country of the Gordons, to bring me intelligence of all that was going on there, knowing that he would meet with nothing but respect and reverence in his route. I likewise gave him letters to two covenanting clergymen of my acquaintance, but told to none of them the purport of my black cavalier's mission, which he executed to a wonder. He had even had the assurance to go into the midst of Huntly's host, as a licentiate of the Episcopal church, and convene

with his officers. After an absence of three nights and days, he returned to me at the fords of the Dee, and very opportunely did he arrive.

It will easily be conceived that I had not that full confidence in my present commander that I had in my former one; and for one main reason—I saw that he had not that full confidence in himself; so that I was obliged to venture a little on my own bottom. Well, when we came the length of the Dee, Argyle was at a stand, not having heard aught of Huntly's motions or strength, and he proposed that we should turn to the east, to take in Aberdeen and the populous districts, and prevent Huntly's levies there.

At that very important nick of time my private messenger arrived, and gave me the following account. Huntly's officers were loading us with the most horrid curses and invectives on account of the excommunication. The people in the villages, instead of enlisting, fled from the faces of the officers, as from demons; and that even of the force they had collected, there were few whose hearts and hands were not weakened; and that Huntly's sole dependence lay on getting reasonable terms of accommodation, and for that only he with difficulty kept his forces together. This was the substance of all he had gathered, principally from the country people, and he assured me I might rely on it. This was blithe news to me. He told me, likewise, that he was called in before Huntly, who examined him regarding all the news of the south. At length he came to this.

"Know you aught of the Covenanters' army?"

"I was in St. Johnstone when they were there, my lord: saw all their array, and heard the names of the leaders, some of which I have forgot."

"What may be the amount of their army?"

"The numbers are considerable. I think Mr. Norris, with whom I lodged, said they amounted to 5000, but they are badly equipped, badly trained, and far worse commanded. Your troops may venture to encounter them one to two."

"Why, I heard that Argyle had the command."

"Not at all, my lord, he has the least command in the army; he only commands the horse. Lord Kinghorn has a regiment, he is no great head, you know; Lord Elcho has another. But the commander-in-chief is, I assure you, a ridiculous body, a baillie of Edinburgh."

"Thank you kindly for the character, Mr. Hay," said I; "thank you kindly." I was, however, highly pleased with the fellow's ingenuity. "Thank you kindly, Mr. Lawrence," said I. "Well, what did the marquis say to that?"

"Say to that!" exclaimed he. "Why, the man went out of his reason the moment I mentioned your name. I never beheld any thing equal to it! I cannot comprehend it. His countenance altered; his eyes turned out, and his tongue swelled in his mouth, so that he could hardly pronounce the words. Then he began and cursed you for a dog of hell, and cursed, and cursed you, till he fell into a sort of convulsion, and his officers carried him away. What in this world is the meaning of it?"

"The meaning of it is, sir," said I—and I said it with a holy sublimity of manner—"the meaning of it is, sir, that he knows I am born to chastise him in this world, and to be his bane in a world to come."

The poor fellow gaped and stared at me in dumb amazement. I made him a present of 100 merks, and the horse that he had rode on, which he accepted of without again moving his tongue.

This was at midnight, and the next morning early, Argyle called a council of war, and proposed turning aside from the direct route, and strengthening ourselves to the eastward. The rest of the officers acquiesced, but I held my peace and shook my head.

"What! does our worthy friend the baillie not approve of this measure?" said Argyle.

"I disapprove of it mainly and decidedly;" said I. "Or, if you will lead the army to the eastward, give me but Freeland's Perth dragoons, and as many chosen men foot soldiers, and I will engage with these few to push straight onward, brave the wild beast in his den, scatter his army of hellish malignants like chaff; and if I don't bring you Huntly, bound head and foot, his horse shall be swifter than mine. I know the power that is given me, and I will do this, or never trust my word again."

"My lords and right trusty friends," said Argyle, "you have all heard our honoured friend the baillie's proposal. You have likewise witnessed the energy with which it has been made—so different from his accustomed modest, mild, and diffident manner—a sure pledge to me that he is moved to the undertaking by the Spirit of the Most High; I therefore propose that we should grant him the force he requests, and trust him with the bold adventure."

"If my cavalry are to be engaged," said the Laird of Freeland, "I must necessarily fight at their head."

"That you shall, and I will ride by your side, sir," said I. "But remember you are to fight when I bid you, and pursue when I bid you; as to the flying part, I leave that to your own discretion."

"Well said, baillie!" cried Argyle; "you are actually grown a hero of the first order." The officers wondered at me, and the common men were seized with a holy ardour, and strove who should have the honour of going on the bold expedition. I was impatient to be gone, having taken my measures, and accordingly I got 400 cavalry, among whom were the three companies of black dragoons, and mounting 400 foot soldiers behind them, I took the road at their head, telling them that, save to feed the horses, we halted no more till we drew up before the enemy. The Laird of Freeland led the horse, and young Charteris of Elcho the foot. We rode straight on to the north, and at even crossed the Don at a place called the Old Ford, or Auldford—a place subsequently rendered famous for the triumph of iniquity.

The weather was fine, and the waters very low;

and I proposed, after feeding our horses, that we should travel all night, and surprise the Gordons early in the morning. Accordingly we set out, but on leaving the Dee, we got into a wild mountain path, and there being a thick dry haze on the hills, we lost our way altogether, and knew not whither we were journeying north or south. At length we arrived at a poor village having a Highland name, which I could not pronounce, and there asked a guide for the town of Huntly. The men were in great consternation, running from one house to another; for our array through the haze appeared even to my own eyes to increase sevenfold.

We at length procured a guide by sheer compulsion; I placed him on a horse before a dragoon, with orders to kill him if he attempted to make his escape, and I assured him, that on the return of day, if I found that he had not led us by the direct path, I would cut him all into small pieces. Finding out that the hamlet belonged to the Gordons, I was very jealous of the fellow, and kept always beside him myself. "Now are you sure, you rascal, that you are leading us in a straight line for Huntly?"

"Huhay: and tat she pe, she pe leating you as straight, sir, as a very tree, as straight as a wherry rhope, sir."

"Had we deviated much ere we arrived at your village?"

"I dhont knhow, sir. Far did you be casting them?"

"Casting what?"

"Why them divots you speaked of."

"I mean, had we gone far astray?"

"Hu, very far indheed, sir, you could not have ghone as far astray in te whoule world."

One of my black dragoons, a great scholar and astronomer, now came riding up and says, "I can tell your honour that I got a glimpse of the heavens through the mist, just now, and saw the polar star; this fellow is leading you straight to the north-west, in among the mountains, and very near in a direct line from Huntly."

"Fats te mhan saying?" cried the guide.

I seized him by the throat, and taking a naked sword in my hand, I said, "Swear to me by the great God, sirrah, that you are conducting me straight to Huntly, else I run you through the body this instant."

"Huhay, she will swear py te muckle Cot as lhong as you lhike."

I then put the oath to him, making him repeat it after me, which he did till I came to the words *straight to Huntly*. To these he objected, and refused to repeat them; I asked the reason, and he said, "Cot pless you, sir, no man can go straight here py rheason of te woots, and te rhocks, and te hills, and te mhountains. We must just go or we can find an opening."

"The man speaks good sense," said I, "and we are all fools; lead on, my good fellow."

When he found that he was out of danger for the present, his natural antipathy against us soon began again to show itself, and he asked at me sneeringly—

"And pe tat your *swear* in te sassenach! Tat is your creat pig oath, I mean."

I answered in the affirmative.

"Phoo, phoo!" cried he, "ten I would nhot kive a podle for an hundred tousand of tem. You will nhot pe tat bittie stick in my hand te petter of it. Put you will soon pe an fhine rhoats nhow, and haxellent speed you will pe."

He was laughing when he said this, and the trooper who was behind him, perceiving that he was leading straight on a thicket, asked him what he meant by that, but all that he said was, "huhay, you shall soon be on haxellent rhoats now;" so saying, he plunged his horse into a bog, where it floundered and fell. The dragoon that guarded the guide threw himself off, and tumbled heels-over-head; but the guide, who was free of the stirrups, flung himself off more nimbly, and the next moment dived into the thicket. Sundry pieces were let off after him, but they might as well have shot against a brazen wall. He laughed aloud, and called out, "Huhay, fire away, fire away; you pe te fery coot shotters, and you pe an haxellent rhoats nhow; ha, ha, ha, you pe an ta haxellent rhoats nhow."

We saw no more of our guide, and knew not what to do; but finding a fine green recess in the wood, we alighted and baited our horses, the men refreshed themselves, and at day-break I sung the last six verses of the 74th Psalm, in which the whole army joined me, making most grand and heavenly music in that wild Highland wood. I then prayed fervently for direction and success against our enemies, while all the army kneeled around me on the grass. After that the men rose greatly encouraged, and in high spirits.

We rushed from the hills straight upon Huntly before noon, but met no army there. We got intelligence that the army of the Gordons had divided: that Sir George Gordon had led one of the divisions to the eastward, into the braes of the Ithan, and had fortified the castle of Haddo, and that the ministers were raising the whole country around him to join Argyle, for the sentence of excommunication had broken the arms of the Gordons. That the Marquis of Huntly had retired up the country with the rest, and had stationed them in fastnesses, while he himself lay in the castle of Auchendoun. We rode straight on for Auchendoun, in hopes still to take him by surprise, although our friends assured us that our approach was known last night through all the rows of Strathbogie, for it seemed the men of the village we came to among the hills had run and raised the alarm.

About noon we came in sight of the Gordons drawn up on a hill to the south of the river, but owing to the inequalities of the ground, we could form no right estimate of their numbers. I say

Elcho was for an immediate attack, but that I protested against as a thing impracticable, owing to the situation of the ground. The hill was full of shelves, lying all one above another, so that they served as natural bulwarks, and to surmount them with troops of horse was impossible; therefore, I proposed to march straight on the castle, to take order with the marquis himself, for the whole bent and bias of my inclination led me to that. Charteris grumbled, and would fain have been at handicuffs; but the Laird of Freeland agreeing with me, we rode on, and the army of the Gordons kept its station, only saluting us with a few volleys of musketry as we passed, which did not wound above five men, and killed not one.

The castle of Auchendoun being difficult of access by a regular army, we formed our men at a little distance to the north-east, and I sent Major Ramsay with a trumpet to summon the Gordons to surrender. The constable asked in whose name he was thus summoned; Ramsay replied, "In the name of the king and the committee of estates." The constable said, "that as to the latter he had not yet learned to acknowledge its power, but he had no orders from his lord to hold out the castle against the king, whose true and loyal subject he ever professed to be. After a good deal of reasoning, the gentleman, on having Ramsay's word, came over to me and conversed with all freedom. I remember little of what passed, for there was only one thing that struck me to the heart; *the marquis had left the castle that morning, with six horsemen only in his company!*

There was a stunning blow for me! I thought I had him in the lurch, but behold he was gone I wist not whither. I instantly chose out twenty of my black dragoons, and leaving the officers to settle with the Gordons as best they could, I set off in pursuit of their chief. I soon got traces of him, and pursued hotly on his track till the fall of evening, when I lost him in this wise.

He had quitted his horse, and crossed the Spey in a boat, while two of the gentlemen who rode with him, led off the rest of the horses down the south side of the river. I followed in the same direction, but could never discover at what place these horses crossed the river, for no ford we could find, the banks being all alike precipitous, and the river tumbling and roaring through one continuous gullet. We passed the night most uncomfortably in an old barn, and the next morning getting a ford, we proceeded on the road to Elgin, but lost all traces of the object of our pursuit. My troopers tried to persuade me to return, but I would not listen to them, and therefore I turned westward again, until I came to the very boatman who had ferried Huntly over the water the evening before. They told me that he left them on foot with four attendants, and that they were all so laden with gold and silver, that if their horses did not come round in a circuit and meet them, they could not travel two miles farther.

This sharpened our stomachs exceedingly, and we set out after the enemy at a bold gallop. We had not ridden far till we were informed by a hind, that the marquis and his friends were lodged in a farmer's house straight before us, occupied by a gentleman named John Gordon; that the marquis had changed his name, but several there knew him, and that it was reported they were laden with treasure, which they were unable to carry with them. In an instant we were at the house, which we surrounded and took by assault, there being none in it but John Gordon and a lad, and two maidens, all of whom we took prisoners. We searched the house, but and ben, outside and inside, but no marquis nor lord found we, but we found two bags, in which were contained a thousand crowns of gold. I then examined all the prisoners on oath, and released them; but Mr. Gordon was very sore displeased at the loss of the gold, which I carried with me. "Sir, that gold is neither yours nor mine," said he; "it was left me in charge; I swore to hide it, and return it to the owner when called for, and it shows no gentleman nor good Christian, to come and take away other people's gold without either ceremony or leave."

"This money, Mr. Gordon, belongs to a traitor to the state," said I; "to one that with the help of it was going to kindle up the flames of rebellion and civil war, and in taking it I do good service both to God and man; and therefore do you take care, Mr. Gordon, that I do not cause your head to be chopped off, for thus lodging and furthering a malignant and intercommuned traitor. For the money I will answer to a higher power than is vested in you, or him that deputed you the charge; and will cause you in a few days, if I return in peace, to be taken up and tried by the legal authorities."

In the meantime one of my black dragoons had been busy kissing one of John Gordon's maidens, and from her he had learned many particulars that came not out on oath. She told him the colours of all the horses and the dresses of the men. The marquis was dressed in tartan trews of the Macintosh stripes, had a black bonnet on his head, and was entitled the major. She told the way the men went, and much of their conversation over-night which she heard. The man they called the major acknowledged that he was bewitched, and the rest joined with him, marvelling exceedingly at a power some hellish burgess of Edinburgh exercised over him; and sundry other things did this maiden disclose.

But from one particular set down here, it was evident the marquis was impressed with a horrid idea that I was to work his destruction, and feared to look me in the face more than he feared the spirits of the infernal regions. I had the same impressions. I knew I would some time or other vanquish him, and have my full revenge for all his base and unworthy dealings toward me. A good lesson to all men in power to do that which is just and right. As it was, my very name unmanned him, and made

him desert his whole clan, who, amid their native fastnesses, might have worn us out or cut us in pieces—bundle up his treasures, and gallop for his life.

Had I ridden straight for Forres that morning, I would have been there long before him; but suspecting that he had fled westward into the Highlands, I returned to Gordon's house, and was now quite behind him. On we rode, without stop or stay, to the town of Forres, having speerings of the party all the way; but when we came there, they were still a-head of us, having ridden briskly through the town without calling. We pushed on to the town of Finran, but there our evil luck predominated, no such people having been seen there. We wist not then where to turn, but thought of pursuing up the coast: and as we were again setting out, whom should we meet but my worthy friend Master John Monro, minister of Inverallen, who was abroad on the business of the estates. From him we learned, that five gentlemen at the village on the other side of the bay were making a mighty stir about getting a boat—that they seemed pursued men, and that two of the party who arrived first were so much alarmed, that they took to the boat provided for the whole, and had left their friends to their shift.

As there were only five of the party we were pursuing, I now suspected that two had been despatched the night before to procure this boat, and knowing the marquis to be of the latter party, I was sure he was left behind. We made all the speed to the place that our horses were able, but they were sore forespent, and just as we arrived we saw a great bustle about the quay, and a small boat with four oars left it. I immediately discovered the marquis, with his tartan trews and black bonnet, and hailing the boat, I desired her to return. The helmsman and rowers seemed disposed to obey, but a great bustle arose in the boat, and one of the rowers who leaned on his oar was knocked down, a gentleman took his place, and away shot the boat before the wind. I ordered my party to fire into her, but then a scene of riot and confusion took place. The men and all the women of the village flew on us like people distracted, seized on our guns, took my black dragoons by their throats, scratched their faces, tore their hair, and dared them for the souls that were within them, to fire one shot at the boat manned by their own dear and honest men.

It was vain to contend: the boat was soon out of reach, so I was obliged to yield to these rude villagers and make matters up with them as well as I could; but I was indeed a grieved man for having taken so much trouble in vain, and letting the great disturber of the country's peace escape again and again, as it were from under my nose.

We took some rest and refreshment at the village, and after communing long with myself, I determined still to keep on the pursuit; to ride westward, cross the firth to Rothiemay, and ride towards Sutherland, to intercept the marquis on his landing. Accordingly, we set out once more, much against the opinion of my men, who contended that we were too small a party to penetrate into those distant regions; but nothing could divert me from my purpose, knowing as I did that Inverness and all those bounds were in favour with our party and true men. But behold that very night we were all surprised and taken prisoners in the town of Nairn, by Captain Logie and a full troop of the Gordons, who, getting some intelligence of their chief's danger, had been on the alert for his rescue.

When I was brought before this young officer to be examined, I found him a very impertinent and forward fellow, although I answered all his questions civilly. When I told him I was pursuing the Marquis of Huntly, to bring him to suffer for all his crimes, he cursed me for a dog, and said the times were come to a sad pass indeed when such a cur as I dared to pursue after the Marquis of Huntly, a nobleman whose shoes I was not entitled to wipe. He called me a puny burgess, a canting worthless hypocrite, and every opprobrious title that he could invent; took all my hoard of gold, tied my feet and the feet of my black dragoons below the bellies of our horses, and led us away captives into the country of the Gordons. I gave the young gentleman several hints to beware how he maltreated me, for that I was a dangerous personage, and never missed setting my foot on the necks of my enemies; but all my good advice tended only to make him worse. He used us very ill, and at length brought us prisoners to the castle of Haddo, commanded by Sir George Gordon, and fully provided for a siege.

We lay for some days without knowing what was going on, often hearing the din of muskets and some cannonry, whereby we understood that Argyle or some of his officers had come before the castle, and sorely did we regret that we had it not in our power to let our state be known to our friends.

But there was one thing that I discovered which could scarcely have been kept from our ears; I perceived there were divisions within the castle, and that the other chieftains of the Gordon race were disgusted with Haddo's procedure. On this subject I kept my mind to myself, and the third day after we were immured, we had a little more liberty granted us, and were rather more civilly treated; then I knew the besieged were afraid, and wished to make their peace. I was right. Argyle had heard from our friends in Morayshire of our capture, and insisted on our release before he would enter into any accommodation with the besieged. We were accordingly liberated, and all my gold restored to me, and joyfully was I received by Argyle and his friends, who lauded my zeal exceedingly, although they did make some sport of the expedition of my black dragoons and me, which they denominated "*the black raid.*"

By this time, Master John Gordon was brought in

a prisoner, as also two of the boatmen who carried the marquis over to Caithness, where they had left him, still posting his way to the north. Such a violent fright did that great and proud person get from a man whom he had bitterly wronged and his few black dragoons, that he never looked over his shoulder till he was concealed among the rocks, on the shores of the Northern ocean.

Finding that Lord Gordon, the marquis's eldest son, had either through choice or compulsion joined his uncle Argyle, I got John Gordon, and before his face, Argyle's, and several others, consigned to the young lord his father's treasure that I had captured, for which I got great praise. I knew well enough Argyle would not suffer any part of it to revert to the Huntlys again. The brave young lord looked much dissatisfied; I was rather sorry for him, for our troops had wasted his father's lands very much.

It is only necessary to note here, that the 800 men whom I left at Auchendoun met with little opposition in those parts. They entered the castle and plundered it of a good deal of stores, and then marched rank and file on the army that was encamped on the shelvy hill, but that melted away before them, for the men saw they had nothing for which to fight.

As soon as I got private talk with Argyle, I informed him of the strength of the castle and the likelihood there was that we would lose many lives before it; but I added, "I am convinced that Sir George's violent measures are anything but agreeable to the greater part of the gentlemen within, for he is a boisterous and turbulent person, and they cannot brook his rule. My advice therefore is, that you offer all within the castle free quarter, providing they will deliver up the laird and the insolent Captain Logie, to answer for their share in this insurrection."

Argyle returned for answer, "that he approved of my pacific measures, having no wish to shed his countrymen's blood, but that surely the soldiers would never be so base as to give up their leaders."

I said, "that I conceived the matter deserved a trial, as the sparing of human blood was always meritorious in the sight both of God and man."

Accordingly Argyle, who never in his life rejected my counsel but once, which he afterwards repented—he, I say, came before the castle, and by proclamation offered the terms suggested by me. The proffer was no sooner made than the gates were thrown open, Argyle and his friends were admitted, and Sir George Gordon and Captain Logie delivered into our hands, well bound with ropes. I asked the captain how he did; but he would not speak, and afterwards when he did speak, he answered me as proudly and as insolently as ever. My kind friend and patron did me the honour that day to say, before sundry noblemen and gentlemen, that he esteemed my advice as if one inquired at the oracles of God.

And now the rebels being wholly either reduced or scattered, we returned straight to Edinburgh with our two prisoners, and had their heads chopped off publicly, on the 19th of July, at the market-cross.

[This was summary work with a vengeance! If this narrative of the honest baillie's detail be, as it professes, nothing but simple literal facts, it is certainly an extraordinary story, and may well be denominated a remarkable passage in his life. But without all doubt, his stories of the Marquis of Huntly must be swallowed with caution; for such a rooted hatred and opposition could not fail to produce exaggeration. The idea which the writer entertains of having a power over the destiny of that nobleman invested in him by the Almighty, as a reward for former injuries, is among the most curious superstitions of the age.

In the following parliament, a Sir John Smith, and our friend the baillie, represent the city of Edinburgh; on which occasion, the latter has the honour of knighthood conferred on him. We must notwithstanding still denominate him by our old familiar title *the baillie*, as it sounds best in our ears, and gives a novelty to the great events in which he was engaged.

His details of parliamentary business are jumbles of confusion and absurdity, and contain many decrees unworthy the councils of a nation struggling for their liberties, civil and religious; we must therefore follow the baillie to his next great exploit in the field, and leave his civic and parliamentary annals to those curious in such matters.]

Some day about the close of the year [this must have been A.D. 1644], I received a letter from Argyle, intreating me to attend him in the West Highlands, as he never stood more in need of my counsel and assistance than at that instant; he being about to set out on an expedition against a powerful army, commanded by dangerous and experienced leaders.

I answered that I liked not having anything to do with Montrose, for I knew his decision, and stood in dread of him; therefore I judged my assistance would rather be prejudicial to the good cause and my noble friend than otherwise; and that moreover, I had no liberty of absence from the council of the nation; but I would never lose sight of furthering his supplies and interests where I was.

But all this would not serve. I got another letter express from Dumbarton, adjuring me to come to him without any loss of time, for in my absence he found a blank in his counsels and resolutions which could not otherwise be supplied; and to bring my reverend friend Mr. Mungo Law with me, to assist us with his prayers. To whet me on a little more, he added, that Huntly had again issued from his concealment, and had crossed Glen-Roy at the head of a regiment of the Gordons, to urge on and further Montrose's devastations.

This kindled my ardour to a flame, and without this instigation I would not have gone; for I felt assured, even in the most inward habitation of my

heart, that I was decreed and directed from above to be a scourge to Huntly, and an adder in his path, until I should bring his haughty brow to the dust. Accordingly, Mr. Law and I set out in the very depth of winter, and after a difficult journey we arrived at Dumbarton Castle, where we found our principal covenanting leaders assembled in council, and a powerful army in attendance.

Argyle's plan was to march straight into Mid-Lorn, which the royal army then wasted without mercy; and in this proposal he was joined by General Baillie. At this momentous crisis Mr. Law and I arrived, and were welcomed by Argyle with open arms. "Now, my lords," said he good-naturedly, "we have had *one Baillie's* opinion, let me now request that *of another*, and if he gives the same verdict, my resolution is fixed, for this has been always an Achitophel to me."

"My lord," said I, "the counsel of Achitophel was at last turned to foolishness, so may that of mine, or of any man however eminent for wisdom; for we are all erring and fallible creatures, vain of our endowments, and wise in our own conceits; but we can do nothing but what is given us to do. Nevertheless, my lord, my advice shall be given in sincerity, and may the Lord direct the issue."

My Lord of Argyle was well pleased with this prelude, for besides that he loved a simple speech, he strove always to exalt me in the eyes of his compeers; and so, bowing and beckoning me to proceed, he took his seat, while I spoke as follows:—

"My lords, and most worthy committee of directors of this inspired expedition: it appears to me quite immethodical to transport the whole of this brave army into the West Highlands at this inclement season, and leave the whole of the populous districts to the eastward exposed and unprotected. You will see that no sooner have we penetrated those snowy regions, and reached the shores of the western sea, than Montrose and his army of wild Highlanders, who account nothing of seasons, will instantly stretch off like a herd of deer, and fall on the towns and fertile districts to the eastward; leaving us entangled among the fastnesses of the mountains, from whence we may not be able to extricate ourselves before the approach of summer. My advice therefore is, that all the army, save the 500 ordained by the committee to assist Argyle, do return with their leaders, and defend the populous and rich districts of the east; and no sooner shall Argyle appear in his own country, than his own brave clan will flock to him in such numbers, that Montrose and his ragamuffins will never dare to face them, and then shall we have them between two fires that shall inclose and hem them in, and destroy them root and branch."

Lord Balcarras spake next, and approved of my plan without hesitation. Crawford Lindsay doing the same, it was approven and adopted without delay, though not much, as I thought, to Argyle's satisfaction. Three regiments returned to Angus, and 500 men went with Argyle. We lingered about Roseneath for three days, until a messenger arrived with the news of Colonel Campbell of Auchenbreck having arrived from Ireland, with twenty other experienced officers, who were raising the country of Kintyre. We then hasted away, and after a most dreadful march, came in upon the shores of Lochfine. What a woeful scene was there presented to us of devastation and blood! the hamlets smoked in every direction; beasts lay houghed and dying in the field by hundreds; whole troops of men were found lying slain and stripped, while women and children were cowering about the rocky shores, and dying of cold and want. Cursed be the man that promotes a civil war in his country, and among his kindred; and may the hand of the Lord be on him for evil and not for good!

The Lauchlans and Gregors were still hanging over the remnants of that desolated place, but they fled to the snowy hills, and laden as they were with spoil, we were not able to follow them. At Ouchter we met with the brave Sir Duncan Campbell of Auchenbreck, who had already raised 400 gallant men, so that we were now above 1000 strong, and with these we marched to Inverary. The frost continued exceedingly sharp, but the snow not being so deep as on the hills to the east, the people flocked in to us from all directions, every one craving to be led against the devourers of their country. The complaints were grievous, and not without cause; it was a shame that the plundering of that fine and populous country had not been put a stop to sooner. I suspected that the marquis was greatly to blame. As for Sir Duncan, he was out of all temper on perceiving the desolation wrought in the country, and breathed nothing but vengeance against the northern clans. I verily believe, if arms could have been had, that Argyle might have raised six, if not ten thousand men! but the greatest part of the arms was carried off or destroyed. As it was, he had his choice of men, and selected none but the stoutest and bravest of the clan, many of them sons of gentlemen; so that, when the army separated at Loch Awe, we had not fewer than 3400 fighting men.

Our greatest loss of all was the want of information relating to the state of the country. Notwithstanding the turmoil that was in the land, we knew nothing of what was passing beyond the distance of a few miles; but all accounts agreed that Montrose was fleeing rapidly before us, his clans being laden with booty, and eager to deposit that at their homes. Of course, we knew that a dispersion of his army must take place in the first instance, and eager we were to harass him before he could again collect them.

As to the affairs of the east, we knew nothing with certainty, save that we had *one* good army in that quarter, though whereabouts we did not know. We heard the Gordons were up, but knew nothing

of their motions, or whether they had joined with Montrose. The Frazers and M'Kenzies were also in arms, but whether for the king or the covenant we did not know, as some said the one way and some the other. All we knew for certain was that Montrose was fleeing, that his Highlanders must disperse for awhile, and that it was our duty to keep up with him, and do him all the evil we could. This was also the desire of the whole army, for never were men marched against an enemy held in more perfect detestation.

I went with the western division of the army, which passed next to the sea, and the provision ships; so also did Argyle, Niddery, and Provost Campbell; but the bold Sir Duncan led the other division, by wilds almost impervious, through the country of the M'Keans. We plundered the country of the Stuarts of Appin, and our drivers brought in sundry small preys. When we came to Kinloch-Leven, we learned that Sir Duncan of Auchenbreck had crossed over into Lochaber before us, and was laying the country of the Camerons altogether waste. We followed on in his track, and overtook him at even, lying by the side of a frith awaiting our arrival. He had been withstood by the Camerons of Glen Nevis, who beat in his drivers, killed several of them, and still hung over his array in the recesses of the hills above.

On the 30th of January at noon, we reached a fine old fortress, where we pitched our camp, and here we were at a great loss how to proceed. Our water-carriage failing us here, we could not transport our necessary baggage farther. The wind had turned round to the north-east, straight in our faces, and therefore to pursue Montrose in that direction any farther, seemed impracticable for the present. A council of war was called; Auchenbreck urged a speedy pursuit, as did sundry other gentlemen of his kindred; but he was an impetuous man, and therefore I took the opposite side, more to be a check on his rashness than from a disapproval of his measures, and Argyle instantly leaned to my counsel.

But we were now in an enemy's country to all intents, and every precaution was necessary; accordingly, Argyle and Auchenbreck stationed the army in divisions, in the most secure and warlike manner. This was on the Friday evening, and on the Saturday Auchenbreck pushed on our advanced guard about seven or eight miles forward on Montrose's track, for his desire was either to overtake Montrose by the way, while his troops were scattered with the spoil, or reach Inverness and join the army there in garrison. But now the strangest event fell out to us that ever happened to men.

On the Saturday, about noon, two men were brought in prisoners, that had escaped from Montrose's army and were returning to Moidart; from them we learned that Montrose had reached Loch Nigs—that his army was reduced more than one half by desertions and leaves of absence—that the remainder were greatly dispirited, as he meditated a march into Badenoch, and from that to Buchan, a dreadful march in such weather. We swallowed all this for truth, and I believe the men told the truth as far as they knew. But behold, at the very time Argyle was questioning them in my presence, there comes news that the advanced guard of Montrose's army and ours had had a sharp encounter at the ford of the river Spean; that the latter had been defeated with a severe loss, and was in full retreat on the camp.

"Secure the two traitors," cried Sir Duncan, and mounting he galloped through the camp, marshalling the troops under their several officers in gallant style. Argyle, Kilmere, and myself remained questioning the deserters. They declared the thing impossible, as they had come in the very line of march, and neither saw nor heard of a retrograde motion, and offered to answer with their lives for the truth of their statement.

Argyle was convinced, so was I; so were all who heard the men's asseverations, and the simplicity with which they were delivered. The captain of the advanced guard was sent for and strictly examined. He could not tell whether the army of Montrose had returned and came against us or not. "I had led my men over the river Spean, on the ice," said he, "lest it should break up, as a thaw seemed to be coming on. They went sliding over in some irregularity, and all the while I perceived the bare heads of a few fellows peeping over the ridge immediately before us. I took them for boys, or country people; yet still, as the men came over, I drew them up on the opposite side to this. When about two-thirds were over, a whole regiment of armed men came rushing down on us at once, running with all their force, and uttering the most terrible shouts. We had firm footing, and I thought might have repelled them, but some of our men who were scrambling on the ice at the time returned, and began a-making for this side. Flight of all things is the most contagious. I have often seen it, and on seeing this I lost hope. In five minutes after this my regiment broke, and ran for it; and many were killed, or taken floundering on the ice. We, however, drew up on the near bank, and retreated in order. I there got a full view of the men; and knew them for a regiment of the M'Donalds; but whether Keppoch's men of the braes, or M'Ranalds, I could not distinguish."

We were all convinced that this check was nothing more than the Lochaber clans trying to impede our march, till Montrose got out of the fastnesses of the mountains; but Auchenbreck was doubtful, and caused our army to rest on their arms all night, sure of this, that if Montrose had returned, he would try to surprise us by a night attack. The night passed in quietness, save the commotion of the elements, which became truly awful. The evening had been light; for the sky though troubled like was clear,

and the moon at the full. But at midnight the thaw commenced; the winds howled, and the black clouds hung over the pale mountains, and whirled in eddies so terrific, that my heart was chilled within me! and my spirit shrunk at the madness of mankind, to be thus seeking one another's lives, amid the terrors of the storm and the commotion of conflicting tempests. I spent the night in fasting and prayer, fervently committing us and our cause to the protection of the Almighty.

My noble friend had no more rest than myself. He lodged in the same house with me down on the shore, but in a different apartment; messengers arrived every half hour, and still he was impatient for the return of the next. About four in the morning he sent for me, and on hasting to his apartment, I was grieved to the heart at seeing him so much agitated. He was lying on his field couch with all his clothes on, save his coat, and his head swathed with flannel above his tasselled night cap. When I went in, he was complaining to his attendants of the uncertainty in which Sir Duncan kept him, and saying it was most strange that it could not be ascertained whether an army withstood us or only an adverse clan. I saw he wished it the latter, and that with an earnestness that greatly discomposed him; his attendants seemed even shy of communicating their true sentiments, and sided with their lord in conjecturing that the troops that opposed our march was only a party raised by some of the chieftains of Lochaber, to impede and harass us in the pursuit.

When the marquis perceived me, he called me to him, and addressed me with his wonted courtesy, asking how I did, and how I had rested, but without giving me time to answer, began a complaining of headache and fever: said it was most unfortunate in our present circumstances, but that it behoved him not to complain, seeing it was the Lord's will to lay that affliction on his unworthy servant. My heart failed me when I heard him speak in this guise. I could not answer him, but taking his hand I felt his pulse, and found both from that and the heat on his skin that he was fevered to a considerable degree. I knew it arose sheerly from agitation and want of rest, but I had not the face to tell him so; only, I desired him to compose himself until the morning, and that then the fresh air and the exercise of the muster would invigorate his spirits; and that in the meantime I would go out and see that all was safe, and the martial lines in proper order.

I took my cloak, mounted my horse, and with a heavy heart rode out to the plain on which our army lay in close files, flanked by the old fortress and a bay of the firth on the left, and an abrupt steep on the right. The morning was dismally dark, and the rain and sleet pouring in torrents, but the wind was somewhat abated. I rode about for some time among the lines, and was several times challenged in Gaelic, for in the hurry at head-quarters, I had neglected to bring a guide with me. I tried to find my way back again, but could not make it out, for not a man could I find who could speak English, until at length I was brought to the young Laird of Kilrennan, and he spake it but right indifferently. I asked him to lead me to Auchenbreck; he replied as well as he could, that it might not be easily done, for he had been moving about all night from line to line, keeping every one on the alert.

I asked him Sir Duncan's opinion of this army that seemed to have risen out of the earth.

"Sir Duncan is shy of giving his opinion," said he, "but from the concern that he manifests, it is apparent that he dreads danger."

"What is your own opinion?" said I.

"I would not give a rush for the danger," said he. "It is merely caused by Keppoch's men, and the tail of the Camerons, collected to harass us a little. I will undertake with my Glenorchy regiment alone to drive them like a herd of deer. If Montrose have come from Lochness since Friday morning, across the Braes of Lochaber, he and his army must have come on wings."

Not knowing the country, I had nothing to say: but in searching for Sir Duncan, we came among the Lowland regiment which we brought with us from Dumbarton. A group of these were in warm discussion on the present state of affairs. Campbell addressed them in Gaelic; but I held my peace, eager to hear their sentiments.

"Wha is they?" whispered one.

"Hout, hout, twa o' our Heeland officers, they dinna ken a word we're speakin."

"Then, David, what have you to say to my argument?"

"I have to say, John Tod, that nane kens what Montrose will do but them that hae foughten under him, as I hae doon. His plans are aboon a' our capacities: for let me tell ye, John, if ye be gaun to calculate on ony o' Montrose's measures, ye maun fix on the ane that's maist unlikely to a' others that could be contrived be mortal men."

"But dear Davie, man, the thing's impossible."

"It's a grit lee, man. I tell ye, John Tod, he does a thing the better that it's impossible."

"Hout, hout! there's nae argufying wi' you ava gin ye say that. But Davie, ye see, if the way be that lang and that rough, that a single man couldna travel it in a black-weather day, how could a haile army traverse it through snaw and ice?"

"It's a' that ye ken about the matter, John Tod. Do ye no ken that Montrose's army's a' cavalry.

"What, his fit sodgers an' a'? Are a' his barhurdied clans muntit on horses?"

"Ay, that they are, John. Fit an' horse an a' is turned cavalry. Have nae they ta'en awa near three thoosand o' the pick o' the horses in a' Argyle! Ay, when they came down the deel's stairs, every man had a pony to ride, and ane to carry his wallet, and let me tell ye, Jock Tod, thae ponies can travel a hundir mile i' the day; an' for roads, they like an

ill ane far better nor a good ane. I'm neither a prophet, nor a prophet's son, but I venture to predict that Montrose an' a' his clans at his back, will rise out o' the stomach of that glen the morn,' an' like a flood frae the mountain, bear the red-haired Campbells an' us wi' them into the waves of the sea."

"Fat pe te Sassenach tog saying?" said young Kilrennan.

"He is threatening to drive his enemies into the waves of the sea," said I.

"He will drive them to the rocks in te first place," said Campbell. Shortly after that we found Sir Duncan of Auchenbreck, whose care and concern for his kinsmen could not be equalled, and with him I had a conference of considerable length. He had been able to discover nothing. If there was an army, it was kept in close concealment; but he was disposed to think there was one, else the flying parties would not have been so bold and forward. "They are at this moment," said he, "hovering so nigh our columns there on the right as to be frequently exchanging volleys with them by way of salutation. A band of caterans would scarcely dare to do so. But if God spare us to see the light of day, our doubts shall soon be at an end."

"Do you mean to begin the attack or to await it?" said I.

"I never wait an attack," returned he; "for my kinsmen have not experience in military tactics enough to repel one by awaiting it firmly, or forming and wheeling at the word of command, in which one single mistake would throw all into irremediable confusion. I *must* begin the attack, and then I can depend on my Campbells for breaking a front line to pieces with the best clans among them."

I then took him aside, and in his ear told him of the state in which I left the marquis, that he really *was ill*, and as I judged somewhat delirious.

He sighed deeply, and said a sight of him mounted at the head of his men was better than a thousand spears; that he never could understand his chief, for he had seen instances in which he showed the most determined courage, but that most unaccountably, he had not the command of it at all times, and never when most required. "As it is," continued he, "we must never expose him in his present nervous state, to set a ruinous example to the men who adore him. Do you, therefore, detain him till the battle is fairly begun, and then, when the first step of the race is taken, you shall see him the bravest of the brave."

I applauded the wisdom of Sir Duncan, and said it was the very step I was anxious for him to take, being certain that the marquis, in his present state of trepidation, would only derange his measures; and at all events, I was sure he would not suffer the army to be moved out of their present strong position to be led to the attack.

"In the name of God keep him to yourself—keep him to yourself," said he vehemently. "Do you call that a strong position? It is the very reverse for a Highland army. We are too closely crammed together, and an attack of an hundred horse from that ridge would ruin our fine array in one instant. That a strong position! I would not give yon ridge of rock for a thousand of such positions. Good morrow. My kindest respects to my chief, and tell him all is safe. I must be going, and see what is going on yonder;" for at that time some volleys of musketry echoed fearfully among the rocks up towards the bottom of Ben Nevis.

I called Sir Duncan back for a moment, and intreated him not to engage in battle till the Sabbath was over, if it lay in his power to avoid it; for I dreaded that the hand of God would be laid in a visible manner on the first who broke that holy day by shedding the blood of their brethren and countrymen. But he only shook his head, and said, with his back towards me: "We warriors are often compelled to that which we would most gladly shun."

The day began to break as I left him, and I could not help contemplating once more the awful scene that hung impending over these ireful and kindred armies. The cliffs of the towering hills that overhung them were spotted by the thaw, which gave them a wild speckled appearance in the gray light of the morning, and all their summits were wrapped in clouds of the deepest sable, as if clothed in mourning for the madness of the sons of men. The thought, too, that it was a Sabbath morning, when we ought all to have been conjoined in praising and blessing the name of our Maker, and the Redeemer of our souls—while, instead of that, we were all longing and yearning to mangle and deface the forms that bore his image, and send their souls to their great account out of the midst of a heinous transgression. The impressions of that Sabbath morning will never depart from my heart; and since that day, February the 2d, 1645, I have held gloomy impressions as a sure foretoken of bad fortune.

There were 500 Glenorchy men, commanded by my late acquaintance young Archibald Campbell of Kilrennan, son to Campbell of Bein-More, with whom he had lately threatened to annihilate the whole host that beleaguered us. These at day-break were advanced toward the right, to take possession of a ridge that commanded the last entrance from an hundred glens and ravines behind. They were attacked in a tumultuous and irregular manner, apparently by a body of men squatted here and there on the height, which, as soon as the Campbells gained, they quitted, retreating toward the hills and calling in Gaelic to one another. I saw this movement and retreat, and never beheld aught more conclusive: I was convinced they were a herd of caterans, sent to harass us and retreat to their inaccessible fastnesses on the approach of danger. With this impression fixed on my mind, I went in again to my noble friend, in excellent spirits. I found him equipped

for the field, but looking even worse than before, though pretending that he was a great deal better. I assured him of what I believed to be the truth, that the opposing army was nothing more than some remnants of the malignant clans collected after depositing their spoil, to attend us on our march, and impede it as much as lay in their power; for that I had myself seen them put to flight by the Glenorchy regiment, and chased to the hills like so many wild goats or ragged Kyloes.

The spirits of the marquis brightened up a little, but there either was a lurking disease or a lurking tremor that had overcome him. He lifted his hand to his brow, and gave thanks to God that we were thus allowed to enjoy his holy day in peace and quietness; he then asked for Mr. Law, and being told that he was on board the galley, he proposed that we should go to him, and join in our morning devotions.

The marquis's splendid galley, THE FAITH, lay within a half bowshot of the shore, immediately behind the house where we quartered, but the store-ship lay farther away beyond the mouth of the river. A little gilded boat with pennant and streamers, and having THE HOPE painted in golden letters on her stern, bore us on board, and we had not well put off from the shore, till the thunders of musketry and field-pieces began anew to echo among the rocks. The marquis lifted his eyes to Ben Nevis and remarked what a tumultuous sound was produced by the storm and the rushing torrents (for by this time the floods of melted snow that poured from the mountains were truly terrific); he made no allusion at all to the sounds of the battle that mingled in the uproar, which were then quite audible, although it was but partially commenced.

He was the first conducted on board. There were eight or nine of us, and I was about the last, or rather I think the very last. Every one having something to take on board with him, I had a good while to sit astern, and I observed the marquis lift his eyes to the hill, and instantly his countenance changed from dark to a deadly paleness, and from that to a livid blue. My very hairs rose on my head, for I had bad forebodings, and I dreaded that his fine army was broken. I hasted on board and soon was aware of the cause of his alarm. It was the bray of trumpets audibly mixing with the roar of the elements, producing an effect awfully sublime, but appalling to those who but now hoped to spend a Sabbath in the exercises of devotion.

"Is not that the sound of trumpets I hear?" said Argyle.

"It is, my lord," said I.

"In the name of God, what does it portend?" said he.

"It portends, my lord, that Montrose is leading a regiment of horse to the onset."

"Then God prosper and shield the right," cried he emphatically; "Mr. Law, let us to our devotions shortly, and commit our cause to the Lord of hosts. Then to the battle-field, where our presence may be much wanted."

Mr. Law led the way to the cabin. I did not go down. I could not; for with all the desire to join in prayer that a poor dependent creature could inherit, I wanted the ability; so much were my thoughts and my eyes riveted on the scene before me.

The marquis had a curious gilded tube on board, with glass in it, which brought distant objects close to the eye. I got possession of this, and saw the battle with perfect accuracy. Auchenbreck had put his troops in motion to the right, in order to begin the attack; he had also taken a position on a broken rising ground behind the valley. The Glenorchy regiment of 500 men, still kept their position in advance to the right, and it was there the battle began. They were attacked by a regiment of Irish, headed by some brave officers, and as they out-numbered ours, the Glenorchy men lost ground reluctantly, and were beaten from their commanding station. They were forced to give way, but were in nowise broken. There appeared to be no horses in this part of the battle, but the three regiments of M'Donalds, who were all on the right, were flanked on both sides by strong bodies of horse. The Camerons, Stewarts, and some other inland clans formed the centre, and the other two Irish regiments were behind. Our Lowland regiment was on the left, the rest being all Campbells. I cannot now distinguish them by the names of their colonels; but, to give them justice, they appeared all alike eager and keen on the engagement; and there is not a doubt but their too great intensity on revenge ruined the fortune of the day.

The Glenorchy regiment, as I said, was beaten back, and this being in view of the whole army, there was an instant call from rank to rank, for support to brave young Bein-More. Auchenbreck ordered off the third line to reinforce the Glenorchy regiment, and then such a rush took place towards that point, that it appeared like utter madness and insubordination. But so eager were the Campbells to make up the first appearance of a breach in their line, that they left both their centre and left wing uncovered and weakened. Montrose lost not a moment on beholding this: he galloped across in front of the M'Donalds and shouted to them to charge. They were not slack; pouring down into the valley in three columns, they attacked the Campbells with loud shouts. The latter received them bravely: their lines bowed and waved, but did not break; and I could not distinguish that very many fell on either side. But Montrose now, at the head of a large body of horse, made a dash off at the right, with a terrible clang of trumpets and other noisy, sinful instruments, as if he meant to place himself in the rear of our army.

The pangs that I felt at this moment are unutterable. When the Campbells made the rush to the

right, they quickly repelled the Irish, and drove them out of my sight; but when Montrose and the M'Donalds came with such force on our left, then quite weakened, little as I knew of military tactics, I trembled for the fate of the day. Auchenbreck was as brave an officer as lived, but he had been used to command troops regularly trained, and he tried to manœuvre this army in the same manner. It would not do. In bringing his force round to support the left, now in such jeopardy, the whole body of the troops got into most inextricable confusion, very much occasioned by the clamour and appearance of the horse. Alack! if they had known how little they had to fear! the greater part of the horses was merely an appearance, and no more; they were newly listed, and sufficiently awkward, as were also the men who rode them. I saw them capering and wheeling, and throwing their riders, affrighted almost to madness at the trumpets and shots; yet with these ragged colts, did that mighty renegade amaze the hearts of the army of the covenant.

If Auchenbreck had but called out—"See, yonder are the M'Donalds beating our brethren, run down the slope, and cut them all to pieces," I am sure they would have done it, or fallen in the attempt; but, in place of that, he tried to manœuvre the army by square and rule, till the whole went wrong, and then every man saw he was wrong without the power of putting himself right. The whole army was, for the space of an hour, no otherwise than an immense drove of Highland kyloes all in a stir, running hither and thither; sometimes with a swing the one way and sometimes the other, as if driven by blasts of wind. All this while they never thought of giving way, although the Camerons were in the midst of them, slaughtering them like sheep; the fierce M'Donalds breaking through and through their irregular line, and the horse flanking them on the side next the sea.

For a long time I could distinguish Montrose's front in regular columns, bearing onward through a mass of confusion, but at length the two armies appeared to mingle in one, and to move southward with a slow and troubled motion. Still the army of the Campbells did not break up and run. Every man seemed resolved to stand and fight it out, could he have known how to do it, or found support on one side or the other. They knew not the art of flight; they reeled, they staggered, and waved like a troubled sea, but no man turned his back and fled. To rally the front was impossible, for the clans were through and through it; but I saw several officers attempting to rally lines in the rear, and so glad were the Campbells of anything like a rallying-point, that they rushed towards these embryo files with an eagerness that in a few minutes annihilated them.

The Lowland regiment, commanded by Colonel Cobron, behaved exceedingly well. It was never broken; when the retreat began, I saw that regiment defile to its left, lean its left wing on the southwest turret of the huge old castle, and sustain for a space the whole power of Montrose's right wing. The horse never attempted to break them, but a strong regiment of the M'Donalds, by some styled the Ranald regiment, drew up in front of the Lowlanders. These either did not like their appearance, or liked better to smite the Campbells, for they passed on to the general carnage, and the Lowlanders kept their ground, and took quiet possession of the castle.

The only other thing that I noted in the general confusion, was a last attempt of Auchenbreck to turn the left of Montrose's line up nigh to the bottom of the steep. A Highland regiment was pushing onward there, said by some to be the Stewarts, whether of Athol or Appin I wot not, as if with intent to gain the glen and cut off the retreat. Against these, Sir Duncan went up at the head of a small number of gentlemen, but the gallant hero was the very first man that fell, and the rest fought over him till they were all cut down. The rout by degrees became general, and the brave and high-spirited Campbells were slaughtered down without the power of resistance.

However much was said to mitigate the loss sustained that day, it was very great; for in fact that goodly army was almost annihilated. When the flyers came to the river of Glen Leven, it was roaring like a sea, and covered with floating snow and ice. It was utterly impassable by man or beast. The Campbells had no alternative, for they chose rather to trust the God of the elements, than the swords of their inveterate foes. They plunged in like sheep into the washing-pool. Scarcely a man of them escaped! They were borne by the irresistible torrent into the ocean in a few moments, where we saw their bodies floating in hundreds as we sailed along. And moreover, in endeavouring to drag a large body on board, the rope broke, and they were all drowned likewise.

This is a true description of that fatal engagement, which need not be doubted, for though I write from memory, the impressions made on my mind that day were not such as to be ever obliterated. I cannot state the loss, for I never knew it, nor do I believe the marquis ever knew it or inquired after it. As far as I could judge from a distant view, there was not a man escaped, save a few hundreds that forced their way to the steep, and scattered among the rocks on the south and west sides of Ben Nevis.

I must now return back to where I left off; namely, at the commencement of prayers on board of Argyle's meteor galley, The Faith.

Mr. Mungo Law, instead of making the prayers short that morning, as the marquis had ordered him, made them as long again as usual, for which he was sharply reproved afterwards; but after my lord the marquis had kneeled down and joined in the homily, he could not with any degree of decency leave it.

When he came up, two pages were waiting orders. They had been sent express from the army. I heard him saying—"Tell Sir Duncan *not* to attack, but keep his strong position in which I placed him. But I will go with the orders myself."

"No, no, my lord, do not mention it now," said I: "It is too late. The battle will be won or lost before you can reach it and give an order."

"I will go; I must go;" said he vehemently. "No man shall hinder me to go, and either conquer or die at the head of my people."

I held him by the robe. The two henchmen waited in the boat. "Speak to him, Mr. Law," cried I: "Speak to my lord. Would it not be madness in him to go ashore now, and perhaps derange Sir Duncan's plan of fight, and then, whatever evil betides, my lord will be blamed."

Mr. Law, who was a powerful man—though not so tall as the marquis, yet twice as thick—came forward, and clasped his brawny arms round above the marquis's, at the same time addressing him in the words of Scripture—"Nay, thou shalt not depart; neither shalt thou go hence; for if these thy people fly, they will not care for them, and if half of them die, they will not care for them, for lo, art thou not worth ten thousand of them; therefore is it not better that thou succour them out of the ship?"

The marquis thus compelled, was obliged reluctantly to give up his resolution, which he did with many groans and grievous complaints. I was resolved he should not go, for I knew Sir Duncan dreaded him, and so did I; therefore I carried my point half by wiles.

It has been reported all over this country that he was in the battle, and fled whenever he saw his rival Montrose and the royal standard. No such thing; he never was in the field that morning. He arranged all the corps the evening before, and gave out general orders; slept at head-quarters, and only went on board when he believed Montrose to be a hundred miles off, and the army of the Campbells to be in no danger. He was afterwards restrained by main force from going ashore, which would only have been selling his life for nothing, as the day was in effect irrecoverably lost at an early hour. The Lowland regiment defended themselves in the old fortress against the whole of Montrose's conquering army, till he was obliged to grant them honourable terms, and they all returned to their homes in peace. The strength of the mighty, the brave, and the Christian clan Campbell was by that grievous blow broken for ever. The Faith and Hope sailed disconsolate down Lochaber. Argyle and I, and seven others, bore straight to the Clyde, and from thence hasted to Edinburgh, where we were the first to lay the matter before the committee of estates, and received the nation's thanks for our good behaviour.

[I had great doubts of the baillie's sincerity in this, till I found the following register in Sir James Balfour's Annals, vol. ii. p. 272–3:

"Wednesday, 12 Feb. Sessio I.

"This day the Marquese of Argyle came to the housse and maide a fulle relatione of all hes proceidingis sence his last going away from this.

"The housse war fully satisfied with my lord Marquese of Argylis relatione and desyred the presydent in their names to rander him hartly thankis for his grit painis and trauellis takin for the publicke weille and withall intreated to continew in so laidable a courase of doing for the goode peace of the countrey."

The battle was on the 2d; this was on the 12th; so that before they sailed round the Mull of Kintyre, they must have lost very little time in examining the loss sustained, or the state of that ruined country.

These are the most notable passages in the life of this extraordinary person; and it is with regret that I must draw them to a close. He was a magistrate; a ruling elder of the church; sat in three Scottish parliaments, and lived to see many wonderful changes and revolutions. He at length triumphed over his old inveterate foe the Marquis of Huntly, receiving him at the Water-gate as a state prisoner, and conducting him to that jail from which he never again emerged till taken to the block. But the lively interest that the baillie took in this bloody affair, both with the church and state, I am rather inclined to let drop into oblivion; while, on the other hand, the manner in which he speaks of the death of his old friend and benefactor does honour to his heart, and the steadiness of his principles. I shall copy only a few sentences here, and no more.]

From the first day that Charles resumed the sceptre of his fathers, nay, from the hour that Argyle placed the crown on the young monarch's head, the fortunes of my noble friend began to decline. He soon perceived that the king was jealous of him, and therefore he parted from his company, and left him to his fate. He had for twenty years been at the head of Scottish affairs, both in church and state, and much labour and toil did he undergo for the good of his country; but now the summer of his earthly glory was past, and he was left like a withered oak, standing aloof from the forest he had so long shielded from the blast.

When General Dean brought him prisoner to Edinburgh, I got liberty to attend him in his confinement, and not a day passed over my head in which I did not visit him. I had always regarded him both as a good and a great man, with some few constitutional failings; but his character never rose so high as when he was plunged in the depth of adversity.

When he and I were in private, and spoke our sentiments freely, he did not think highly of the principles or capacities of Charles the Second; for his principles, both civil and religious, inclined him to a commonwealth, or a monarchy greatly restricted. It was said the young king soon discovered something so contracted and selfish in his character, that he was glad to be rid of his company; but I knew

his character better than the profligate monarch did, and such a discovery never was made by me. There was no man truer to his friends or more generous to his dependants, and from the support of the Protestant religion he never once swerved. I was twice examined on his trial, and could have told more than I did regarding him and Cromwell. One could not say that his trial was unfair, admitting the principle on which he was tried to have been relative. But during a long life, I learned to view our state trials of Scotland as a mere farce; for what was a man's greatest glory and honour this year was very like to bring him to the block the next. What could be a surer test of this, than to see the good Marquis of Argyle's gray head set upon the same pole on which his rival's, the Marquis of Montrose, had so lately stood!

[The other circumstances mentioned by the baillie are recorded in every history of that period. But he prayed with and for his patron night and day during his last trial; dined with him on the day of his execution, took farewell of him at the foot of the scaffold, and running home, betook him to his bed, from which he did not rise for a month. He could not believe that the country would suffer a deed so enormous to be committed, as the sacrificing such a man as Argyle, nor would he credit the account of his death for many days. From that time forth he had no more heart for business; and his political interest in the city being at an end, he retired from society and traffic, and pined in secret over the miserable and degraded state of his country, and the terrors that seemed once more to hang over the reformed religion. He could not go to his door without seeing the noblest head in the realm set up as a beacon of disgrace; the lips that had so often flowed with the words of truth and righteousness falling from their hold, the eye of majesty decaying in the socket, and the dark gray hairs bleaching in the winds of heaven. This was a sight his wounded spirit could not brook, and his bodily health and strength decayed beneath the pressure. But he lived to remove that honoured head from the jail where it had so long stood a beacon of disgrace to a whole country; to carry it with all funeral honours into the land which it had ruled, and deposit it in the tomb where the bones of the noble martyr were reposing. Then returning home, the worthy baillie survived only a few days. He followed his noble and beloved patron into the land of peace and forgetfulness. His body was carried to Elgin, the original burial-place of his fathers, and by a singular casualty, his head laid precisely at the Marquis of Huntly's feet.]

JULIA M'KENZIE.

THE following extraordinary story was told to me by Lady Brewster, a Highland lady herself, the sole daughter of the celebrated Ossian M'Pherson; and she assured me that every sentence of it was literally and substantially true. If the leading events should then be at all doubted, to that amiable lady I appeal for the truth of them; and there are many in the north of Scotland, who from their family traditions can substantiate the same.

It was never till the time of the wars of Montrose, that the chiefs and chieftainships of the Highlands came to be much disputed and held in estimation. The efficiency of the clans had then been fairly proven, and every proprietor was valued according to the number of vassals that acknowledged him as their lord and rose at his command, and in proportion to these was his interest with the rulers of the realm.

It was at that time, however, that the following horrible circumstances occurred in a great northern family, now for a long time on the wane, and therefore, for the sake of its numerous dependants and relatives, to all of whom the story is well known, I must alter the designations in a small degree, but shall describe the scene so that it cannot be mistaken.

Castle-Garnet, as we shall call the residence of the great chief to whom I allude, stands near to the junction of two notable rivers in the north Highlands of Scotland, having tremendous mountains behind it towards the west, and a fine river and estuary towards the east. The castle overhangs the principal branch of the river, which appears here and there through the ancient trees foaming and boiling far below. It is a terrible but grand situation, and a striking emblem of the stormy age in which it was reared. Below it, at a short distance, a wooden bridge crossed the river at its narrowest and roughest part. The precipitous banks on each side were at least twenty fathoms deep, so that a more tremendous passage cannot be conceived. That bridge was standing in my own remembrance, and though in a very dilapidated state, I have crossed it little more than forty years ago. It was constructed of oak, rough and unhewn as it had come from the

forest, but the planks were of prodigious dimensions. They rested on the rocks at each end, and met on a strange sort of scaffolding in the middle, that branched out from one row of beams. It had neither buttress nor balustrade; yet, narrow as it was, troops of horse were known to have crossed on it, there being no passable ford near.

But the ancient glory of Castle-Garnet had sunk to decay during the turbulent reigns of the Stuarts, whose policy it was to break the strength of the too powerful noblemen, chiefs, and barons, by the arms of one another. The ancient and head title of that powerful family had passed away, but a stem of nobility still remained to the present chief, in the more modern title of Lord Edirdale. He was moreover the sole remaining branch of the house, and his influence was prodigious; the chief of a powerful clan. But on his demise, the estate and chieftainship were likely to devolve on the man whom, above all others in the world, he and his people hated; to the man who had deprived him and them of wealth and honours; and who, though a near blood relation, was, at the very time I am treating of, endeavouring to undermine and ruin him.

This being a hard pill to swallow, Edirdale, by the advice of his chieftains, married Julia, the flower of all the M'Kenzies, while both were yet very young. She was lovely as an angel, kind, virtuous, and compliant, the darling of her husband and his whole clan; but alas! years came and passed by, and no child appeared, to be heir of the estate of Glen-Garnet and lordship of Edirdale. What was to be done? The clan was all in commotion; and the chieftains held meeting after meeting, in all of which it was unanimously agreed, that it were better that ten of the chief ladies of the clan should perish, than that the whole clan itself and all that it possessed should fall under the control of the hated Nagarre.

When the seventh year of the marriage had elapsed, a deputation of the chief men, headed by the veteran Carnoch, the next in power to the chief, waited on Lord Edirdale, and boldly represented to him the absolute necessity of parting with his lady, either by divorce or death. He answered them with fury and disdain, and dared them ever to mention such a thing to him again. But old Carnoch told him flatly that without them he was nothing, and they were determined that not only his lady, but all the chief ladies of the clan, should rather perish, than that his people should become bond slaves to the hateful tyrant Nagarre. Their lord hearing them assume this high and decisive tone, was obliged to succumb. He said it was indeed a hard case, but if the Governor of the universe saw meet that their ancient line should end in him, the decree could not be reversed; and to endeavour to do so by a crime of such magnitude would only bring a tenfold curse upon them. He said, moreover, that he and his lady were still young, not yet at the prime of life, and there was every probability that she might yet be the mother of many children; but that, at all events, she was the jewel of his heart, and that he was determined much rather to part with all his land, and with all his people, than to part with her.

Carnoch shook his gray locks, and said the latter part of his speech was a very imprudent and cruel answer to his people's request, and which they little deserved at his hand. But for that part of it which regarded his lady's youth it bore some show of reason, and on that score alone they would postpone compulsion for three years, and then for the sake of thousands who looked up to him as their earthly father, their protector, and only hope, it behoved him to part with her and take another; for on that effort the very existence of the clan and the name depended.

Three years present a long vista of existence to any one; and who knows what events may intervene to avert a dreaded catastrophe? Lord Edirdale accepted the conditions, and the leading cadets of the family returned to their homes in peace. The third year came, being the tenth from the chief's marriage, and still there was no appearance of a family. The Lady Julia remained courteous and beautiful as ever, and quite unconscious of any discontent or combination against her. But alas! her doom had been resolved on by the whole clan, male and female, for their dissatisfaction now raged like a hurricane, and every tongue among them denounced her death or removal. Several of the old dames had combined to take her off by poison, but their agent, as soon as she saw Lady Julia's lovely face, relented and destroyed the potion. They then tried enchantment, which also failed; and there was nothing for it but another deputation, which, on the very day that the stipulated three years expired, arrived at the castle, with old Carnoch once more at their head.

The chief now knew not what to do. He had given his word to his clan; their part had been fulfilled—his behoved to be so. He had not a word to say. A splendid dinner was prepared and spread; such a dinner as had never graced the halls of Castle-Garnet. Lady Julia took her seat at the head of the table, shining in the silken tartan of the clan, and dazzling with gold and jewels. She seemed never before so lovely, so affable, and so perfectly bewitching, so that when she rose and left them there was hardly a dry eye in the hall; nor had one of them a word to say—all sat silent and gazed at one another.

The chief seized that moment of feeling and keen impression, to implore his kinsmen for a farther reprieve. He said he found that to part with that darling of his heart, and of all hearts, was out of his power; death and oblivion were nothing to it: that his life was bound up in her, and therefore consent to her death he never could, and to divorce and banish her from his side would be to her a still worse death than the other, for that she lived but in his

affections, and he was certain that any violence done to her would drive him distracted, and he should never more lead his clan to the field; he spoke very feelingly too of her courtesy and affectionate interest in him and his whole clan. The gentlemen wept, but they made no reply; they entered into no stipulations, but parted from their lord as they met with him, in a state of reckless despair; but as they were already summoned to the field to fight the enemies of the king, they thought it prudent to preserve the peace and equanimity of the clan for the present, and afterwards to be ruled by circumstances, but ultimately to have their own way.

Shortly after this, the perturbation of Lord Edirdale's mind threw him into a violent fever, and his whole clan into the last degree of consternation. They thought not then of shedding their lady's blood, for in the event of their chief's demise, she was their only rallying point to preserve them from the control of Nagarre, the next of blood; and as all the cadets of the family manifested so much kindness and attention both to himself and lady, he became impressed with the idea that his Julia's beauty and virtue had subdued all their hearts as well as his own, and that his kinsmen felt incapable of doing her any injury, or even of proposing such a thing. This fond conceit, working upon his fancy, was the great mean of restoring him to health after his life had been despaired of, so that in the course of five months he was quite well.

But news of dreadful import arrived from the south, and the chief was again summoned to march southward with his whole strength to the assistance of Montrose, who was in great jeopardy with enemies before and behind. The chief obeyed, but could only procure arms for 300 men, and with these he marched by night, and after a sharp scuffle with the clans of Monro and Forbes, reached Montrose's camp just in time to bear a part in the bloody battle of the Don, fought on the second of July, 1645, and in which they did great execution on the left wing of the army of the parliament, pursued it with great inveteracy, and returned to their glens laden with spoil, without losing a man, save two whom they left wounded; and as the royal army then left the Highlands, our old friends, the chieftains of the clan, began to mutiny in private against their chieftain with more intensity than ever. They had now seen several instances of the great power and influence of an acknowledged patriarchal chief, and felt that without such the clan would be annihilated; and they saw, from the face of the times, that theirs must rally so as to preserve the balance of power in the north. Something behoved to be done—anything but falling under Nagarre, and the clan losing its power and name in his. Prophets, sybils, and second-sighters were consulted, and a fearful doom read, which could not be thoroughly comprehended.

A deputation once more waited on the chief, but it was not to crave the dismission of his lady, but only a solemn pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Bothan, on Christmas; for that they had learned from a combination of predictions, that from such a pilgrimage alone, and the nature and value of the offering bequeathed, an heir was to arise to the great house of Glen-Garnet and Edirdale; and that from the same predictions they had also been assured, that the clan was never to fall under the sway of the cursed Nagarre.

Lord Edirdale was delighted. His beloved, his darling Julia, was now to be his own for ever. He invited all the cadets of the family and all their ladies to assist in the grand procession. But Christmas brought such a storm with it, that scarcely a human being could look out of doors; it was dreadful. Though the weather at that season throughout the Highlands is generally of the most boisterous description, this winter exceeded them all. The snow fell to an unprecedented depth, and on Christmas eve such a tempest of wind and rain commenced as the oldest inhabitant of that clime had never witnessed. The country became waist-deep of lapper or half-melted snow; impassable torrents poured from every steep; so that when the morning of Christmas appeared all hopes of the grand procession were given up, for the rivers were flooded to an enormous degree, and instead of the whole gentlemen and ladies of the clan, only four chieftains, the most interested and nearest of kin, appeared at the castle, and these at the risk of their lives. All of them declared that the procession must take place that very day, at whatever toil or trouble, for that no other subsequent one to the end of the world could have the desired effect. A part of the way was perilous, but the distance to walk was short; so Julia, who was prepared for the event, with her usual sweet complaisance, wrapped herself well up, and away they went on their gloomy pilgrimage. At their very first outset they had to cross the river by Drochaid-maide (the wooden bridge, I suppose). Never was there such a scene witnessed in Scotland. The river was more than half way up the linn, roaring and thundering on with a deafening noise, while many yawning chasms between the planks, showed to the eye of the passenger its dazzling swiftness, and all the while the frail fabric was tottering like a cradle. Lady Julia's resolution failed her, a terror came over her heart, and she drew back from the dreadful scene; but on seeing the resolute looks of all the rest, she surmounted her terror, and closing her eyes she laid fast hold of her husband's arm, and they two led the way. Carnoch and his nephew Barvoolin were next to them, and Auchnasheen and Monar last; and just a little after passing the crown of the bridge, Carnoch and Barvoolin seized Lady Julia, and in one moment plunged her into the abyss below. The act was so sudden, that she had not time to utter a scream, nor even to open her eyes,

but descending like a swan in placid silence, she alighted on the middle of the surface of the fleet torrent. Such was its density and velocity, that iron, lead, or a feather bore all the same weight there. The lady fell on her back, in a half sitting posture. She did not dip an inch, but shot down on the torrent as swift as an arrow out of a bow; and at the turn of the river round a rocky promontory, she vanished from their view.

The moment that the lady was tossed from Drochaid-maide, the four chieftains seized on her husband and bore him back to the castle in their arms. He was raving mad; he only knew that he had lost his lady, by what means he did not comprehend. At first he cursed Barvoolin, and swore that he saw his hand touching her; but the other assuring him that he only did so to prevent the dizzy and distracted leap, and the rest all averring the same thing, before night they had persuaded him that the terror of the scene had produced a momentary madness, and that the Lady Julia in a fit had flung herself over.

Men on horseback were despatched on the instant to the meeting of the tide with the river, where all the boats were put in requisition; but in that unparalleled flood both of tide and stream, the body of Lady Julia could not be found. This was a second grievous distress to her lord; but so anxious were the clansmen for his safety, that they would not suffer him to assist in the search. He had loved his lady with the deepest, purest affection of which the heart of man is capable; for his pathetic lamentations over her loss often affected the old devotees of clanship to the heart, and they began to repent them of the atrocious deed they had committed; particularly when, after representing to him that he lived and acted not only for himself, but for thousands beside, and that, since it had pleased the Almighty, in his over-ruling, to take from his side in a terrific way the benign creature who alone stood between them and all their hopes, it behoved him by all means to take another wife without delay, in order to preserve the houses of their fathers from utter oblivion, and themselves, their sons, and daughters, from becoming the vassals and slaves of an abhorred house. "These are indeed powerful reasons, my friends," said he; "I have always acknowledged with deep regret that Heaven should have decreed it. But man has not these things in his power, and though there are some hearts so much swayed by self-interest that it becomes the motive of all their actions, and modulates all their feelings, such heart is not mine, for there are certain lengths it can go and no farther. As soon as it forgets my Julia, I shall take to myself another wife, but when that may be I have no mode of calculation. How can I woo another bride? I could only woo her as Julia; I could only exchange love and marriage-vows with her as Julia; and when I awoke in the morning and found that another than Julia had slept in my bosom, I should go distracted, and murder both her and myself. Believe me, my dear and brave kinsmen, when I assure you that the impression of my lost Julia is so deeply engraven on my heart that it can take no other. Whenever I feel that possible I will yield to your entreaties, but not till then."

This was a cutting speech to the old proud cadets of the family, and made them scowl and shake their heads in great indignation as well as sorrow. They had brought innocent blood on their heads, and made matters only worse. While Lady Julia was alive there was some chance remaining for family heirs, for alas! she had been cut off only in her twenty-ninth year; but now there was none, and they began to repent them heartily of what they had done.

While matters were in this state, while the fate of Lady Julia was the sole topic of conversation up stairs at the castle, it was no less so down stairs, but in the latter, conviction appeared arrayed in different habiliments. The secrets and combinations of a clan are generally known through all its ramifications, except to the person combined against. It is, or rather was, a trait in the character of this patriarchal race, and rather a mean subservient one, that they only saw, heard, felt, and acted in conformity with their chiefs and superiors, and they never betrayed their secrets. In the present instance, perhaps, Lady Julia was the only person of the whole clan who did not know of the dissatisfaction that prevailed, and the great danger she was in. The menials, of course, strongly suspected that their lady's death had been effected by stratagem, taking all things into view; yet they were so servile, that hearing their lord and his relatives thought otherwise and spoke otherwise, they did the same. But there was one little beautiful pestilent girl, named Ecky M'Kenzie, who was Lady Julia's foster-sister, and had come from her own country or district with her, who was loud and bitter against the subordinate chieftains, and old Carnoch, as the head and leader of them in particular, asserting boldly that he had murdered their lady and deceived their lord, because he knew he was next of kin to the chief, and that he and his family would succeed him, as the clan would never submit to Nagarre, which he knew full well. The rest of the menials accused her of uttering falsehoods, and threatened to expose her; but they gathered around, and gaped and stared upon one another at her bold asseverations. "I know it all," she would add. "I know all how that angelic creature was hatod, combined against, and murdered by your vile servile race, and particularly by that old serpent Carnoch, who has all this while acted as huntsman to a pack of blood-hounds. But vengeance will overtake him. There will a witness appear at the castle in a few days who shall convict him to the satisfaction of the whole world; and I know, for I have it from the country beyond the grave, that I shall soon see him lying a mangled

corpse between the castle wall and the precipice which overhangs the river."

These asseverations were so unreserved and violent, that one Angus Seers went direct and told his lord everything that Ecky had said, adding, that unless she was made to hold her tongue, she would bring disgrace on the whole clan. The chief judged for himself in that instance; happy had it been for him if he had done so always; but nothing in the world was now of interest to him save what related to his late lady. So after dinner, while seven of the duniwastles (or gentlemen) of the clan were present, he sent for Ecky M'Kenzie up stairs, after saying to his friends, "There is a little vixen of a maid here, who was related to my lost lady, her foster-sister and confidante, who is spreading such reports against you and me, and maintaining them with such audacity, that I must call her to account for it.

"Ecky, come up here; stand before me, and look me in the face. What wicked and malicious reports are those that you have been spreading so broadly and asserting so confidently before my domestics?"

"I have asserted nothing but the truth, my lord, and nothing that I will not stand to before you and all your friends; ay, and before the very man whom I have accused."

"Ecky, you cannot assert anything for a truth of which you were not an eye-witness."

"Can I not? I know otherwise, however. Much is revealed to me that I never saw. So, you think I do not know who murdered my dear lady? You might know, considering the former proposals which were made to you. But if you are really so blinded that you do not know, which I think you are, I shall tell you. It was by the hands of those two men who now sit on your right and left hand; in particular, by that old fiend Carnoch, who has for years been hatching a plot against your beloved Julia, and who at last executed it in a moment of terror and confusion. Ay, and not unassisted by his tremulous nephew there, the redoubted Barvoolin. You may scowl—I care not. I know the foundation of your devilish plot. My lord does not know the principal motive. And for a poor selfish consideration you have taken the life of a lady than whom a more pure, lovely, and affectionate creature never drew the breath of life. Ay, well may you start, and well may the tears drop from your dim remorseless eyes. You know I have told you the truth, and you are welcome to ruminate on it."

"What do I see? Why do you weep, cousin?" said the chief to Carnoch.

"It is, my lord, because in my researches into futurity, I discovered that the death of Lady Julia was to bring about my own. I had forgot the prediction, unconscious how one life could hang upon another, until this wicked minx's bold and false assertion reminded me of it, and convinced me that she herself would be the cause of it. My lord, shall such audacity and falsehood pass unpunished under your roof?

"Nothing shall pass—but punishment must follow conviction, not antecede it. Now, Ecky, they are all present who witnessed my lady's death. You did not, that we know of."

"Did I not? Let the murderers see to that. Do you think I was going to let her cross the river that day with these hell-hounds without looking after her? *They* know well that I am telling the truth, and I will bring it home to them. Let them beware of their necks." And she made a circle with her finger round her own.

The chief was struck dumb with astonishment at hearing his kinsmen so boldly accused to their faces, and it is probable that at that moment he began to suspect their guilt and duplicity, but Carnoch, springing to his feet, drew his sword, and said fiercely, "My lord, this is not to be borne, nor shall it. That infatuated girl must die to-night."

"Not so fast, Carnoch!" cried the elfin, shaking her little white fist in his face. "No, Carnoch, I must *not* die to-night, nor will I for your pleasure. I know that your relentless heart will seek my death to-night, knowing your danger from me; but I will sleep far beyond the power of your cruel arm to-night, and have communication too with her whom that arm put down. And note well what I say. Take not my word for the certainty of these men's guilt. If a witness does not arrive at the castle, my lord, in less than three days, that shall convict them to your satisfaction, ay, and a witness from another country too, then I give you liberty to cut me all to pieces, and feed the crows and the eagles with me. No, Carnoch, I must *not* die to-night, for I must live till I convince my too easy and confiding lord. As for you, murderers, you need no conviction; you know well that I am telling the truth. Carnoch, I had a dream that I found you lying a mangled corpse at the bottom of the castle wall, and I know it will be fulfilled. But, O, I hope you will be hung first! Good night, sir; and remember, I *won't* die to-night, but will live out of despite to you!"

"What does the baggage mean?" said the guilty compeers, staring at one another; "'she will give us liberty to cut her all in pieces, if a witness against us do not appear from another country; and that she will have communication with her late lady to-night.' What does the infernal little witch mean?"

"Her meaning is far beyond my comprehension," said Edirdale; "not so her assertion. Would to God that I did not suspect it this night as bearing on the truth. But it is easy for us to wait three days and see the issue of this strange witness's intelligence. After that we shall bring the minx to judgment."

"She may have escaped beyond our power before that time," said Carnoch; "as I think she was threatening as much to-night. The reptile should be arrested at once. My advice therefore is, that

she be put down this very night, or confined to the dungeon. I myself shall undertake to be her jailer."

"I stand her security that she shall be forthcoming at the end of three days, either dead or alive," said the chief.

There was no more to be said, not another word on that head; but on the girl's asseverations many words passed. Though the guiltiest of the associates pretended to hold the prediction light before the chief, it was manifest that it annoyed them in no ordinary degree; for they all sat with altered faces, dreading that a storm was brewing around them, which would burst upon their heads. Old Carnoch in particular had his visage changed to that of an unhappy ghost. He was a strange character, brave, cruel, and attached to his clan and his chief; but never lived a more superstitious being in that superstitious country. He believed in the second sight, and was constantly tampering with its professors. He durst not go a voyage to Ireland to see or assist a body of his clansmen there, without first buying a fair wind from a weird woman who lived in Skye. He believed in apparitions, and in the existence of land and water spirits, all of which took cognizance of human affairs. Therefore Ecky's threatenings, corresponding with some previously conceived idea arising from enchantments and predictions, impressed him so deeply, that he was rather like a man beside himself. An unearthly witness coming from beyond the grave to charge him with the crime of which he well knew he was guilty, was more than he could contemplate and retain his reason. He had no intention of remaining any longer there, and made preparations for going away; but his lord shamed him out of his cowardly resolution, and said that his fleeing from the castle in that manner was tantamount to a full confession. On that ground he not only adjured, but ordered him to remain, and await the issue of the extraordinary accusation. The evening following, it being the first after Ecky's examination, Carnoch took his nephew apart, and proposed a full confession, which the other opposed most strenuously, assuring his uncle that in the spirit of regret that preyed on the chief, he would hang them both without the least reluctance; "and moreover," added he, "a girl's word, who only saw from a distance, cannot overturn the testification of four gentlemen who were present. No, no, Carnoch, since we have laid our lives at stake for the good of our people, let us stand together to the last."

The dinner was late that evening, and the chief perceiving the depression of his kinsmen's spirits, plied them well with wine; but Carnoch continued quite nervous and excited in an extraordinary degree; the wine made him worse. His looks were wild and unstable, and his voice loud and intermittent; and whenever the late lady of the mansion was named, the tears blinded his eyes. In this distracted sort of way the wassail was proceeding, when just as the sand-glass was running the ninth hour, they were interrupted by the arrival of an extraordinary guest.

It was a dark night in January. The storm which had raged for many days had died away, and a still and awful calm succeeded. The sky was overspread with a pall of blackness. It was like the house of death, after the last convulsion of nature; and the arrival of any guest at the castle in such a night, and by such paths, was enough to strike the whole party with consternation. The din of conversation in the chief's dining apartment had reached its acme for the evening, for just then a rap came to the grand entrance door, at which none but people of the highest quality presumed to approach. Surely there must have been something very equivocal in that tap; for never was there another made such an impression on the hearts and looks of so many brave and warlike men. The din of ebriety was hushed at once; a black and drumly dismay was imprinted on every countenance, and every eye, afraid of meeting the gleams of terror from another, was fixed on the door. Light steps were heard approaching by the great staircase; they came close to the back of the door of the apartment, where they paused a considerable space—and an awful pause that was for those within. The door was at length opened slowly and hesitatingly, and in glided, scarcely moving, Ecky M'Kenzie, with a snow-white sheet around her, a face as pale as death, and a white napkin around her head. Well she knew the character of the man she hated; she fixed one death-like look on Carnoch, and raising her forefinger, pointed at him—then retreating, she introduced Lady Julia.

This is no falsehood—no wild illusion of a poet's brain. It is a fact as well authenticated as any event in the annals of any family in Britain. Yes: at that moment Lady Julia entered, in the very robes in which she had been precipitated from the bridge. Her face was pale, and her look to the chieftains severe; still she was the Lady Julia in every lineament. A shudder and a smothered expression of horror issued from the circle. Carnoch, in one moment, rushed to the casement at the further end of the apartment; it opened on hinges, and Ecky had intentionally neglected to bolt it. He pulled it open, and threw himself from it. Barvoolia followed his example; but none of the rest having actually imbrued their hands in their lady's blood, they waited the issue; but so terror-smitten were they all, that not one perceived the desperate exit of the two chieftains, save the apparition itself, which uttered an eldrich scream as each of them disappeared. These yells astounded the kinsmen with double amazement, laying all their faculties asleep in a torpid numbness. But their souls were soon aroused by new excitations; for the incidents, as they came all rushing on one another, were quite beyond their comprehension. The apparition fixed its eyes, as if glistening with tears, on one of them only, then spreading forth its arms, and throwing

its face towards heaven as if in agony, it exclaimed, "No one to welcome me back to my own home!" The chief assumed the same posture, but had not power to speak or move, till the apparition, flying to him with the swiftness of lightning, clasped him in her arms, laid her head upon his bosom, and wept. "God of my fathers, it is my Julia, my own Julia, as I live and breathe," cried he in an ecstasy. It was the Lady Julia herself.

"Pray, Mr. Shepherd, does not this require some explanation?"

"It does, madam, which is forthcoming immediately, in as few sentences as I can make you understand it."

On the side of the river opposite to the castle, and consequently in another country, according to the idomatic phrase constantly used in that land, there lived a bold native yeoman, called Mungo M'Craw, miller of Clackmullin (I cannot help the alliteration, it is none of my making); but in those days, mill-ponds and mill-leads, with their sluices and burns, to say nothing about the mill-stones and mill-wheels, were in a very rude ineffective state. Such a morning as that was about Clackmullin! Mungo was often heard to declare—"Tat tere was not peing her equal from the flood of No, till te tay of shudgement, however long she might be behind."

That great Christmas flood had been a prototype of the great floods in Morayshire, so movingly described by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder. For one thing, it levelled Mungo M'Craw's wears and sluices as if no such things had existed; and what was worse, as the dam came off at the acute angle of the river, the flood followed on in that straight forward direction, and threatened instant destruction, not only to the mill and the kiln, but to the whole Mill-town, which stood a little more elevated; and there was Mungo, with his son Quinten, his daughter Diana, and his stout old wife yclept Mistress M'Craw, toiling between death and life, rearing a rampart of defence with wood, stones, divots, and loads of manure from the dunghill.

They were not trying to stop the mighty torrent—that was out of the power of man—but to give it a cast by their habitation; and there were they plunging and working at a terrible rate; Mungo scolding and calling for further exertion. "Ply, ply, you goslings of te Teal Mor, else we shall all be swept away out of te worlt wid tat roaring ocean of destruction tat pe coming roaring down from te hills and te corvies. Oh, Mistress M'Craw, cannot you pe plying tese creat pig shenteel hands of yours. Haif ye not te fears of Cot before your eyes, nor M'Tavish Mar, tat you will pe rolling your creat druim in tat ways. Go fill all te sacks in te mill with dung, and let us pe plunging tem into te preach. Diana, you mumping rosy chick, what are you thoughting upon? I teclare you pe not carrying creat above ten stones of dung at a time. Quinten, oh you great mastiff dog, you creat lazy puppy of a cucannech, do you not see tat we shall pe all carried away from te univarse, unless you ply as never man plied pefore?"

"Father, is Keppoch charged?"

"Malluchid! If I do not pe preaking your head for you. What does te creat bhaist want with te gun just now?"

"Because here is a swan coming on us full sail."

"Och then! run and bring Keppoch. She is always charged; clean and dry, and let us have a pluff at te swan, come of te mill what will. Life of my soul! if she pe not a drowned lady instead of a swan! Mistress M'Craw, and you young witch, Diana, where pe your hearts and your souls now? Och now tere will pe such splashing and squalling, and hoo-hooing, tat I shall have more ado with te living tan te dead, for women's hearts pe all made of oladh-heighis. There now, I have lost my grand shot, and shall lose my good mill and all te gentle's corn, and te poor fiars' likewise. Alas! dear soul, a warmer and a drier couch would have fitted you creat petter to-day! Come, help me to carry her, you noisy, thoughtless, noisy cummers, and help me to carry her in. What! howling and wringing your hands? See, give me hold of all your four arms, and let her head hang down, that the drumbly water may run out at her mouth like a mill-spout."

"No, no, Mungo, keep up my head, I am little the worse. My head has never yet been below the water."

"As I shall pe sworn before te tay of shudgement, it is te creat and cood lady of Edirdale. Cot pe wid my dhear and plessed matam, how tid you come here?"

"Even as you see, Mungo. But put me into your warm bed, and by and by I shall tell you all; for I have had a dreadful voyage to your habitation; but it has been a rapid one. It is not above half a minute since I lost hold of my husband's arm on the dizzy cradle on the top of Drochaid-maide."

With many exclamations, and prayers, and tears, the Lady Julia was put into bed, and nursed with all the care and affection of which the honest and kind-hearted miller and his family were capable. She bound them all to secresy until she thought it time to reveal herself; but her recovery was not so sudden as might have been expected. An undefinable terror preyed upon her spirits, which she found it impossible to remove—a terror of that which was past. It was a painful, thrilling suspicion that her husband had tossed her over. She had not the heart nor the capability of mentioning this that made the impression on her health and spirits to any at the mill; but she resolved to remain there in quiet concealment till the mystery of her intended death was satisfactorily cleared up.

She then offered Quinten, the young miller, a high bribe, if he would go privately to the castle, and procure her a secret conference with her humble cousin and foster-sister, Ecky M'Kenzie.

"Och, dear heart," said Mistress M'Craw, "he needs no bribe to go privately to Miss Ecky M'Kenzie. He is oftener there than at the kirk. It would require a very high bribe to keep him away; and she is so cunning and handy, that neither your ladyship nor any about the castle have ever discovered them. I shall answer for that errand being cheerfully and faithfully performed, but if the boy take one highland penny for his trouble, I'll feed him on black bearmeal brochen for a month."

Poor Ecky cried bitterly for joy, and was so delighted, that she actually threw her handsome arms around the great burly miller's neck and kissed him; but she would tarry none to court that night, but forced Quinten to return to Clackmullin with her.

The meeting of the two was affecting and full of the deepest interest, but I may not dwell on it, but haste to a conclusion; for a long explanatory conclusion is like the fifth act of a play, a wearisome supplement.

At that meeting, Ecky first discovered to her lady the horrible combination that had existed so long to take her off, but knowing the chief's steadfast resolution never either to injure or part with her she never told all that she knew for fear of giving her dear lady uneasiness; that they never would have accomplished their purpose, had it not been for the sham pilgrimage to St. Bothan's shrine; and that the two kinsmen seized her in a moment of confusion, and hurled her over the bridge; then all the four seized on their lord, and bore him into the castle, where they convinced his simple and too-confiding heart that his lady had, of her own accord, taken the dizzy and distracted leap.

She was now convinced of her husband's innocency, and that the love he had ever expressed towards her was sincere; and as she lived but in his affections, all other earthly concerns appeared to her but as nothing; and to have the proofs of their own consciences, the two settled the time, manner, and mode of her return, which was all contrived by the affectionate Ecky, and put in practice according to her arrangement, and the above narrated catastrophe was the result.

On going out with torches, the foremost of which was borne by Ecky M'Kenzie, they found old Carnoch lying at the bottom of the wall next to the river, with his neck broken and his body otherwise grievously mangled, and Barvoolin very much crushed by his fall. He made a full confession to Lady Julia, and at her intercession was pardoned, as being only the organ of a whole clan, but he proved a lameter to the day of his death. His confession to the lady in private was a curious one, and shows the devotedness of that original people to their respective clans and all that concerns them. He said, "that finding after many trials they could make nothing of her lord, they contrived that pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Bothan's, to intercede with the saint to take pity on their race; but they had resolved that she should never return from that devout festival. They had no idea of drowning until the tremendous flood came, which frustrated the other plan. They meant to have taken her off by poison, and had brought a bottle of poisoned wine with them, which was to have been presented to each of the ladies of rank who should sit on high with the Lady Julia, in a small golden chalice, and it appearing impossible to make exceptions, *they had resolved to sacrifice the whole to bear their lady company.*"

But the far best part of the story is yet to come. Whether it was the sleeping for a fortnight on a hard heather-bed, or the subsisting for that time on milk-brose and butter, or whether the ducking and correspondent fright, wrought a happy change on Lady Julia, I know not: but of this I am certain, that within a twelvemonth from the date of her return to the castle, she gave birth to a comely daughter, and subsequently to two sons; and the descendants of that affectionate couple occupy a portion of their once extensive patrimonial domains to this day.

MARY MONTGOMERY.

On the 3d of July, 1641, when England was in utter confusion, a party of yeomen were sent toward Scotland with a young lady, sole heiress, of the name of Montgomery, whose father was one of the leading royalist lords; but being imprisoned and in imminent danger, was obliged to send his infant daughter to her relations in Scotland. The party was led by Captain Seymour, a determined Catholic and hardy warrior; and in passing through the wood of Tarras, on the Border, they were encountered by a band of moss-troopers, led by one Beatson or Beattie, of Watkerrick. Beatson pretended to be leading his clan to join the Whig army, but in fact to obtain some plunder in the harassed state of the country; and on meeting with Seymour and his party, he accosted him in these words: "Whither away, brother, and on what expedition?"

"And pray who gave you a right to ask that?" said the other.

"Do you see this good spear which I hold in my hand, and this cut-and-thrust blade by my thigh, with all these men behind me, and yet ask me that question?"

"I'll see a higher commission than any of these, thou bonneted saucy Scot, before I explain my mission. Give way, and let me and my party pass; we have no quarrel with thee. Let it suffice that our mission is a private one, and has no connection with the political troubles of the day."

"Ye are telling a braid downright lee, sir," said Wat o' Blackesk, "for dinna I ken you to be the maist determined an' abominable Papishur in a' the British dominions. I hae met wi' you, hand to hand, afore this, an' came rather off wi' the waur, but I'll speak wi' you now here in my ain coontry. Watkerrick, this is Captain Seymour, gaun away on a papish errand for his cursed master, whose cruelty has laid our country waste."

"Down with your arms, sir, instantly," said Beatson, "and you shall all have assurance of life and limb until further instructions from the commission of estates."

"I despise and defy you and your commission," said Seymour. "Thou rude churl! Thou Border ruffian! Impede my progress if thou darest. I say open, and let me pass. I have no quarrel with thee; or feel the weight of a weapon that never was turned in battle."

"Let me but at the villain!" cried Wat o' Blackesk, and with that he rode furiously at Captain Seymour with his lance, but before one could have counted six, Seymour had cut off both the head of Wat and his lance. The rush of the Beatsons was then instantaneous. Seymour and his party fought stoutly, for there was no more parley, and several of the Beatsons were the first who fell, among whom was John of Watkerrick, their leader. The fray grew fiercer every minute, but the Beatsons, being nearly two to one, prevailed, and all the English were cut down, saving one who had fled at the beginning of the action, and was seen scouring off at full speed, with intention, as was supposed, of reaching the castle of Mangerton. The Beatsons supposing him to be the bearer of some great secret or treasure, gave chase with all their might, and Robert of Cassock being the best mounted at length overtook him, and speared him without ceremony in at the back; and behold, when he came to the ground, a lovely female child that was clasped in his bosom fell with him. She was richly dressed, but crying pitifully; and Robert, seeing her all covered with blood, thought she was wounded, and that it would be as good to stab her too at once, and put her out of pain, and lifting his lance with as much deliberation as if about to leester a salmon, his ears were assailed by such an unearthly cry from the dying man, that it made him start and withhold his stroke for the moment; and turning to him, he said in a fluttered voice, "What the deel's the matter w'ye, man?"

Though this was rather an annoying question to a man who had been fairly run through the body, yet he showed such anxiety about the infant that Robert was struck with a sort of natural awe, and turned and listened to him. He pointed to the babe, held up his hands, and spoke in the most fervent tones; but he was a foreign priest, and Robert could not understand a word that he said. Rather astonished, however, that a man should be speaking what he could not comprehend, which had never happened to him in Eskdale before, he drew close to the wounded man, held down his head, and asked very loud, "Eh? what are ye aye bletherin an' sayin, man? Wha is the creature? Wha is she ava?"

The man spoke on in the same fervent tones, but not one word could Robert comprehend, till at length losing patience with him, and seeing a crucifix upon his breast, an object of the utmost detestation then in the south of Scotland, he stabbed him again through the body, bidding him "either speak sense that fo'ks could understand, or haud his tongue for ever." The poor forlorn priest writhed and spurned,

uttered his *Ave Maria*, and ever and anon kissed the rood. Robert was rather affected, and stood for some time gaping and staring over him, saying at last to himself, "Od, I wonder what the body can be saying! But oh! I'm sure the kissing o' that bit black stick can do little for his soul's salvation. It is surely a maist ridiculous thing to be a Papist. But come, come, there's nae fun in this. It is best to pit sic a gomerel out o' pain;" and so saying, he drew his sword, as sharp as a razor, and at one stroke severed the priest's head from his body.

In the meantime Jock of Thickside had come up, and lifting the child, saw a golden crucifix and chain hanging around her neck, and gold and jewels about her beyond calculation, which had been placed there as their only place of safeguard in those marauding and troublous times, it probably having been weened that no ruffian hand would harm a helpless and lovely infant. Well, Jock Beatson perceiving these before his kinsman had done confessing and murdering the priest, claimed the baby as his own, he having been the first lifter of her from the battlefield. At the first, Robert of Cassock seemed very willing to consent to this arrangement, thinking to himself that he had plenty of these brats up and down the country already, and soon expected some more. But his eye had caught something about the babe, it was never known what it was, and all at once he refused to yield his right to her, saying that he had overtaken and slain her guardian with his own hand, which he (Jock Beatson) never could have done on his bauchle of a beast, and that therefore he should have his heart's blood before he had that child. This was a hard alternative, especially as this Robert was now the chief of the Beatsons after the fall of Watkerrick, and Jock of Thickside was rather hard put to it, knowing something of the riches of which he was possessed.

Now, it must be remarked, that the rest of the Beatsons who were pursuing the flying priest, perceiving that he was overtaken and slain, hasted back to the combat field to divide the horses and the spoil, and look after their wounded friends, so that at this time there were none nigh or in view but the two rough kinsmen and the baby. "I lifted her first, cousin; and you know by all the rules of our clan, that gives me a right to her and all about her; go and strip the priest, he is your own fair prey."

"I brought the priest and her both to the ground at the same blow, and I claim both, therefore give up what is my right before I am obliged to send you after the priest to bear him company."

"Speak'st thou that way to me, cousin? If thou art disposed to use such language, use it to thy equals, for thou knowest that this arm could master ten such as thine. Why, I'll hold the child in the one hand and fight thee with the other, and if thou win her from me thou shalt have her."

Robert of Cassock could bear no more; but heaving his long bloody sword with which he had just beheaded the priest, he attacked his cousin, who held his drawn sword in one hand and the screaming infant below the other arm. At the very first turn Robert wounded both Jock and the child. "Beshrew thy heart, man, thou hast killed the bairn!" said Thickside, and flung the poor thing behind him as if it had been a bundle of clouts, and the combat went on with the most deadly feud, for the nearer the friends the more deadly the animosity when such occurs. Sharp and severe wounds were given on both sides, and their morions and hauberks were hacked and hewed, for the two kinsmen were very equal in prowess. Robert was the strongest man, but Jock of Thickside was accounted the best of the clan at handling his weapon, and at length, when both were much exhausted, he, by a dexterous backstroke turned upward, wounded his cousin below the sword arm, and he fell, cursing his opponent for a wretch and a villain.

When John Beatson saw what he had done in the heat of passion, he was cut to the heart, stood up like a statue, and the tears poured from his manly eyes mixing with his blood. "O, Rob Beattie, Rob Beattie! What have I done!" cried he, "and what hast thou done to provoke this deadly enmity between two who have always agreed and loved like brothers! Now, Rob, to save thy life would I give all the ewes and kye on Thickside, and the land that feeds them into the bargain. Can I do nothing for you in binding up your wounds?"

"No, no; you can do nothing for me," said the other, "for I am cut through the midriff, and life is ebbing fast. Take thy prize, but take her and her wealth with my curse, and know she will prove a curse unto thee, and thy ruin shall arise from her, for thy claim on me was unjust."

John, nevertheless, did all that he could to bind up and stem his cousin's wounds, and even brought him a drink in his helmet; he drank eagerly of it, then died in his cousin's hands. Poor little Mary Montgomery, horror-struck by her wound, and the sight of two bloody men hacking and hewing at one another, and her kind conductor lying without the head, had rolled herself from her swaddling clothes, and was waddling across the moor, crying incessantly, and falling every minute. John Beatson followed, and seizing her by the frock he brought her back in his hands swinging like a thing of no value. "Haud the yaup o' thee, thou little imp!" said Jock. "Little does thou ken the evil thou hast bred this day! Sorrow that thou had been in thy mother's cradle, an' ane o' thy braw velvet clouts about thee. Haud the tongue o' thee, I say, for I want but a hair to mak' a tether o' that sal lay thee beside the tither twa. Plague on thee. Haud thy yaup!" And with that he shook her until the dear little lady cried herself weak and faint.

Jock of Thickside (for that was the familiar name he was known by) was so o'erspent by wounds, vexation, and the loss of blood, that he never so much

as thought of ransacking the pockets of the priest, where he would have found some documents that would have redounded to his profit. But if Jock had found them he could not have read them, and would probably have burned them or thrown them away. However, weary and heart-broken as he was for the death of his cousin and next neighbour, he took the babe carelessly on before him on the horse, regardless of her cries and whining, and bore her straight to Christy his wife at their remote habitation, without going any more nigh the field of battle to share the spoil.

"O, Kitty Jardine! Kitty Jardine! I am a ruined man," said he, but you are a made woman, for here's a bit creature I hae brought you wi' as muckle riches hanging about her shoulders as wad buy an earldom. But O, Christy, what think you I hae done! Have nae I gane an' killed Rob o' Cassock, our cousin, for the possession o' that bairn."

"Hush!" said Christy, laying her finger on her lips. "Did ony body see you kill your cousin?"

"No, no ane but that creature itsel', for there was nae another soul in sight but a papish priest, an' he couldna see very weel for he wantit the head. But what gars ye speir that? I killed him fairly in a set battle, an' I'll never deny it."

"That was bravely done. But was your quarrel with him just?"

"I'm no just sae sure about that."

"Then deny it. Swear it was not you, else you are a dead man. You will be hanged in eight days, and every ane o' the clan will cut a collop off you if you have fastened an unjust quarrel on Rob Beattie an' murdered him."

"O Kitty, Kitty! ye gar a' my flesh creep. I wadna care sae muckle for hanging, but to be cuttit i' collops is terrible. But what do you think! He cursed me wi' his dying breath, an' prophesied that that bairn should prove my ruin. I dinna like to think o' this at a', Christy; an' I hae been thinkin' that it might no be the warst way to pit the bit brat out o' the gate."

"God forbid that ever sic a sin should lie at our door. Poor dear little creature! She is thrown on our care by some strange chance, but she has brought plenty wi' her to pay for her boord wages, an' sooner would I part wi' it an' a' that I hae in the warld beside, than see a hair o' her head wranged;" and with that Christy Jardine hugged the child to her bosom and kissed and caressed her; and the babe, horrified as she had been by scenes of blood, and feeling herself once more under the care of one of her own kind sex, clung to Christy's neck, and again and again held out her little lovely mouth to give her protectress another kiss. Jock Beatson, the rough moss-trooper, was so much effected by the scene that he blowed his nose three times, and as often brought his mailed sleeve across his eyes.

"God bless you, Kitty!" said he.

The Beatsons stripped the slain, collected the fine English horses, a grand prize for them at that period, buried their friends and foes together in one pit, which is still well known, about half way between Yarrow and Liddell, and bore home their wounded with care to their several families. It had been a dear-bought prize to them, for they had lost their leader and his second in command, and nearly as many brave men as had fallen of the English. They had seen Watkerrick fall, but what had become of Robert of Cassock they could not comprehend. Several of the pursuers asserted that they had seen him overtake and bring down the flying warrior; but they knew no further, and in the hurry and confusion none even seemed to remember that John of Thickside had ridden on to the final catastrophe. So the next morning a party were sent out to search out for Robert, dead or living; and as they well knew the place where he had been last seen, they went straight to it, and found both him and the headless priest lying stripped naked side by side. This circumstance was to them perfectly unaccountable.

Now it so happened, that Lord Nithsdale, who was a stern Catholic, had raised five hundred men to go to the assistance of King Charles, and he being the lord superior of the Beatsons, who were Protestants and hated him, sent up a strong force by the way of Eskdale, under Peter Maxwell of Wauchope, to command their services. Peter found them all gone on a different service (as Lord Maxwell rather had suspected), and followed straight on their route, to force them to take the side of their liege lord. Peter chanced to take the other side of the ridge, and fell in with the headless priest and Robert of Cassock lying dead together. On stripping the former, Peter found a letter to Sir James Montgomery, stating that Lord Montgomery had sent his only child to Sir James, as the only place of refuge he knew of, with all the ready money he had, and all her late mother's jewels; that the child's name was Mary, and she was the sole heiress to three earldoms. The letter also recommended Captain Seymour and Father Phillippe to Sir James's confidence.

Peter Maxwell was astonished, for there without doubt was Father Phillippe lying without his head, side by side with one of the wild moorland clan denominated "the bloody Beatsons." But he perceived that a valuable life and a valuable prize were in jeopardy, and not knowing what to do, he, like an honest man, went straight to his chief, put the letter into his hands, and stating how he came by it asked his counsel how to proceed.

But by this time word had arrived at Lord Maxwell's camp, that a party of English troopers, supposed to be Catholics on some private mission from King Charles into Scotland, had been met by a subordinate clan of his and totally annihilated. Lord Maxwell was in dreadful wrath, and forthwith took an oath to extinguish that marauding sept, and re-

solved at all events to have the child. So turning with one hundred of his choicest troopers, he rode without drawing bridle straight to Watkerrick, to ask an explanation from the leader of that wild and desperate clan.

But it so happened, that when he arrived there, the whole of Eskdale, consisting chiefly of Beatsons, Bells, and Sandisons, were assembled together, burying their chief in his own chapel. A few lifted their bonnets to Maxwell, but suspecting his intents to be evil and dangerous, they took very little notice of him till he began to speak in an authoritative manner, demanding a word of their chief; but they only shook their heads and pointed at the bier. He then ordered his troopers to take every Beatson present into custody, in order to be tried for a breach of the king's peace. But as soon as his troopers began to lay hands on them, a thousand rapiers and daggers were drawn from under the vestments of mourning, and a desperate battle ensued for the space of ten minutes, when Lord Maxwell's troop was broken and every one fled at full speed the best way he could. As I said, Lord Maxwell had been the lord superior of Eskdale for ages; but he being a Catholic, and the inhabitants of that wild region a sort of nominal Protestants, without much genuine religion among them, as they are to the present day, therefore they hated him, and in short wanted to be rid of him, and possess their lands without feu-duty or acknowledgment to any lord superior. Such men wanted but a pretext for beginning the strife, and they did it with all their energy. Maxwell's men were scattered like the chaff before the wind, and he himself so hemmed in and belaid that he could not get homeward, but was obliged to flee to the east with only three or four followers. A party of his rebellious vassals pursued with all speed, and before he gained Craik-Cross his followers were all cut down one by one, but he himself being exceedingly well mounted still kept far ahead. His horse was greatly superior to any of the Eskdale horses, but had been exhausted by his forenoon's ride from the tower of Sark to Watkerrick, so that before he reached the castle of Branksholm, some of the Bells and Beatsons were close upon him. When he came within view of the castle he waved his chapeau and shouted aloud, and the warder perceiving a nobleman pursued by commoners, raised the portcullis and let him in; but there was one George Bell so close upon him, with his upheaved sword, that the portcullis in falling cut off his horse's head, and he himself knocked out his brains against the iron bars.

That was a costly raid for the Beatsons, for Lord Maxwell the same night sold the superiority of Eskdale to the Laird of Buccleugh for a mere trifle, and that relentless chief raising his clan, cut off the Beatsons every one who possessed land to a man, except the young Laird of Watkerrick, the son of the chief, whom he saved, and whose heirs inherit the estate to this day in a lineal descent. The original surname of the clan was Beatson, but from the familiar pronunciation it is now changed into Beattie.

In the meantime, as soon as Lord Maxwell reached his troops, he despatched a number of private spies in search of the young heiress, and it was not long until they got a clue to her; for a countryman named David Little informed them that "he had seen Jock o' Thickside cross at the Garwald water-foot on the evening of the 3d of July;—he was a' covered wi' blood, an' had a bit bloody bairn wawin' on afore him."

One of the men then proceeded straight to Thickside by himself, and soon discovered that the missing child was indeed there, for John had only two sons nearly grown to men's estate. But all that the man could do, was to return and inform his lord, he having no further instructions than merely to discover where the child was. Some dispute that took place between Sir Richard Graham and Lord Maxwell, about the marching of the troops of the latter on such an expedition, crossed Maxwell so much that he was arrested on his journey, and shut up in Carlisle Castle as a rebel to the state, his troops marching back to Nithsdale and Galloway.

While these things were going on, there were some insinuations spread against John of Thickside, and it was rumoured that he had murdered his kinsman and next neighbour, Rob of Cassock. He had got a strange child nobody knew how; he was covered with wounds; and it was perfectly well known that he had not been at the division of the spoil nor the burying of the slain; and it was said there were "some very braw velvet clouts covered wi' gowd" that had been seen by some of the vassals about the house; in short, strong suspicions were entertained against Thickside, and the Beatsons, though a lawless sept as regarded others, had the most upright notions of honour among themselves, and would in nowise suffer the highest of their clan to wrong the lowest: so they themselves took hold of Jock of Thickside, and carried him to Dumfries jail, to take his trial before that very Lord Maxwell who, like himself, was at that time shut up in prison.

I have often been amazed at discovering how the truth comes out under circumstances the most concealed and secret, and the first hint that circulates is very often the most accordant with it. Word reached Christy Jardine that she had an heiress to three lordships in her keeping, and that the child would be forced from her in a few nights, with all she possessed; and if that was refused, her house and fortalice would be laid in ashes.

Christy was terribly perplexed. Her husband had been borne off to prison on suspicion of the slaughter of his cousin. She was aware he was guilty, and knowing the hands that he was in, she had but little hope of his escape. But above all she felt that

the tearing of that sweet babe from her would be the same as tearing her heart from her bosom, and she could think of no way of preservation but by absconding with her to some other place. So as it approached towards evening on the 17th of July, Christy prepared everything for her departure. She hid all the jewels and a part of the gold in a hole of the little fortalice, and built them up so as that neither wind, water, nor fire could touch them; and putting the rest of the gold in the lining of her bodice, and the golden cross being about the child's neck, which she would not get off, but took for a charm to keep the fairies from her; as soon as night set in she left her home weeping bitterly, carrying the sleeping babe along with her, and sped away toward the country of those who sought to reave her of her child, for there lay her native country, and she knew no other. About the break of day she heard the voices of a troop of men meeting her, on which she crept behind a turf dike, and squatted down in perfect terror, lest the child should awaken and cry. As bad luck would have it, the men sat down to rest themselves on the side of the path, right opposite to where Christy and her precious charge lay concealed, and she heard the following dialogue among them.

First Man.—"Are we far frae that out-o-the-way place, Thickside, does ony o' you ken? How far off are we, Johnstone?"

Second Man.—"About seven miles, as I guess; and I shouldna be ill pleased though we should never find it. I look on the haill o' this expedition as unfair. What has our Lord Maxwell ado wi' the brave old fellow's wean, however he came by her? But I trow it is the yellow goud he wants. Jock himself is lying in prison an' hard suspicions entertained against him, an' no ane to defend his place but a callant; an' if they refuse to gie up the wean an' her treasure, we are to burn and herry. The deil a bit o' this is fair play."

First Man.—"But think if Jock Beatson be a murderer, Johnstone, an' hae killed his cousin for the greed o' this bairn's siller, which they say wad buy a' the lands o' Eskdale. Then think what he deserves. What is your opinion about that?"

Second Man.—"'Od, I believe that he killed Robert o' Cassock; for it is plain that the priest wanting the head coudna hae killed him. But then I think he killed him in fair combat, for he has nae fewer than ten wounds a' before; an' his armour, which was brought to Dumfries, is hacked and hewed, ye never saw aught like it. 'Od, we'll bring them a bairn o' ony kind. If it be but a lassie, they canna ken ae bairn by another, an' it will be a grand fortune to ony bit weelfaurd lass bairn to get three lordships."

Third Man.—"I hae half a dozen wenches, an' my wife has seven, ye shall get the wale o' them a', Johnstone, if you like to make the experiment."

Fourth Man.—"I wad rather hae a haul at Jock o' Thickside's ewes an' kye. Let us, if you please, go according to order."

Second Man.—"Devil-a-bit! The time is come that I hae been looking for a while past, when every man does that which is right in his own eyes. But it shall never be said o' Jock Johnstone, that he took advantage o' the times to do aught that's oppressive or unjust; an' I think this mission o' ours is an unfair one. An' if a' be true that I hae heard, the best days o' the Beatsons are by."

When the dialogue had reached thus far, there was a dog or sort of bloodhound belonging to the troop, popped his head over the turf dyke, right above where Christy and her sleeping charge lay concealed. He never got such a fright in his life! He uttered such a bay as made all the hills yell, and fled as if a hundred fiends had been after him, never letting one yelp await another.

"May a' the powers o' heaven preserve us," cried one; "what can be ayant that dyke? sure am I it is something neither good nor canny, for Reaver never fled frae the face o' clay sin' the day that he was born."

The first horrid bay of the dog wakened the child, who stood up in her rokelay of green, and began to prattle, and the men hearing the small voice in a language which they did not well understand, conceived that they were indeed haunted by the fairies, and grew exceedingly frightened, and as Christy thought, some of them fled; but one Charles Carruthers, more bold than the rest, cursed them for cowards, and went away, though manifestly agitated, to peep over the dyke. The lovely infant clad in green, met his face with hers on the top of the old green dyke; but if Reaver got a dreadful fright, Carruthers got a worse, for he actually threw himself back over, and made sundry somersets down hill before he could gain his feet, and the whole troop then fled in the utmost astonishment. As for Reaver, he got such a fright, that he ran off and was never more seen.

Poor Christy journeyed on with a heavy heart, for she heard that evil was determined against her. Yet was she glad that she had made her escape with the child; and she had some hope in the honour and forbearance of Johnstone, who seemed to be a leading man among Maxwell's soldiers. This party reached Thickside about sun-rising, and found only James, the youngest son, at home; for the eldest had followed his father to Dumfries to minister to him. James told them frankly that his father had brought home a child from the battle, but that when or how he got her he knew not; but he added, "My mother will maybe ken, for she sleeps wi' her. She says they ca' her Maly Cummy."

But when they went to Christy's apartment, behold "the sheets were cold, and she was away!" There was neither dame nor child there, at which James was greatly confounded, thus to be deprived of both his father and mother; and the men easily discerned that he was in no way privy to the con-

cealment. The soldiers searched the cowhouses, hinds' houses, and shepherds' cots, but no concealed lady, child, or treasure could they find; so they burned the house of Thickside, and drove the cattle, according to their lord's order.

During the time of the search, and the contention about seizing the spoil, the youth James contrived to send off an express to Garwal, who sent expresses to every landward laird of the clan, and though the Beatsons knew not until the following year that Lord Nithsdale had sold them and their possessions, yet having once shown a spirit of insubordination they were determined to submit to nothing. So when the Maxwells came to a place called Sandyford, a strait and difficult passage across the Black Esk, they were encountered by a body of the Beatsons, and cut off to a man.

Christy and her lovely little charge arrived late that same evening of the foray at a cot in Langleydale, where she was kindly welcomed by a lone widow to a night's lodging, chiefly on account of the beauty and polished dialect of little Mary, who was quite a phenomenon among those rude Borderers. And the next day, when Christy was about to continue her journey, the widow, whose name was Clark, besought her to stay with her, and help her with the spinning of some webs for Lady Langley. Christy accepted the offer, for no one could excel her at spinning; and the two continued on carding and spinning, time about, very busy and very happy to all appearance, although in truth Christy's heart was yearning over the precarious situation of her husband, as well as her household goods and gear; and Widow Clark yearning no less to know who the strangers were whom she had got in her house. Christy said "the bairn was hers, but the father o' her was a grand nobleman wha had fa'n into some scrape, an' the king had cuttet off his head. Sae as the bairn wasna jeetimate, the friends had just sent her back to her poor mother again."

"Ay, ay!" said Widow Clark; "we leeve in awfu' times! For sin' ever I can mind, which is near forty years, the lives o' men hae been naething countit on. Whenever a man's indictit as they ca't, the next word that we hear is, that he's hanged." (Christy let the thread drop out of her hand, and her cheek grew pale.) "An' then, how mony hae been shot an' hanged without either indictment or trial? The lives o' men are nae mair countit on now-a-days than they were a wheen auld ousen or auld naigs. But oh, I heard some ill news yestreen! Ye maun ken that there's a wild bloody clan wha leeve up in the moorlands that they ca' Beattie's, wha it is thought will soon be extirpit, for they hae risen in rebellion against their lord, an' as near killed him as he'll ever miss being killed again. An' there's ane, it seems, the warst o' the hale bike, wha has killed a gentleman, an' stown an heiress. Aweel, ye see, the Lord Maxwell o' Niddisdale, he sends up a band o' sodgers to rescue the bairn; but when they gaed there, the rascally thieves wadna produce her. Weel, the sodgers brunt an' herried, for ye ken thae Beatties are a' outlaws an' thieves, an' fair game. But what does the villains do, think ye? I declare it was tauld yestreen, that they gathered till a head, an' had killed Lord Niddisdale's men ilka ane, an' roastit an' eatin them."

"Hout! they surely wadna do that. It wad only be some o' the recovered cattle that they roastit an' eatit. That ye ken is the rule."

"I ken nae sic thing, but this I ken, that the knaves will soon be a' hanged, that's some comfort. The villain that murdered the gentleman, an' stealed the bairn an' her tocher, is ta'en away to Dumfries already to be hanged. An' if Lord Maxwell of Niddisdale had them a' where he is, there wadna ane o' them escape. This bonny bairn's your ain, you say?"

"Ay, weel I wot is she, though I maun say it to my shame. An' I maun e'en try to work for her bread an' my ain baith."

"Because a kind of glose cam' o'er me that this might be the stawn heiress, an' that I might get mysel strappit neatly up by the neck about her. But what need I say sae? What interest could a poor workin' body like you hae in stealing a bairn to bring a double weight on your shoulders! An' what a bit gildit trinket is this wi' some glass beads in it that she wears on her naked bosom?"

"That's a charm for keepin' away the fairies, the brownies, an' a' evil spirits frae her. Her father, wha was a great maister o' airts, lockit that about her neck that it might never be ta'en aff."

"Ah! but that is a valuable thing an' a blessing to my house, for muckle muckle I hae been plaguit wi' them! So she's your ain bairn, you say! Weel I canna help having my jalousings. She's verra unlike ye. What is your name, darling?"

"Why, Maly! little Maly Gumly!" said the child carelessly, as she sat on the floor caressing a kitten.

"I am ruined now," thought Christy to herself, "and all will out together!"

"What mair nor Mary did you say! Tell me what mair?"

"I don't know what you say," said the child. "What mare is it! Is it papa's own, or the one I rode on wid old Fader Flip?"

"What does the creature say?" said Widow Clark. "Who was Father Flip, Mary?"

"Oh, it was de man that wanted de head, you know: when Maly yan and kie'd, and de bloody man took Maly up and toss'd her."

"Oh, she's clean ayont my comprehension," said Widow Clark. "But what mair do they ca' ye forby Mary? What mair did ye say?"

"I did not say anything about a mare," said the child. "Come, come, pussy, you must go with me, and if you dare to scratch me, I will beat you."

"That's nae bairn o' this country, however," said

the widow; "ye hae surely been far up through England when ye met wi' your misfortune?"

"That's rather a sair subject, Mrs. Clark, but ye ken weel how many English officers, baith noblemen an' gentlemen, hae been hereabouts for ower lang a time for our good. If ye ken'd a' that I hae suffered for that bairn, your heart would bleed for me. An' lack-a-day, I fear my sufferings for her winna be a' ower yet." And with that Christy fell a-crying bitterly, as she thought of her husband and of her burned habitation. But who can fathom the latent fountains of tenderness in a woman's heart, especially when helpless infancy is concerned?

Widow Clark felt that she had sounded a chord too delicate, and concluded by saying—"Weel, weel, cheer up your heart, an' think nae mair about it. What's done canna be undone, an' ye hae a pair o' good hands o' your ain, an' are weel worthy o' your room, sae ye are welcome to stay here as lang as you like, an' your wark shall stand for your meat, an' if we ply weel, we'll surely support sweet little Mary atween us."

This speech was rewarded by a gush of grateful tears from Christy, for her heart yearned over the child, and from that day forward, Mrs. Clark never put another question to Christy about the child. She called herself Christy Melvile, and said the child was to be called after her own surname, by order of her father the day before he was beheaded. So one was called Christy and the other Mary, and there was no more said about it. But every Sabbath-day Christy left the charge of little Mary with the widow, went off before day and returned again by night; and though the widow watched her, she saw that she sometimes went one way and sometimes another, and could not comprehend her business. It was afterwards discovered that she went to Dumfries and Thickside week about.

Christy saw and learned from others that she stood on ticklish ground. A high reward having been offered for the discovery of the child, she took good care to conceal the riches she brought with her, never even venturing to buy her a new frock, unless out of their joint savings. That widow Clark really believed the child to be Christy's is rather doubtful; but certain it is she acquiesced in the belief, for she loved both the child and mother, and had no mind to part with them. So the child grew in stature and in beauty. But we must return to Christy's family.

Jock of Thickside was tried before Lord Nithsdale immediately on his return from England, but the Beatsons, his accusers, refused to attend, keeping their fastnesses, for they knew that as far as the power of the Maxwells extended they were a proscribed clan; and moreover their late slaughter of the band of English rendered them supremely obnoxious to their old tyrannical liege lords. But Maxwell was at the pains to send officers up among them, who examined them, and the Beatsons told all that they knew, for they lamented the death of their brave clansman Robert of Cassock exceedingly, and all of them suspected John of Thickside. It was proven that he was not on the field at the dividing of the spoil, nor the burying of the slain, nor even at his chief's funeral the next day, and that he was seen crossing the Esk on the evening of the 3d, with a crying child on the horse before him.

This was all, and there was nothing more criminal in it than what attached to the whole clan who were present at the foray, and all this Jock had confessed plainly at first, but schooled by his wife, he denied that he had ever left the field of strife. He said he had picked up a lovely child trying to waddle away from the field of battle, and he being wearied and wounded, rode straight home and took the child with him to try to preserve her innocent life.

"Then tell me, ruffian, what thou hast done with that child?" said Lord Maxwell; "for that baby's life was of more value than the lives of thy whole race."

"It is false," said Jock.

"What say'st thou, caitiff? Speak'st thou so to me?"

"Yes, I do. For there is not a life of my race which is not as valuable in the sight of Heaven as either thine or hers, and I hope a great deal more so than that of any Papist's on earth."

A buzz of approbation ran through the crowded council-room at this bold reply; for the Dumfriesians had suffered much from the Catholics and abhorred them, and Lord Maxwell, perceiving this, answered mildly and said, "Tell me what thou hast done with that noble child, and thy life shall be as dear to me as thou rashly supposest it is to heaven."

I must give John Beatson's explanation in his own words. "Troth ye see, ma' lword, I feught verra hard that day an' levelled a good deal o' the Englishers wi' the swaird. But that wasna my wyte, far we had a commander, a chief o' our ain, an' whan he began the fray, what could we do but follow? Besides we kenned the days o' the papishes war ower, as ye'll soon find to your cost, and we thought the sooner we made an end o' a wheen o' them the better. But to come to the bairn again that ye haud sic a wark about; troth I was laith to pit the secret out. But faith an' troth, my lord, ye murdered her yoursel'. An' it's gayan like a papish's trick after a'. They're sae frank at taking the lives o' others, it's weel done when they snap ane anither's at orra times."

"Explain what you mean, Beatson. This is too serious a business to be jeered with. I never saw the child, and therefore could have had no hand in taking her life. But it is a business which, if I judge aright, will cost you your neck."

"Aweel! I ken ye hae resolved on that already, an' gin a' my kinsmen had but ae neck among them

ye wad chop a' off at aince. But I ken wha's head better deserves to be chopped off; and I'll explain the matter to you an' a' that hear me. I fund a bairn there's nae doubt o't, trying, poor thing, to waddle away an' escape frae the field o' battle. Sae I took her by the frock-tail an' pu'd her up afore me, an' finding that she was laden wi' goud an' diamonds an' precious stones, an' that I was sair woundit an' forefoughten, I thought I wad tak her for my prize an' let my friends share the rest amang them. Sae I brought hir hame an' gae her to my wife, wha, poor woman, kissed her, caressed her, and fed her wi' the best in the house. But behold I was sent to prison, an' your lordship, knowing that I wasna at hame to defend my ain, sent up your sogers, wha surroundit the house; and my poor wife was sae fley'd that she took up the baby an' a' her riches into a hiding place in a garret which nae leeving soul could find out. But behold the base knaves set the house on fire an' brunt it every stap, and my honest woman an' the bonny bairn war baith brunt to ashes. But that's the gate honest an' true men hae been long guidit by the papishes."

Lord Nithsdale looked confounded. He knew such a deed had been done; the plain narrative affected him, and he exclaimed, "God forgive me." The populace grew outrageous. They pulled Lord Nithsdale from the seat of justice, and knocked and pommelled him so. that it was with great difficulty his officers and adherents got him pushed into the dungeon of the prison and locked up there. From that day he never more mounted the bench of justice in Dumfries. The times were changed with him. The mob assumed the rule for a season. The crown tottered on the head of the king, while a more powerful hand grasped at it, and all was utter confusion. In the meantime, John of Thickside was set free, amid the shouts of an exulting mob. But though liberated in this singular and tumultuous way, he was not exculpated in the eyes of his kinsmen, who regarded him with a jealous eye and refused to associate with him. They suspected him not only of having foully slain Robert of Cassock, but of having made away with the child for the sake of her treasure; for though the Beatsons heard the story as a fact that the wife and child were both burned, they did not believe it.

When Mary came to be about nine years of age she was taken notice of by Mrs. Maxwell, commonly called Lady Langley. This lady was a widow, her husband having fallen in the civil wars, and she had retired to an old solitary but neat mansion in this wild dell, with her only surviving child, a boy in his teens. Now, as Lady Langley supplied the two women with constant work, she often called at their cot to see how her woollen and linen yarn were coming on, and pay them by the spindle. So every time she saw and conversed with little Mary Melville, as she was called, she could not help admiring her singular beauty and fine address; and at length proposed to take her home and educate her along with her son, who had a tutor of his own. This proposal was blithely accepted by the two women, for though both of them, by dint of hard spelling and misnaming words, could read a little, they found themselves quite inadequate to teach their little darling anything beyond the alphabet, every letter of which they mispronounced.

Mary proved a most apt learner, as girls about that age generally are, and soon made great advancement in overtaking the young laird. Lady Langley was so pleased with herself at having taken this fatherless and interesting child under her protection that she condescended often to attend to her education herself, though with a great deal of pomp and circumstance. It was while guiding her hand in writing one day that Lady Langley perceived the cross on the girl's bosom, and was struck dumb with astonishment thinking it was streaked with blood. She took it out and stared at it. Mary made no resistance, but stared on the lady's face in return. It was a cross of gold set with rubies in a most beautiful way.

"Mary Melville, what is this!" said the lady: "child, this cannot be yours."

"I believe it is, madam," said Mary seriously. "It has hung there since ever I remember, and I have heard that it was locked round my neck by my father the day before he was beheaded."

"He has died for the true religion then," said the lady, turning up her eyes, and then turning over the cross, she saw upon the adverse side these words, if I remember aright, set in very small diamonds. *Mater Dei, memento M. M.* "Ay, there it is there it is!" exclaimed she; "'Mother of God, remember Mary Melville!' Girl, that cross is worth an estate. Do you remember aught of your papa?"

"I think always I remember of riding in a coach with a gentleman whom I was wont to call so."

"What was his name?"

"I have quite forgot, but men took off their caps when they spoke to him."

"Was your own name always Mary Melville?"

"No, it was not. I am almost certain it was not. But O I cannot remember! I think they called me Mary Gurney or Gulney, or some such sound as that. But it is all uncertain and quite like a dream."

"But you never had any mother or mamma save poor Christy?"

"No, no, I never had any mother or mamma but Christy, excepting Mrs. Clark, who is the very same."

"Ay, ay! So then the story is all too true. Your father has been a gentleman, perhaps more. But your mother has been one of the herd, perhaps a common strumpet, so you must never think to rise in life, Mary. Never presume to thrust yourself

into genteel society, for there is a stain on your lineage which all the beauty and accomplishments of the world cannot efface."

"I don't see that at all, Lady Langley, why I should be looked down on by the world for a misdemeanour in which I had no share."

"It is the way of the world, child, and to the ways of the world we must submit, as we cannot frame it anew to our own ideas or the particular circumstances that suit ourselves. But blessed be God who cast you on my protection, for I will breed you up in the true religion, and as you never can rise in life, I will get you placed in a nunnery."

"A nunnery? What's that? I do not like the name."

"It is a religious house where young women are brought up in the fear, nurture, and admonition of the Lord, well prepared for a better state, and well provided for all their lives."

"Well, I should like that exceedingly. Are there plenty of young gentlemen in it?"

"No, no! There is no man suffered to enter those sacred gates but the father confessor."

"I think I shall not go. I'll rather take my chance with old mother Christy, to such luck as may cast up."

Lady Langley smiled and made a long speech about mothers, which I do not choose to bring into my tale, and by degrees half and more persuaded the young volatile beauty that she was directing her on the right path. In the meantime the young laird and she learned on and gambolled on together. He was constantly playing tricks on her, and keeping her squalling in their hours of amusement, and sometimes he would pretend to lash her from him with a horse-whip, but in one minute she was between his shoulders again. Lady Langley gave them many profound lectures on the impropriety of their intimacy, and would often impress Mary's mind so much that she would try to keep aloof from George for days together. But the game always began again. They went a nutting, they went a bird-nesting, keeping out of the severe dame's sight, and ultimately George would stand or sit and gaze in silence at the growing beauties of Mary, while the return he got for this worship was often no more than a slap on the cheek or a fillip on the nose.

But the time arrived when George was obliged to leave his mother's house for some Catholic college, whether in France or Ireland I have forgot, but he remained there a number of years, and was only home once all the time, and then when he met with Mary he did not know her. It was a droll scene. Mary accosted him with ease and familiarity, while he could only bow, stare, and hesitate. When told that it was his old playmate, Mary Melville, he actually cried for joy at seeing her so lovely. The lady took good care to keep them asunder, so that they only met once by themselves for a few minutes, but during that short space something had passed between them which never was forgotten by either of them.

But the time at length arrived when it behoved George Maxwell to come home and take the charge of his own affairs, and then Lady Langley resolved to put her scheme into execution with regard to Mary, and get her disposed of in a nunnery. She made no mention of such a thing, but said she wanted to send her as a companion and governess to her cousin, the Countess of Traquair, who she knew generally went abroad every year and had plenty of interest. Mary was obsequious and rather fond of the change, but it took all Lady Langley's eloquence to persuade the two old dames to part with her, and strange to say, Mrs. Clark was by far the most obstinate in yielding and affected at parting with her.

The Earl of Traquair's chaplain and livery-servant at length arrived by appointment, and after a great deal of kissing and crying, Mary, mounted on a fine palfrey, rode cheerfully away with her ghostly conductor; the livery-man's horse being quite laden with necessaries which the good old woman forced her to take along with her.

I could never find out what road they took for the castle of Traquair. A printed account of the transaction that I have seen says they were going to lodge that night with a sort of broken or deposed clergyman at a place called Braeger, so that it is probable it was at the steps of Glen-dearg that they encountered a horde of men and women, lodging in two tents in which fires were blazing, and plenty of noise and singing going on, while the bagpipe was lending its loudest strains to the chorus. The priest was frightened, as well he might, for he knew by the inimitable strains of the bagpipe which he had frequently heard, that the carollers were the Faas, a reckless tribe of gipsies that generally travelled twenty-four strong, and through all the country took and did whatever they listed, but who never visited any place more then once in a year, and those who were civil to them they would not wrong, but reaved without scruple from their adversaries.

The priest as I said was not at all at his ease, but to get off the road at the steps was impossible, and to return back over the dreary path they had passed was both cowardly and inconvenient, so the three were obliged to pass on. But to get by unperceived was impracticable. The horses stopped and snorted, and the dogs of the gipsies bayed, until out sallied a body of the Faas, and without ceremony seized the three hapless travellers and bore them in to the chief, taking care meantime to secure their horses out of sight.

What a scene was there! There was plenty of lamb and mutton roasting and stewing, which the gipsies, with the help of their dogs, had reaved from the flocks that fed all around them, and plenty of the best French brandy, for they were smugglers as well as gipsies. Now the man who seized Mary and

carried her into the gipsy's tent was no other than the celebrated Gordon Faa, the piper; which she knew by this token, that every step which he took with her, the great drone uttered a groan, she having some way pressed against the bag, to the infinite amusement of the gang, who screamed with laughter at the piper and his splendid load.

The smell of the viands was so delicious that, truth to say, the chaplain eyed them as ascending from the cauldron with great satisfaction, and after blessing the good things in Latin, partook most liberally of them, as well as of the brandy. He knew the chief, and named him by his name, Lord John Faa. He also knew the piper, naming him, so that no doubt of the identity of the priest remained. The Lord Traquair of that day was a great and good man, respected over all Scotland, and by this wandering horde as much as any; nothing therefore could exceed the kindness of the gang to their guests, and it must be acknowledged that both the priest and servant enjoyed themselves exceedingly, for they really felt that they were much more comfortable than they could possibly have been with the broken curate at Braeger. Not so with poor Mary. It was a scene of rudeness, roughness, and recklessness, of which she had never even dreamed, and the gipsy women were by far the worst. And moreover Gordon Faa, the piper, who kept close by her, plagued her with his assiduities, looking upon her as his lawful prize, although again and again snubbed both by the stern looks and degrading taunts of his chief, John Faa, lord of Little Egypt, who at length drove him into the secondary tent, leaving none in that tent save his mother, two brethren, the priest, Mary, and himself. They slept on rushes; but as Mary refused to lie down, the chief like a gentleman sat and watched with her. As soon as all were quiet, he proposed at once to make her queen of the gipsies, assuring her that no lady in the land should fare better or be better attended. She tried to turn it into a jest, and said she was already engaged to the piper. Lord John let her know that he was jesting none about the matter, and told her that Gordon the piper was a low dastardly poltroon, whom he, John Faa, could snuff out like a candle, and not so much as burn his fingers on him.

"I beg your pardon, Sir Sovereign," said Mary. "Now, in my opinion, the piper is the most proper man of the two, and as I am engaged to him it is most ungenerous in you to propose taking me from your kinsman."

"I would take you from my brother," said he, "for of all the women I have ever seen on earth you are the most beautiful. But, believe me, it would be wise and prudent in you to acquiesce in my proposal. It will be the better for you, because what you refuse me on friendly terms, I am resolved to take by force."

"I must first hear what my conductor and ghostly confessor says to that," said Mary. "And you yourself must also first procure the consent of the piper before we can proceed farther in this matter."

Now it so happened that there was only the thickness of the canvas between them and the jealous piper all this time, and he heard every word that was uttered, and took it all for earnest; and there was one other heard it, who, to all appearance, was the soundest sleeper there, and that was the chief's mother, the queen-dowager of the gipsies; and as she both adored and dreaded her son, she resolved to further his views in the attainment of his object, a queen of the gipsies, that would not only do them credit, but astonish all the country.

The next morning they packed up their baggage in a time unaccountably short, and set off before sunrise. The priest asked for their horses and liberty to proceed, but the chief told them that he would conduct them in safety to Traquair gate, provided he would marry him to that young lady, with whom he was resolved never to part. But if he refused to do that, perhaps—he—would not be permitted—to go much farther.

The chaplain's blood ran chill to his heart, for he knew with whom he had to do, a gang that accounted no more of the lives of men than of sheep. "If I have the consent of parties," said he with a pale and quivering lip, "why then I can have no objections."

"How can you say so, father Crosbie!" said Mary; "would you marry me to the chief of a lawless gang of outlaws, vagabonds, the terror and disgrace of the country. Be assured then, once for all, that I would rather die a thousand deaths than submit to such a degradation."

"Don't just say so far, young madam," said the old gipsy queen, "we'll see about that by and by."

"Well, well, we'll not say any more about these matters just now," said the chief. "But as we are all going the same road, let us journey on together till breakfast-time, and when we have got a hearty meal, we shall either remain together or part good friends."

The chaplain, who would gladly have been off, answered mildly, "Why, now begging your honour's pardon, I think we had better proceed by ourselves. You are the very best of fellows, and the best of landlords, but think what will be said through the country if the Earl of Traquair's chaplain, a gentleman in holy orders, and a lady belonging to that great family, should be seen travelling through the country with the gipsies?"

"There is no one to see us here," said Lord John, "for no one dares to come near us as we pass out of the way, therefore let us journey on till we breakfast together, which will not be before eleven, as we take always only two hearty meals a-day."

Some went a-fishing, some went a-shooting, and some a-reaving, and as appointed, they all met at a place called Back-Burn at eleven to breakfast. They had plenty of fine trout, some of the birds now

called *game*, and both lamb and mutton beside; and after both men and women had partaken of a full quaigh of brandy, they sat down to a hearty breakfast, and then, after another quaigh of brandy, the chief said, "Now, Sir Priest, proceed we to business, if you please, and join this young woman's hand with mine, as nothing less than such a ceremony will satisfy the consciences of women."

Here the piper came forward, bonnet in hand, and thus addressed his chief: "My lord, how is it that I should be forced to remind you of the unaltered and inviolable law of this and all well regulated communities regarding spulzie; you know too well that it is, that whoever first finds the prize and takes possession, is the legal owner, without dispute and without reference; you have therefore no right nor claim to that young maiden. She is mine. And before our kinsmen I make my appeal, and dare you to touch her so much as with one of your fingers."

Lord John Faa stood up curling his dark lip, while his mustachios moved up and down like the whiskers of a cat with rage. "Thou butterfly! Thou moth! Thou thing of wind and whistles! Darest thou for thy heart's blood speak thus to me?"

"Yes, I dare!" said the piper, "for I ask only justice."

"Then take that as a part of thy measure of it," said the chief, aiming a tremendous blow at the piper's left temple. But Gordon Faa the piper was a proper man though in a subordinate capacity; he broke the force of his assailant's stroke with his left elbow, and returned it with such interest that he laid his chief flat on the green, where he lay motionless, with the blood gushing from his mouth and nose, right before the entrance of his tent. The piper, instantly struck with the enormity of his offence, turned his back and fled, and in the hurry of lending assistance to the chief, no one noted this till the old gipsy queen called out, "Is the dog to be allowed to escape thus?" On which Ellick Faa, the chief's brother, threw off his coat, drew a rapier, and pursued him.

There was not one of the sept, however, a match for the piper in speed, which had often been proved before, and at this time terror increasing it he shot away from his pursuers like a hare from a collie-dog. Another brother perceiving this, pursued also, and the chief, recovering from the stunning blow, followed behind, calling on his brothers to stop, but they neither heard nor regarded. Some of Gordon the piper's near connections next followed, both men and women, and the path down the river over knowe and dell, was seen by the shepherds and peat-workers from the hills covered with a long line of gipsies, all running like mad people, and they said one to another, "There's some drunken fray among the Faas, an' it'll no settle without blood."

The piper kept quite a-head, and it is believed would have done so and far outran all his pursuers. What then tempted him to take earth is unaccountable, for though far a-head and out of sight of his pursuers, he bolted into the very first house he came to, which was the farm-house of Cosserhill. It so happened that there was not a soul in the house but one young girl, who was standing at the kitchen table baking bannocks. She knew Gordon Faa the piper, for she had danced to his strains only three days before, and she asked in astonishment "What's the matter? What's the matter? Guide us. Gordon, what's the matter?"

"Nae ill to you, deary; nae ill to you," said he, and flying into a corner of the milkhouse, he hid himself behind a salt barrel and a meal one. I can give the particulars of this catastrophe correctly, for it was the daughter of that girl who related the story to me again and again when I was a boy. Her name was Tibby Scott, and she lived with an only daughter at Craig-hill on Lord Napier's land, and I am sure is still remembered by many living.

"What's the matter, Gordon?" said she. "Nae ill to you, deary," said he. "But for God's sake dinna tell ony o' them that I'm here."

He had not well done speaking when Ellick Faa entered, with his thirsty rapier ready in his hand. "Did you see a man, lassie?" said he, hurriedly; "did you see a man? Saw you aughts o' our piper here?"

"Na," said she, as if quite surprised by the question, on which Ellick uttered an oath and ran again to the door. But the view from that house being very extensive all around, and he seeing no one flying, returned again into the house, and said, "Oh d— him, he must be here!" and instantly commenced a search, when the panting of the piper soon led to his discovery. Ellick seized him by the neck, and dragged him out to the middle of the kitchen-floor, while the piper seemed to be deprived of all power either to plead or fight, but arms he had none. Ellick trailed him out on his back, and setting his foot on his throat, he stabbed him through the heart. He was standing on him with both his feet, the girl said, and when he pulled out his rapier from his breast, the blood spouted upwards against the loft. The piper died instantly.

That blood remained on those joists and flooring for a century, and I have often looked at it myself in the old farm-house of Cosserhill, with a sort of awe and terror, although only a memorial of former days. The chief's younger brother next arrived, and likewise ran his weapon through the body of the piper, but it hardly shivered, he having been run through the heart at the first. The chief next arrived, with his face and breast covered with blood; but his rage and grief when he saw Gordon the piper was murdered is past describing. He cursed his brethren for their impetuosity, and the girl was wont to say, that she believed if he had had a weapon in his hand, he would have slain them both. When his rage had somewhat subsided, he lamented his fallen kinsman in the most dolorous and pathetic

terms, and wept like a child over him, saying, "Thou art foully slain, Gordon, thou art foully slain! and I would rather it had been myself, or either of them, than thou. For it was I who was the aggressor! yes, it was I—it was I!"

Sundry others arrived, both men and women, and great was the lamentation for the fall of the piper, and dreadful the execrations on his murderers. They then took the byre door from its hinges, stretched the ghastly corpse upon that, and bore him back to the tent, where they wrapped the body up in linen and woollen, and buried it on the very spot where his chief fell when he knocked him down, and where his grave is to be seen to this day, on Brockhope Ridge—and with one stone at the head, and another at the feet: a dreadful lesson to the insubordinate members of all clans.

In the meantime, while this horrible and fatal affray was going on, and the gipsy men all away, the priest and livery-servant made their escape; mounting their steeds, they rode with all their might, and reached the castle of Traquair before it was quite dark, where they related their grievous story, but not truly, to save themselves from the shame of leaving Mary behind. The truth was, that the priest pleaded very hard that Mary should accompany him; but the old gipsy queen, and the other women that remained at the tent, would not suffer her to depart, but held her by force. The priest threatened her with the vengeance of Lord Traquair, and said he would send an armed body of men at once, who would not only take the young lady from them, but cut them all to pieces. But the old hag is said to have answered him in these bitter words:—

"Ay, gang or ride your ways, and warn the Earl o' Traquair. We dinna gie *that* for him (snapping her fingers). An' afore ye win the Kirk-rigg, we'll mak her she sanna be worth the sending for, nor will she gang wi' ye if ye wad tak her."

Mary cried most bitterly, and entreated the priest by all that he held sacred, to remain with her and be her protector; but he was glad to escape with life and limb, and left Mary in a swoon, held down by three gipsy women. Therefore when he went to Traquair, he said that they had fallen in with the powerful gipsy gang called the Faas, and that the young lady for whom they were sent, rather chose to remain with them and be their queen, than come to Traquair to be a servant. Lady Traquair would not believe this report, after the letters she had had from her cousin, but the earl believed it, and sent no succour.

But there is a Power far above that of the nobles of the earth that watches over truth and innocence; and Mary failed not at every interval of hateful persecution in this dreadful dilemma, to implore protection of Heaven; and her prayers were heard, for she *was* delivered, and that in a most wonderful manner.

When the gang returned with the mangled and bloody corpse of the piper, her feelings received a fearful shock. She expected nothing but death from those lawless ruffians; but it was not death so much as dishonour that she dreaded: and after the gipsy queen's speech to the priest, she had good reasons for dreading both. She however seized a clasp knife, and concealed it in her bosom, resolved, if any violence was offered to her, to stab the aggressor, and if unable to accomplish that, to stab herself. But the old gipsy queen either missed the knife, which was a sort of closing dagger, and a most insidious and dangerous weapon, or some way or other suspected Mary's design, for the three hags laid all hold of her at once, forced the knife from her, and tied her hands behind her back.

When the piper's burial was over, the chief was very down-hearted and out of tune. He was angry that the chaplain was gone; he was angry that the young lady was detained against her will, and her hands bound behind her back. In short, he was angry with everything, and ordered his mother to let Mary depart; for he had no heart to compel her to submit to his will by force.

"Not by force!" said she. "How then should a queen of the Egyptians be wooed but by force! I thought I had a noble and daring son of thee, but I have only a chicken-hearted craven! Where could you find such another queen as this thrust upon you by chance? The like of her is not in broad Scotland; and after proposing the thing, to draw back! Faugh! force forsooth! Where lives the maiden who does not like to be forced to some things! I—ay, I was laid on the bride-bed with your father, with my hands tied behind my back; and what I was obliged to submit to, my daughter-in-law may well submit to after me. I would not have a queen of our brave and ancient tribe who was not taken by force, because otherwise she would not be worth having. Win her and wear her, say I. There she lies at your command. Lord Traquair may send for her to-morrow, but I sent him word, that before that time he should find her not worth the taking; and neither would she go with his men if he would take her. Come, comrades, let us take a walk up by the Back-Burn, and leave the young couple by themselves."

Mary was then left in the tent with Lord John Faa, with her hands tied behind her back. He had, however, used no violence with Mary, for she all her life spoke of him with respect. He had perhaps offered some—for it seems that he discovered the cross in her bosom, which at once struck him speechless and motionless. This golden cross, be it remembered, was a very affecting thing. It was an effigy of the Saviour on the cross, with large rubies for the nails, and smaller ones resembling the streaming of the blood. The savage, who certainly had known something about the Christian revelation, was so struck with the sight of this apparently bloody cross, that he shrunk back speechless and horrified, while Mary, seeing his perturbed looks, appeared as

much terrified as he. At length, with a quivering lip, he spoke words to the following purpose—"Lady, you are the favoured of Heaven; and rather than offer any violence to that pure and lovely frame, would I spill my own heart's blood. You are free. Here I loose you with my own hands, and fear not that one of our tribe dare so much as touch you with a foul finger."

Poor Mary was so overjoyed at this miraculous relief, that she kneeled at her deliverer's feet, and embraced his knees; and then, how astonished was the old reckless queen and her associates, at seeing the chief and the beauty meeting them walking arm in arm. The gipsies, of course, formed conclusions wide of the truth.

But that very afternoon the chief mounted Mary on her own palfrey, and he and his two brethren accompanied her as far as a place called Corse Cleuch, where she got the room to sleep in and they the barn; and the next day they set her safely down at Traquair gate, with everything pertaining to her. Lord and Lady Traquair were highly pleased with the generosity and kindness of this roving barbarian chief, and it was thought (but to the truth of this I cannot speak) that it was through the earl's powerful interest that there was never any cognizance taken of the piper's murder. It was as likely to have been occasioned by the times being so terribly out of joint: but so it was, that the two brothers escaped with impunity.

As for Mary, she seemed to have been born to a life of wild romance; for no sooner had she shown her face at Traquair than John Stewart, second son to the earl, and denominated the Tutor of Caberston, fell desperately in love with her, and intreated of his parents permission to marry her. They were highly indignant at the proposal, but finding him obstinately intent on his purpose, they were obliged to apply to Mary herself, and rely on her prudence. She was aware how well the young gentleman loved, and also how advantageous the match would have been; for he was afterwards Earl of Traquair. But she listened to the admonitions of her new guardians, and the next time the Tutor addressed her, she gave him such a lecture on his imprudence in proposing such a thing, and of their great inequality in life, he being the son of a powerful nobleman, and she a poor nameless foundling, unacknowledged by any one, that the young man was astonished, but nowise diverted from his purpose; for in place of that, when he found her so disinterested, his love glowed fiercer than ever, and he determined at all hazards on making her his wife.

Mary told the countess everything candidly, and all the gentleman's vehement protestations; and that acute lady perceived that, knowing her son's temper and disposition, there was nothing for it but separating them. She therefore persuaded her two sons, Charles and John, to go on a visit to their relations in Nithsdale; and in the meantime she smuggled off Mary for France, in company with two of her daughters, the Ladies Lucy and Ann, with charges to them to get her introduced into the convent of Maisendue, with which the Scottish Catholic nobility were all connected: so off they set to Edinburgh in the earl's huge lumbering carriage, and did not reach that city until it was dark on an autumn day, when they alighted at the earl's house in the Canongate.

Mary had not well set foot on the pavement, when one touched her arm and said, "Mary, I want to speak with you."

Mary thought she knew the voice, and turned aside with the woman without hesitation. It was her unfailing friend Christy, who never lost sight of her except one of the nights she was detained by the gipsies. On the very day that Mary left Langley-Dale, poor Christy vanished from Mrs. Clark's cottage. Whoever reads this will suppose that then she had gone home to her own dwelling at Thickside, but, alas! Thickside was no more her dwelling; the Beatsons had been extirpated, and their ancient feudal territory parted among the Scotts, and John of Thickside and his sons had shared in the fate of their brethren. So Christy had made up her mind to stick by her adopted daughter. She was sure she was a lady of quality, but who she was, or what she was, remained a mystery. The good woman, however, had plenty of tokens to prove her protegee's origin if ever she should be claimed; in particular, the gold and ruby cross, which was locked about her neck, and hung down on her breast, was one that could never be disputed. She followed her to Traquair, and was there a day before her; and ere she left home she got some intelligence that Mary was destined for a foreign convent. While Mary was at Traquair, Christy was refused admittance to her, and never saw her; but when she set off for Edinburgh, she set off also, and was there before her, and contrived to get the first word of her on her alighting from the carriage, and with the bustle and confusion of taking out the ladies and the luggage, Mary's retreat was never noted.

"My dearest Mary," said Christy, "leave these great people at once and retire again with me. Your doom is fixed if you refuse this, and you are to be sent to France and confined within the walls of a nunnery for life."

"But do you not think, mother, that a life devoted to religion is the best life that a woman can lead?" said Mary.

"No, no, Mary, that was not the end of woman's creation. She was made for the nourishing of the immortal mind, and bringing up beings for eternity, and therefore it is mean and selfish in her to care only for herself. For my part, I would rather see you take the evil and good things of life as they come, to be a wife and a mother, than have you immured in a convent, even though that secured you of heaven at last."

With arguments of this tendency, expressed in more homely but more forcible language, she persuaded Mary to elope with her, and abandon her noble friends and her luggage for ever. So the two went to the house of a Mistress Jardine, in a place called Alison Square. She was cousin german to Christy, and had often spent a few weeks with her at Thickside, and with that lady they took up their lodgings and lived in style, for Christy had plenty of the good red gold with her, and they lived at least as well as the ladies of Traquair did in their grand house in the Canongate. Christy also bought her darling several appropriate dresses, so that at this time Mary was really an angel in loveliness.

Great was the stir among the earl's people when it was discovered that Mary was missing. It was the most unaccountable thing ever known! that a young lady should vanish stepping out of a coach, who had not an acquaintance, male or female, in Edinburgh, and leave all her baggage to whomsoever pleased to take possession of it. None could give any account of her, save that one page said he saw her step aside on the plain stones, speaking to an elderly woman, but that being called on at the time, he saw no more. The very worst construction was thus put on poor Mary's elopement, for sooth to say, the Traquair young ladies hated her, finding they never could catch a glance from a gentleman when Mary was present, and they now asserted that their chaplain had told the truth, that she had remained a night with the gipsy chief of her own free choice, and had now gone off with a lady of the town, of whom she could know nothing, on the very first hint; and they charitably concluded that she was an undone creature, and that her personal beauty had been given her for her ruin.

In the meanwhile, the Tutor of Caberston returned from his visit to Nithsdale, and when he found that his darling Mary was smuggled away from him in rather an equivocal manner, his rage was quite boundless. He accused his mother fiercely to her face, and told her he would follow that inimitable girl to the limits of the earth, and defied the machinations of man or woman to deter him from the attainment of her. So mounting his horse he galloped straight to Edinburgh, determined, if she had gone on shipboard, to follow her straight to France and prevent her taking the veil; but on reaching his father's house in Edinburgh, and finding that Mary was a-missing, his chagrin surpassed all bounds, and to their evil insinuations regarding her, he not only turned a deaf ear, but cursed them all for a parcel of affected fools and idiots, ever to suppose that guilt or deceit could lurk beneath a face and form like those of Mary Melville. In short, Lord John, or the Tutor, as he was commonly called, was in such a rage, and in such chagrin that the family were distressed, and even frightened about him. And when he was just at the worst, behold there arrived his half-cousin, George Maxwell, in search of the same lost beauty, and came straight to the earl's house, his nearest kinsman, in Edinburgh.

The Tutor was happy at meeting him, being so much interested in the same discovery. They were very like each other, exactly of the same age, and though only half-cousins, there was a family resemblance between them that was most singular: and when dressed in the same way (and it is well known that the dresses of gentlemen, as well as ladies, were very formal in those days), no one could distinguish the one from the other.

They agreed between themselves to search for Mary Melville till they found her, if she was alive, and in Scotland, and that no ill blood might be between them, to leave the appeal entirely to herself when found. It was not easy to find any one in Edinburgh then. There was no half-dozen of papers with advertisements going every day. There was nothing to rely on but bodily exertion and ocular proof. There was only one street in Edinburgh then; the High Street and the Canongate, which is a continuation of the former, stretching from the castle to the palace. That street our two young lovers traversed every day, but always traversed it in vain. They attended at the private meetings of the Catholics, but they found her not. They went to every public place—to every popular meeting, whether sacred or civil, but Mary they could not discover.

As they were walking up the Lawnmarket towards the castle one day, a lady, a perfect angel in beauty, dressed in green silk, with a green turban and feathers, beckoned to them across half the street. They returned the salute, and walked on for a long time in perfect silence. "Who in the world is that?" said Maxwell.

"I think she is one of the Ladies Gordon," said Lord John, "I don't know any other ladies of rank, and she is very like them in her stately manner and superb dress. She is, however, a beautiful young creature."

They walked on in silence again, until coming up to the Castle-hill. "My Lord John," said Maxwell, "it strikes me that that lady who smiled and beckoned to us was no other than Mary Melville, the young lady for whom we are so anxiously searching.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Lord John. "She is in my opinion, Lady Mary Gordon." But then stopping, and making himself some inches higher, he exclaimed, "Good heavens, is it possible that that exquisite splendid being could be Mary Melville?"

"There is something, my lord, that schoolfellows never forget," said Maxwell, "and there was a smile and some dimples yonder which I am sure could be nobody's but Mary's!"

"Let us follow then," said the Tutor, "and trace her to her domicile. She is worth the looking after at all events. If that really was Mary, what a jewel!"

The two kinsmen then wheeled round and pursued down the High Street, but did not overtake the two ladies, as they had turned off to the right for the Horse Wynd, that led to their lodgings. Shortly after that, Maxwell fell sick, either from disappointed love, or of vexation at the insinuations constantly poured into his ears against his adored Mary. However, sick he grew and took to bed, and his physician said it was agitation of mind that caused his illness.

The Tutor was now left to prowl about by himself, which he did every day, always keeping a sharp look-out for the lady dressed in green silk; and one day, when he was taking a look at the palace of Holyrood, the splendid home of his royal relatives, whom should he meet face to face in the gallery but the identical lady in green silk, his admired Mary Melville, leaning on the arm of old Christy of Thickside.

"Miss Melville!" exclaimed he, "Blessed be all the powers above that I have at last found you out!"

"And pray, wherefore, sir?" said Mary.

"Because, with your dear permission, we shall never part again," said he.

"It will be very long before you attain that, sir?" said Mary, rather saucily. "I know my distance better, and have got some feeling lectures about that before now."

And with that she moved off along the gallery, making the plumes in her turban nod in a rather disdainful manner. "Mary! my dear Mary!" cried Christy, "pray, whaten a bee has gotten into your head the day? Are ye gane daft, lassie?" But Mary capered on, and down the stair she went. Christy ran back to Lord John, taking him all the while, be it noted, for George Maxwell, and making a real country curtsey, said, "Dear, dear, sir! Ye see Mary has ta'en some o' her tantrums the day. They're queer creatures, thae young women! It's impossible to comprehend them. For I can tell you ae thing, that she likes you better than baith her meat an' her drink. Ay, than either her right hand or her right ee, or than a' the men o' Scotland put thegither. An' tak ye an auld fool's word for't, ye're as sure o' her as ye're sure o' your denner the day. In an honourable way, that's to say."

"Thank you, thank you, for the dear information!" said the Tutor; at the same time holding out a handful of silver and gold pieces to her.

"Na, na! Na, na! I want nane o' your siller an' gowd, sir!" cried Christy, holding her closed fist above her head. "Mary has mair gowd than baith her an' I can count, or ever will be able to count a' our days, I believe. Na, na! Keep your siller to replenish your house when you get Mary, for I assure ye that will be to do, and in some style too! Only this I can assure ye o', if you want to hae Mary in an honourable way ye're sure o' her."

Lord John stood like a statue, saying within himself, "The daughter of a nobleman! More gold than she will ever be able to count? Of a Catholic nobleman, who died for the cause; and such a jewel for beauty! In love with me too! I'll have her in spite of all the kinsmen and kinswomen on earth. I'll have Mary Melville! Yes, I'll have her to myself, let them all say what they will."

Christy hurried after her darling and adopted daughter, and overtaking her in the area, she said, "Dear, dear, Mary! What gart ye take the strunts at the young laird the day? Ye ken how weel he likes ye, an' I ken gayen weel how somebody likes him. I canna understand thae dortie fits. I'm sure when I was young, I never took ony o' thae dortie fits at the man I liket, except aince by the by."

"Stop, stop, dear mother Christy! What are ye speaking about!" said Mary. "Yon young gentleman was no other than the Lord John Stewart of Traquair, or the Tutor of Caberston, as he is called. He is a youth of a haughty and imperious temper, and of a high though amiable family; but, in short, a young nobleman whom I would no more think of marrying than the Prince of Wales, to be a discredit to his high and proud ancestry. He made love to me before, but I like him very ill."

"Dear Mary, if yon be nae George Maxwell, the Laird of Langley, I never saw him."

"I tell you he's no more the Laird of Langley than you are, but the Lord John Stewart, the Tutor of Caberston."

"Then what hae I done, Mary! What hae I done! I told him that I was sure he had your heart, an' that if he axed you in an honourable way he should hae you, I e'en gae him my word o' honour on it."

"Then you have done very wrong, mother Christy, and that which may lead to much ill. He is only George Maxwell's half-cousin, and I know there is a singular family likeness between them. But could you not distinguish the impetuous and haughty looks of the one from the modest and respectful looks of the other? Ah! there is something in the features of early school-fellows which never can be forgotten, and which even a half or a whole century could not efface from the mind. Had he been George Maxwell of Langley, my mischievous and teazing youthful playmate, I do assure you my behaviour would have been far otherwise. But I understand he is living in the same house with his cousins, and a great favourite there, so that I have but a small chance of any further notice from him. But it shall be long before I make any efforts to obtain it."

"Ah, ye hae a prood speerit, Mary! An' its proper an' fitting that ye should too! for I ken mair about ye than ye ken yoursel, if some reports be true. But ye sal never hear them frae me, unless I can reach the foundation o' them."

"Hush, hush!" said Mary. "See, there is the Lord John Stewart following us; and as I am firmly

resolved to resist his proffers, whatever they may be, I beg that we may elude him some way or other, that I may not be harassed by his courtship."

"Ye're a queer lassie, Mary; for I wad think the offer of a young nobleman for a husband was no that bad."

They however went into a nobleman's house on the right-hand side of the Potter Row, and as soon as the Tutor saw them fairly housed, he ran home, and hasting up to Maxwell, who was sitting in his room with a napkin about his head, and some cordials or medicines beside him, told him that he had met with Mary Melville, and though he had not got her verbal consent to marry him, he had gotten that of the old dame who had the charge of her. That she was really the most lovely creature that ever trode the face of the earth. And as Lord John seems to have been a forthright honest fellow, he told him at once where she lived.

George Maxwell arose and dressed himself, ill as he was, and went straight to the nobleman's house, and desired to speak to Miss Melville. No such person was known there. Maxwell retired modestly as one who had been hoaxed, and just at the door he met the Tutor, who gave him a look of high offence, as if he thought he had been taking advantage of him.

"She is not here, my lord," said Maxwell.

"Not here?" said he, "I know better;" and rapping loudly, a footman came to the door, when Lord John asked for Miss Mary Melville.

"I know of no such lady, sir," said the footman. "But as you asked the same question not five minutes ago, pray may I request your address?"

"Lord John Stewart of Traquair," said he.

Now it so happened that the Earl of Traquair had been the lord of the mansion's great friend and patron. I think his name was Anstruther, a baronet, and one of the judges of the Court of Session; so when he heard Lord John announce his name, he hastened into the lobby, welcomed him, and compelled him to come in and be introduced to his family, loading him with every sort of attention and kindness, and then inquired jocularly who the Miss Melville was whom he was asking so anxiously after.

The Tutor answered that she was a young lady who had been recommended to the care of his father and mother, but that she had eloped from them, and they were most anxious to recover her, as she was an heiress, and the daughter of a nobleman who had suffered for his adherence to the cause of King Charles.

"Melville, Melville!" said the judge. "There must be some mistake, for no nobleman of that name in Britain has suffered either in person or forfeiture for such adherence. Are you sure she is not Lady Mary Montgomery? She would, indeed, be worth looking after."

"No; we have known her always only by the name of Miss Melville."

"Then it is some deception, Lord John; some cheat, depend on it, and the less you trouble yourself about her the better. Come, look round you; what think you of my daughters here!"

Lord John did look round the room, for how could he avoid it? He perceived there was one of the young ladies very pretty. She chanced to be a young widow with a fortune, but he thought no more of it at that time. The judge then said jocularly, "But my dear Lord John, what tempted you to suppose that this lost sheep, this stray runaway beauty of yours, could be an inmate here?"

"For the best of all reasons," said the Tutor. "For I traced her into your door—saw her admitted and welcomed."

"That is the most singular circumstance I ever heard," said the judge. But seeing his three daughters begin to titter and blush, and look very sly to one another, he asked an explanation. They would not give it, but laughed louder, blushed deeper and bowed down their faces to their knees.

"I don't understand this at all," said the judge. "My Lord John, can you explain it to me! There must be something under this. I beg, my dear girls, that you will explain what you mean. Was Miss Melville really here yesterday?"

"Why, sir, it is rather an awkward circumstance, and I pity the noble young gentleman with all my heart," said the handsome widow. "But the truth is that there *was* a lady here yesterday, a young lady clad in green—a very fine girl, but accompanied by an old plain country-looking dame. They were ushered in here, and the young lady begged pardon and said that she was watched and haunted by a gentleman whom she disliked exceedingly, and whom she wished by all means to elude, and that she was obliged to take shelter in our house to mislead him. She stood at that window and watched until he went out of sight, and then took her leave. She was quite a lady—a very fine girl indeed! But from the appearance of her patroness, I would not say that she is any better than she should be."

Lord John's face grew red, then pale, and then red again, yet he could not help giving a sly smile to the lovely and wicked widow. He rose to go away, but the baronet and judge compelled him to stay to a family dinner, declaring at the same time that he had been more obliged to his father than any man on earth.

When the footman admitted Lord John, he took him for the same gentleman who had called a few minutes before, for everybody mistook the one cousin for the other, their dress and looks being precisely the same, so he shut the door, and Maxwell was left by himself, to saunter about in the street and do as he liked. In less than five minutes who should appear but the lovely Mary Melville and old Christy of Thickside? Maxwell ran to them, and never was a lover better received. When he took Mary's hand and kissed it, the tears streamed down her cheeks,

and the three all returned straight back to Mrs. Jardine's again, to Mary's lodgings. Everything was soon understood between them. Their hearts had both understood it before, and it appeared at once that they were inseparable.

"Now, dear, dear Mary, just tell me this," said Christy. "Will ye ever presoom to say or pretend that that's no the gentleman we met in Holyrood-house the tither day, wha I promised you to—in an honourable way, that's to say?"

"No more than I am you or you me, Christy. Do you think old schoolfellows can ever forget one another! Never! If you knew how oft I had been between these now broad shoulders, and how oft pinched and tickled by those mischievous hands, you would not suppose I could mistake his face again."

"Aih, wow, sirs! But there's mony wonderfu' things i' this warld! An' mony wonderfu' changes!" exclaimed Christy. "But love biziness gangs on the same an' the same for ever! Aye love an' aye love! and aye generation an' generation! frae the weary day that our auld father Aedie fell to this day; and some think that was the very thing that brak him too."

"Whisht, whisht!" said Maxwell, "and inquire at Mrs. Jardine if she has any room for me, for my cousin John Stewart is so violently in love with Mary, and such a violent young man altogether, that I would rather live beside you or near you than in the earl's family. It would be so delightful to see you every day."

Mrs. Jardine could not spare him a parlour and bedroom, but she got him both right opposite, from which, though he could not properly speak, he could make signs every hour of the day; so that the two lovers generally spent the greater part of the day together, walked together, took their meals together; but on Sunday, going to a private chapel together, who should they meet in front of the altar but Lord John Stewart. Mary was dressed in pure white that day, with a white gauze veil, and no man could conceive an angel, far less a virgin, more lovely. When Lord John saw them enter arm in arm, his countenance flamed with rage. He was in love with Mary, fervently, deeply in love: and after the agreement he had made with his kinsman, he conceived himself undermined and insulted; and as Maxwell had left his father's house in the Canongate privately, he weened that Maxwell himself was conscious of the advantage he had taken. So, on leaving mass, he came sternly up and asked his cousin's address, which was given without reserve, and that same evening, Sunday though it was, Lord John sent him a challenge by the hand of Lord Adam Gordon. Maxwell would willingly have entered into an explanation; but Lord Adam, who was likewise the Tutor's cousin, had no such instructions, so he refused all kind of capitulation, and the challenge was of course accepted, the place appointed, and everything settled for the next morning at sun-rising.

But now a particular difficulty occurred to Maxwell. Where was he to find a second? He had not one gentleman acquaintance in Edinburgh, save Lord John Stewart himself. There was, he knew, a sort of writer body, who had done a good deal of business faithfully for the late Mr. Maxwell, his father, and also for himself in his minority, whose name was Johny Fairbairn; so, considering him a friend, he ran to him and told him his circumstances, begging of him to be his second, and telling him at the same time that he was the only son of his old friend Mr. Maxwell of Langley.

The writer was sitting in his little snug parlour at the top of three stairs in St. James's Court, reading his Bible, that day being (as may be remembered) the Sabbath. But when he heard the young man's name and request, instead of appearing distressed, he seemed to regard him with laughter and contempt.

"Ay, ay, man," said he, "so thou's the son o' my first an' best friend, George Maxwell? An' thou's gawn to thraw away thy life in a sinfu' combat, likely about some wench, without thinking what is to become of thy mother and of the family name. O, man! thou's a great fule! An' then to think that Johny Fairbairn wad bear thee out in sickan madness! That's the maist ridiculous o' the hale! But there's ae thing I can do for thee, which is mainly requisite. I'll draw out thy testment. It shall only cost thee ten puns."

George Maxwell stood thoughtful for a few minutes, and then said, "By the by, that should have been done. But there is no time now. I must go and look after a second. The thing is settled."

"Now stop, my dear callant, and think for a wee," said Johny, "an' I'll convince ye that ye're ane of the greatest fules in the warld. The morn's morning ye maun either murder a kinsman, or he may murder you. If ye murder him, ye will leeve a miserable life o' remorse, an' be passed into hell-fire at last, like a bouking o' foul blankets into a tub. An' gin he murder thee, which is the maist likely o' the twa, how do you think thou'lt set up thy face to thy Maker, or what wilt thou say for thyself? Couldst thou really hae the assurance to say, 'It happened that a friend of mine an' I fell out about a wench, an' then it grew an affair o' honour, an' I hae thrown away my life, there's nae doubt o't?' What think'st thou the Judge's answer wad be to thee? I think I can tell thee. It wad be, 'Tak him awa' wi' his honour, an' plunge him into the hottest brimstone, an' let him there ken the value o' his tint honour.'"

Maxwell could not stand this satire. He found he had come to the wrong man, so he turned his back and fled; but the satiric limb of the law followed, calling out, "Na, na, stop. I's no done wi' thee yet. Thou hast forgot the testment an' the ten puns. Ah, fule, fule, fule!" added he as Maxwell's feet blattered down the lowest stair.

Maxwell was now hard put to it, for there was not one individual in or near Edinburgh of whom he had the least knowledge, but with the bee honour in his head, and half crazed with that and some inward gnawings, he ran up toward the castle, to try if any one officer there would stand his second. But in going up the castle hill a curious chance befell him. He perceived a fine-looking young gentleman sitting apparently much interested in the view toward the north, so he joined him and asked him the names of such and such places, and at once perceived from his dialect that he was from his own country. "I perceive, sir, that you are a gentleman: in that no one can be mistaken," said Maxwell, the duel alone occupying his mind. The stranger stared in his face, and thought him mad. "I am unknown here, sir, and I think from your tongue that you are from my own country. Pray, will you be so kind as stand my second in a duel to-morrow morning!"

"With all my heart," said the other, "for I know that none but a gentleman would either give or accept of a challenge. Therefore I am your man, depend on it. Name the place and hour."

"The place," said Maxwell, "is Nicholson's small park—the furthest away one. The time is at the sun-rising. I am George Maxwell of Langley, and my opponent is the Lord John Stewart of Traquair."

"And I am likewise George Maxwell," said the stranger; "a countryman and relation of your own. I am a younger son of the family of Springkell, and a student at the college here."

"Then God bless you for a noble-hearted fellow. We are indeed near relations, and both named after the same noble progenitor."

"Why I do not expect that God will bless me much the more for this undertaking. But a Borderer likes always to see a trick of his old trade. Nothing to him like a bout at crown-cracking. Pray, will I get a cuff at the second? Who is he?"

"I believe he is one of the young Gordons of Huntly, likewise a cousin of my own; so it unfortunately happens that we are all relations together who are engaged in this quarrel."

"Nay, he is no relation to me that I know of. I'll fight him. It is said that those Highlanders are good at the broadsword, or claymore as they call it. But if Lord Adam Gordon will fight me with the Border long cut-and-thirst, I will bet a hundred pounds to his twelve pennies on the issue. I wish you would give up your quarrel with Lord John Stewart to me. If I don't settle him, never trust a Maxwell again."

"This is the rarest fellow, that I ever met with!" thought the other Maxwell to himself, turning round and indulging in a burst of laughter. "No, no, my brave namesake, that will never do. I have accepted Lord John's challenge, and I'll fight him whatever may be the consequence. It is for all that is dear to me in life, to which he has no more right nor claim than you have."

"Ho! hem! I understand it! Well, I'll fight him for you, and lay no claim to the girl neither. Is it a bargain?"

"No, no; speak not of that, but meet me very early at my lodgings to-morrow morning."

"Never fear! I'll be with you, and I'll see you get justice too.

The opponents met next morning in a small inclosure, somewhere about where Rankeilor Street now is. And it having been agreed on that they were to fight with long two-edged swords, as was then the custom, before the word was given to begin, young Maxwell of Springkell said to the other second, "What, suppose we should also take a turn in the meantime, Lord Adam?"

"We have no quarrel, sir," said the other.

"No, true, we have no quarrel; but when friends are fighting, I hate to stand and look on. Please then, my lord, to draw!"

Lord Adam complied. The word was given, and the two pairs began at the same time. The Maxwells soon truly found with whom they had to do. In the course of from ten to fifteen seconds, Lord Adam disarmed his opponent without shedding a drop of his blood. The other was a very hard battle indeed, and it appeared to both the seconds that Maxwell had rather the best of it. At length they were both wounded—Maxwell seriously. Then was the time that the other Maxwell ought to have interposed and made peace, and for the neglect of that he was sore blamed afterwards. But he was stupified by his sudden defeat, and could do nothing but stand staring at Adam Gordon with a sword in either hand. At length Lord John wounded Maxwell for the third time, closed with him, threw him down, and had just his hand raised to run him through the heart, when Gordon seized his arm, and wrenched his sword from his hand, addressing him in terms so severe, that I do not choose to repeat them. He then led him from the field, but as he was forced away, he turned and said, with great bitterness, "I must go, since it is your will; but I'll have the lady still, in spite of his heart's blood."

As they were going off the field, Gordon turned round and struck his opponent's sword into the earth till it sunk to the hilt, saying, "There is your grand sword, Maxwell; I hope the next time you use it, you will use it better, and in a more legitimate cause."

Maxwell never got over that sudden defeat. Some said it broke his heart and killed him, as he deemed his arm unequalled. I think he died abroad, but am not certain.

Maxwell conducted his friend home, and Dr. Bennet dressed his wounds, expressing considerable doubts of his recovery. Mary attended him without the least restraint or affectation, wept over him, and blamed him sore for risking his life for her, adding one day, "Did you ever think that anybody could take me from you?"

It is impossible to conceive, far more to describe

how dear she became to Maxwell. He felt that she was the dearest part of his being, both soul and body, and that he never could exist without her. In the meantime, Lord John Stewart having found her out, offered her marriage in perfect sincerity, and was not a little astonished, as well as chagrined, when he found that she absolutely refused him; and he being a young nobleman of that wild impetuous temper that he could not brook opposition to his will in anything, told her plainly on going away, that he *would* have her, either by foul or fair means; that she might depend on.

This frightened her and her lover both, for they knew that Lord John would try to be as good as his word, and the two were married forthwith by a worthy old priest, who had been reduced by the change of times from the highest to the lowest grade of his profession; and even before George Maxwell was very fit for the journey, the two set out for Langley Dale on horseback: old Christy absolutely refusing to ride, took her foot for it, and was home before them.

Lord John took the best and most rational amends for his disappointment that any man could do, for the very next week he was married to the handsome young widow, Lady Weir, the daughter of his father's friend, Sir Philip Anstruther, the judge.

When George Maxwell and his lovely bride reached home, they were coldly received by Lady Langley, and informed, to their utter consternation, that they were not worth a farthing in the world, for that owing to the part that her late husband had acted with the royalist lords, the estate was sequestrated, as well as the furniture, even to the dishes and spoons, and everything to be sold by public auction, the forfeiture having passed the great seal. The estate was exposed to sale in the Royal Exchange at Edinburgh. No man offered money for it. Then came the roup of the household furniture and cattle, at which a great concourse of people attended, when, behold, an old country-looking wife bought up everything. At first she had to buy up some articles rather dear, nevertheless she would not let one of them go away; but soon a whisper ran that she was an agent for Lady Langley, and then, so high was the respect entertained for the old family, that no one would bid a farthing over old Christy's head. She got everything at her own price. She actually got richly-carved chairs at twopence a-piece, and splendid tables for sixpence each. The auctioneer was astonished, but all his eloquence signified nothing. He got many to laugh at him, but not one to bid him money save old Christy. He at length was driven to the alternative of just asking, "See, old lady, what will you give for this?" and then strike it off to her, whatever she offered. He at one time said, "Ladies and gentlemen, this is very remarkable. Certainly this old lady has bewitched you, and tongue-tied you every one, else you have no regard for your own interests. Here is a state-bed mounted in full, containing everything requisite for a king lying down in. I am sure this bed, as it stands, cost upwards of a hundred pounds. We shall begin it as low as thirty pounds. Who bids thirty pounds for it? Will nobody offer thirty pounds for this splendid piece of furniture, with mattresses, feather-beds, sheets, and coverlets? Only thirty pounds."

"I'll gie you thirty pennies for it, man; an' that's a fair offer frae ae friend till another."

"Old witch, that you are! I wish that you had been a hundred miles hence to-day!"

"Dear, what wad hae com'd o' your roup then?"

"But remember, old madam, that everything is to be ready money here to-day."

"Hout, na! ye'll surely gie me sax months' credit. It's the gate o' this coontry. We never pay aught in less than sax months."

"It must be on better security than you are likely to bring then."

"Oo, I'll gie you the government creditors for my security, as you an' them hae been sae muckle obliged to me the day, ye canna refuse that, ye ken."

"Well ladies and gentlemen, my instructions are to sell everything within and without the house. Everything on the premises for what it will bring, so I am compelled to proceed. There is only one half-crown bidden for this elegant bed! Does none bid more? Two and sixpence, once! Two and sixpence, twice! Going, going! Gone! Plague take the old witch! This is deplorable! What shall I do?"

The same thing went on the whole day. The crowd got so much amused with the auctioneer's dilemma, that there was a roar of laughter constantly going through it, and I believe if it had been for nothing more than the fun of the thing, no one would have bid a penny. No one did, however. Christy got everything at her own estimate. She got a pair of capital bay mares for nine shillings and sixpence, and one cow for sevenpence-halfpenny. The whole sum came to a mere trifle, which Christy paid down in good yellow gold, placing the family exactly as they were before the forfeiture, and yet she still went and lodged with widow Clark as usual, and would by no means stay in the mansion-house, modestly judging that she was not fit company for them and their guests.

Before the assemblage parted that night, the auctioneer announced, that the estate of Langley Dale was to be sold at the cross at Dumfries on the 7th of April, in seven lots, which he specified, and every one of which was to be knocked down to the highest bidder for ready money only. Well, the 7th of April came, but as ready money was far more scarce in Scotland then than at present, there were not very many purchasers. In the meantime the story had spread over the whole country about old Christy, and it was reported and believed that all the Maxwells had combined to preserve the estate in the family, and had employed this old woman as

the most unfeasible agent they could fix on, and every one rejoiced at the stratagem, and at the part old Christy had acted. There were three of the Maxwells had agreed to buy up the mansion-house and the farm around it for their young relation, but farther they had not resolved to credit him in the ticklish state he stood with the new government.

The auctioneer was placed upon a raised platform with the clerk beside him. The mansion-house of Langley was first exposed, with the garden, offices, and farm adjoining, at the moderate upset price of £10,000 Scots. Springkell was just going to offer the upset price for the behoof of the present proprietor, when, behold, old Christy stepped forward and offered 500 merks!

If anybody had but seen the astonishment of the clerk and auctioneer, when they saw their old friend appear before them again! Their jaws actually fell down, and they looked like men bewitched or struck with a palsy. They perceived how the sale would go, and how they would be regarded by their employers, and their spirits sunk within them; so after a great deal of palaver, the lot was knocked down to Christy for 500 merks, a sum rather short of £27—at this very time it is let at £243.

George Maxwell being there among his noble and most respectable relations, would not let one of them open their mouths to bid for him as soon as old Christy appeared, so the sale went on much as before. There were plenty there who knew old Christy, and the whisper soon went round that this was the agent of the Maxwells again, and not one person would bid a farthing against her. She bought up the whole at her own price, and the last farm, that of Auchenvoo, which a friend of my own now possesses, she obtained at not the twentieth part of what is now paid for it in annual rent.

There was some demur about the payment. Among the treasure which Christy got with Mary when a baby, there were a great number of foreign gold coins, of which she did not know the sterling value, but on which she had set a nominal value of her own, something proportioned to the size. These the agents for the sale refused to take, and tried on that account to reverse the whole bargain. But the Maxwells backed old Christy and appealed to the sheriff, Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, who knew as little about the value of the coins as any of them did. But he loved the old Maxwells, and took a most excellent way of settling the dispute. He made them take so much of the sterling coin of the realm, and weigh the foreign coin against it, and pronounced the one as of the same value with the other. As this came very nearly to one-third more than Christy had set upon her foreign specie, the estate turned out to be very cheap at last.

These transactions were all a mystery to the Maxwells. Christy had never mentioned Mary's treasure to any living creature save to Lord John Stewart by mistake, and he having lost her and married a rich widow instead, thought no more of it; and they really imagined, like the rest of the country, that she was the secret agent of the clan. She would not live with them, but still with Mrs. Clark; but there was no endearment that they did not load her with, for there were they established in their ancient property more free of burdens than it had ever been since it came into the possession of the family, and all bestowed on them by a poor old widow, by what means they could not comprehend.

Lady Mary Montgomery had been called over every cross in the south of Scotland and north of England once a year, for a number of years, and £100 offered for her discovery, that being the only means then in use of advertising; and it so happened that Lord John Faa, the king of the gipsies, was the man who discovered her to her friends, and actually gained the reward—a generous and kind action seldom misses it. "He had been guilty of some fact, but I canna just be telling e'enow what that fact was," as Mrs. Macknight used to say; but certain it is he was lying in Ayr prison at the time when he heard the proclamation through his grated loophole, and when the description was read of the golden cross set with rubies, which was locked round her neck, he was certain he could find a clue for her discovery.

He accordingly, the next day, sent for Sir James Montgomery, and disclosed to him all that he knew about the young lady. How that she had once fallen into his hands by mere chance. That she had even been delivered to him with her hands bound behind her back; but that he was so much impressed by her beauty, her tears, and above all by the bloody cross of gold upon her breast, that he instantly released her, and conducted her in safety to the castle of Traquair, where he delivered her to the ladies of that mansion.

Now, this must have been a Sir James Montgomery of Ayrshire, and not, as I supposed, Sir James of Stanhope; for I know that Faa was lying in the prison of Ayr, and that he sent for Sir James Montgomery, who attended him on the very day that he sent, and listened to the gipsy lord's narrative with wonder and astonishment. He instantly bailed him from prison, armed and mounted him, and took him in his train as a witness who could not be deceived. There was, however, no deception attempted. When they arrived at Traquair house, the earl and the countess were from home, having gone abroad; but Lord Linton, Lord John, his young wife, and another young lady, were there, and welcomed Sir James with all the usual kindness and hospitality for which the family had been long remarkable; and the Tutor, who knew most about the young lady, told Sir James at once that the young lady who had been recommended to their family under the name of Mary Melville, had eloped from them, and was now married to a young kinsman of their own, Mr. Maxwell, of a place called Langley. That he had since heard that their lands had been forfeited, and

that they had been rouped out at the door, and he knew no further about them. He said not a word about his own love, or the duel he had fought for her, his wife being present; but he told Sir James further, that she was supposed to be the daughter of a nobleman who had suffered in some way for his adherence to King Charles, but who he was could never be discovered. That he thought he had heard his mother once speak of a cross set with jewels, but for his part he had never seen it, and knew not positively whether it was of her or some other lady that the countess had then been speaking. Perhaps it was hers, for there was something said about an M. M. being on it.

Sir James clapped his hands for joy. "It is she! it is she indeed!" cried he. "My own dear and long-lost ward! Her husband is fortunate! She is worth fifty thousand a year to him, exclusive of long and heavy arrears, which are due to her, but all are well secured."

He rode straight to Langley Dale next day, and found his long-lost kinswoman a lovely, beloved, and happy wife, though rather, as they themselves supposed, in poor circumstances, as they were indebted for all that they possessed to a poor old woman, who had acted the part of a mother to Mary from her earliest recollection.

When Sir James alighted at Langley gate with his train of three armed followers, there was no little stir within the house, visitors of such apparent rank being rarely seen there. He told his name and designation, and said he wanted a private word of the young lady of the mansion. He was shown into a room, and Mary instantly came to him with a pale face, wondering what a great baronet could want with her. After the usual compliments and salutations had passed, Sir James said, while Mary stood actually panting for breath, "My dear young lady, I hope I come with good tidings to you."

"Thank you, Sir James, thank you, though I cannot conceive what those tidings may be."

"Pray, will you allow me one look of the medal suspended from that gold chain around your neck?"

Mary pulled it out and presented it, on which Sir James kneeled and kissed certainly the most beautiful crucifix that ever was framed by the hands of men. And then saluting the lady, he said, "You do not know, madam, who you are or what your rank is, but I know. Come, then, and let me introduce you to your husband, although rather a novel way of introduction."

Then leading her in by the hand to the parlour where Maxwell and his mother stood awaiting them, he said to the former, "I give you joy, sir, of this your lovely young wife;—such joy as I never had the power of conferring before, and never shall again; but I give it you with all my heart, and hope by your behaviour you will continue to deserve it. You are the most lucky man, Mr. Maxwell, that ever Scotland bred. This young and most lovely wife of yours, sir, I may now introduce to you as the Honourable Lady Mary Montgomery, sole heiress of three lordships, all of which you will inherit through her, though not the titles, excepting perhaps the Irish one. But these are of small avail. With this lady's hand you have secured to yourself £50,000 a year, besides upwards of £500,000 of cash in hand, all run up in arrears of rent since she was lost, but all firmly secured in bonds at full interest. So I think you must confess you are the most fortunate man that ever was born."

George answered modestly that he held his darling Mary in such estimation, that no earthly advantage could enhance her value to him, but that he certainly would be grateful to Providence as long as he lived for such an extraordinary windfall of fortune. But Mrs. Maxwell, who had been pinched for money all her life, hearing of £500,000 of tocher, and £50,000 a year, seemed to lose all power of calculation. She held up her hands—her frame grew rigid. Her face grew first deadly white, then of a mulberry hue, and down she fell in a swoon. This somewhat marred the joy of the happy group, but after the old lady was laid in bed she gradually recovered. She however lay raving about "thousands and hunders o' thousand puns" for nearly three weeks.

When matters were a little settled, old Christy was sent for, that everything might be fairly authenticated. Christy for the first time divulged the whole truth concerning the young lady; of the death of the priest, and the capture of the child, with all her gold and jewels about her person, but that the documents relating to her birth had by some chance fallen into other hands, she wist not how. She knew that one noble family, of whom she had great dread and great suspicions, was in search of the babe, but that she, dreading it was in order to make away with her and possess themselves of her treasure, thought it best to abscond with the dear infant, and claim her as her daughter, in order to preserve everything to her that was her own, which she had done to the value of a plack. She then stated how she had bought up the estate and everything pertaining to it with the lady's own treasure, and that she had a good deal still, of which she neither knew the value nor the use, but which should be produced to the last mite.

She then went to her little concealed treasure, and brought a great number of gold ducats and doubloons, with many other foreign coins, of which I have forgot the names. She likewise produced all the little precious trinkets that had belonged to Mary's mother, Lady Montgomery, even to her wedding ring, which affected Mary exceedingly. It is easy to conceive that old Christy and Mrs. Clark were placed in snug and comfortable situations for the rest of their lives.

When all these things were fairly settled, and Mary's capture proved to a day and an hour, Sir James

said, "But Lady Mary, I have a henchman of my own to introduce to you, merely to see if you know and acknowledge him, for if you do, it is a fact that you are indebted to him for all your riches and honours, and he deserves his reward."

He then went and brought in John Faa, lord of little Egypt, and of all the Egyptian tribe in Britain.

Mary at once courtsied to him, and said, "Ah, my Lord John Faa here too! As noble and generous a person as ever breathed, and well deserving to be chief of a more respectable clan. But yon was an awful morning, Faa. However, *you* behaved as a gentleman to me, and I shall never forget it."

"Do you know, you blackguard gipsy," said Sir James, "that this lady, whom you protected and released, is no other than the Honourable Lady Mary Montgomery, the sole heiress to three earldoms!"

"Lord, what a prize I hae looten slip away from me!" exclaimed Faa, holding up his hands, with a countenance of exultation. "But, 'od you see, Sir James, her beauty an' her tears, an' aboon a' the bloody cross on her breast, struck me wi' the same veneration as if she had been the Virgin Mary (which she was by the by). But, 'od you see, I coudna hae injured a hair of the lovely creature's head to hae been made king o' the island. Na! Nor for nae earthly feeling or advantage."

Sir James then paid him down his hundred guineas, and said, "Now, had it been a hundred thousand I could hae paid it from that lady's wealth to-morrow."

"A hunder pounds! a hunder pounds!" exclaimed the gipsy chief, "there was never as muckle money in a gipsy's pouch sin' the warld stood up, or else it was nae as honestly come by. Mony thanks t'ye a', leddies and gentlemen;" and Faa began to bow himself out of the room, when Mary said, "Farewell, Lord John; and as you once freed me, when in dreadful jeopardy, if you are ever in one, which is not unlikely to happen from what I saw of your subjects, be sure to apply to me, and if either my interest or credit can relieve you, they shall not be wanting." That time did arrive in the course of three years, but thereby hangs a tale, which I hope I shall live to relate.

Before the gipsy chief was dismissed, Sir James had noted that old Christy was standing up in a corner, sobbing and drowned in tears. "What is the matter, my worthy old dame!" said he.

"O, sir," said she, "I never ken'd really wha my dear, dear bairn was till now. The very first night that she came to my arms, she said that her name was Maly Gumly, a name of which I could make nothing. And when I was obliged to abscond with her for fear of being burned to ashes, which we wad hae been had we staid at hame another day, an' when I cam' here to leeve wi' her, as my ain bairn, she told widow Clark that her name was Maly Gumly, and that she had ridden in a coach wi' her father, and that men took off their caps to him. I think I hae acted the part o' a mother to her, an' if I should never see her face again, which I fear will now be but ower seldom, I shall say that o' her, that a kinder-heartit, mair affectionate an' dutifu' creature was never formed o' flesh an' blood."

Mary ran up, clasped old Christy to her bosom, and kissed the tears from her cheeks.

THE SIEGE OF ROXBURGH.

CHAPTER I.

There was a king, and a courteous king,
And he had a daughter sae bonnie;
And he lo'ed that maiden aboon a' thing
I' the bonnie, bonnie halls o' Binnorie.

* * * *

But wae be to thee, thou warlock wight,
My malison come o'er thee,
For thou hast undone the bravest knight,
That ever brak bread o' Binnorie!

Old Song.

The days of the Stuarts, Kings of Scotland, were the days of chivalry and romance. The long contest that the nation maintained against the whole power of England for the recovery of its independence—of those rights which had been most unwarrantably wrested from our fathers by the greatest and most treacherous sovereign of that age, with the successful issue of the war, laid the foundation for this spirit of heroism, which appears to have been at its zenith about the time that the Stuarts first acquired the sovereignty of the realm. The deeds of the Douglases, the Randolphs, and other Border barons of that day, are not to be equalled by any recorded in our annals; while the reprisals they made upon the English, in retaliation of former injuries, enriched both them and their followers, and rendered their appearance splendid and imposing, to a degree that would scarcely now gain credit. It was no uncommon thing for a Scottish earl of that period to visit the court at the head of a thousand horsemen, all splendidly mounted, and many of these gentlemen of rank and family. In court and camp, feats of arms were the topic of conversation, and the only die that stamped the character of a man with the fair, the monarch, or the chiefs of the land. No gentleman of noble blood would pay his addresses to his mistress, until he had surprised a stronghold, or driven a prey from the kinsmen of the Percies, the Musgraves, or the Howards. As in all other things that run to a fashionable extremity, the fair sex took the lead in encouraging this spirit of chivalry, till it grew into a national mania. There were tournaments at the castle of every feudal baron and knight. The ploughmen were often discovered, on returning from the fields, hotly engaged in a tilting bout with their ploughstaves; and even the little boys on the village green, each well mounted on a crooked stick, were daily engaged in the combat, and riding rank and file against each other, breaking their tiny weapons in the furious onset, while the mimic fire flashed from their eyes. Then was the play of *Scots and English* begun, a favourite one on the school-green to this day. Such was the spirit of the age, not only in Scotland, but over Europe, when the romantic incidents occurred on which the following tale is founded. It was taken down from the manuscript of an old curate, who had spent the latter part of his life in the village of Mireton, and was given to the present editor by one of those tenants who now till the valley where stood the richest city of this realm.

There were once a noble King and Queen of Scotland, as many in that land have been. In this notable tell-tale manner does old Isaac the curate begin his narrative. It will be seen in the sequel that this king and queen were Robert II. and his consort. They were beloved by all their subjects (continues he), and loved them in return; and the country enjoyed happiness and peace, all save a part adjoining to the borders of England. The strong castle of Roxburgh, which was the key of that country, had been five times taken by the English, and three times by the Scots, in less than seventeen months, and was then held by the gallant Lord Musgrave, for Richard, King of England.

Our worthy king had one daughter, the flower of all Scotland, and her name was Margaret. This princess was courted by many of the principal nobility of the land, who all eagerly sought an alliance with the royal family, not only for the additional power which it would confer on them and their posterity, but for the personal charms of the lady, on which no man could look without admiration. This emulation of the lords kept the court of King Robert full of bustle, homage, and splendour. All were anxious to frustrate the designs of their opponents, and to forward their own; so that high jealousies were often apparent in the sharp retorts, stern looks, and nodding plumes of the rival wooers; and as the princess had never disclosed her partiality for one above another, it was judged that Robert scarcely dared openly to give the preference to any of them. A circumstance, however, soon occurred, which brought the matter fairly to the test.

It happened on a lovely summer day, at the end of July, that three and twenty noble rivals for the hand of the princess were all assembled at the palace of Linlithgow; but the usual gaiety did not prevail, for the king had received bad tidings that day, and he sat gloomy and sad.

Musgrave had issued from the castle of Roxburgh, had surprised the castle of Jedburgh, and taken prisoner William, brother to the Lord of Galloway, slain many loyal Scottish subjects, and wasted Teviotdale with fire and sword. The conversation turned wholly on the state of affairs on the Border, and the misery to which that country was exposed by the castle of Roxburgh remaining in the hands of the English; and at length the king inquired impatiently, how it came that Sir Philip Musgrave had surprised the castle this last time, when his subjects were so well aware of their danger!

The Earl of Hume made answer, that it was wholly an affair of chivalry, and one of the bravest acts that ever was performed. Musgrave's mistress, the Lady Jane Howard, of the blood royal, and the greatest heiress of the north of England, had refused to see him, unless he gained back his honour by the retaking of that perilous castle, and keeping it against all force, intercession, or guile, till the end of the Christmas holidays. He had accomplished the former in the most gallant style; and from the measures he had adopted, and the additional fortifications he had raised, there was every possibility that he would achieve the latter.

"What," said the king, "must the spirit of chivalry then be confined to the country of our enemies? Have our noble dames of Scotland less heroism than those of the south? Have they fewer of the charms of beauty, or have their lovers less spirit to fulfil their commands? By this sceptre, I will give my daughter, the Princess Margaret, to the knight who shall take that castle of Roxburgh out of the hands of the English before the expiry of the Christmas holidays."

Every lord and knight was instantly on his feet to accept the proposal, and every one had his hand stretched towards the royal chair for audience, when Margaret herself arose, and flinging her left arm backward, on which swung a scarf of gold, and stretching her right, that gleamed with bracelets of rubies and diamonds, along the festive board, "Hold, my noble lords," said she; "I am too deeply interested here not to have a word to say. The grandchild of the great Bruce must not be given away to every adventurer without her own approval. Who among you will venture honour and life for me?" Every knight waved his right hand aloft and dashed it on the hilt of his sword, eyeing the graceful attitude and dignified form of the princess with raptures of delight. "It is well," continued she, "the spirit of chivalry *has not* deserted the Scottish nation. Hear me then: My father's vow shall stand; I will give my hand in marriage to the knight who shall take that castle for the king, my father, before the expiry of the Christmas holidays, and rid our border of that nest of reavers; but with this proviso only, that in case of his attempting and failing in the undertaking, he shall forfeit all his lands, castles, towns, and towers to me, which shall form a part of my marriage-portion to his rival. Is it fit that the daughter of a king should be given up or won as circumstances may suit, or that the risk should all be on one side? Who would be so unreasonable as expect it? This, then, with the concurrence of my lord and father, is my determination, and by it will I stand."

The conditions were grievously hard, and had a damping effect on the courtly circle. The light of every eye deadened into a dim and sullen scowl. It was a deed that promised glory and renown to adventure their blood for such a dame—to win such a lady as the Princess of Scotland: but, to give up their broad lands and castles to enrich a hated rival, was an obnoxious consideration, and what in all likelihood was to be the issue. When all the forces of the land had been unable to take the castle, where was the probability that any of them was now to succeed? None accepted the conditions. Some remained silent; some shook their heads, and muttered incoherent mumblings; others strode about the room, as if in private consultation.

"My honoured liege," said Lady Margaret, "none of the lords or knights of your court have the spirit to accept of my conditions. Be pleased then to grant me a sufficient force. I shall choose the officers for them myself, and I engage to take the castle of Roxburgh before Christmas. I will disappoint Musgrave of his bride; and the world shall see whether the charms of Lady Jane Howard or those of Margaret Stuart shall rouse to deeds of desperate valour. Before the Christmas bells have tolled, that shall be tried on the rocks, in the rivers, in the air, and the bowels of the earth. In the event of my enterprise proving successful, all the guerdon that I ask is, the full and free liberty of giving my hand to whom I will. It shall be to no one here." And so saying she struck it upon the table, and again took her seat at the king's left hand.

Every foot rung on the floor with a furious tramp, in unison with that stroke of the princess's hand. The taunt was not to be brooked. Nor was it. James, the gallant Earl of Douglas and Mar, stepped forward from the circle. "My honoured liege and master, said he, "I have not declined the princess's offer—beshrew my heart if ever it embraced such a purpose. But the stake is deep, and a moment's consideration excusable. I have considered and likewise decided. I accept the lady's proposals. With my own vassals alone, and at my own sole charge, will I rescue the castle from the hands of our enemies, or perish in the attempt. The odds are high against me. But it is now a Douglas or a Musgrave: God prosper the bravest!"

"Spoken like yourself, noble Douglas," said the king; "the higher the stake the greater the honour. The task be yours, and may the issue add another laurel to the heroic name."

"James of Douglas," said Lady Margaret, "dost

thou indeed accept of these hard conditions for my sake? Then the hand of thy royal mistress shall buckle on the armour in which thou goest to the field, but never shall unloose it, unless from a victor or a corse!" And with that she stretched forth her hand, which Douglas, as he kneeled with one knee on the ground, took and pressed to his lips.

Every one of the nobles shook Douglas by the hand, and wished him success. Does any man believe that there was one among them that indeed wished it? No, there was not a chief present that would not have rejoiced to have seen him led to the gallows. His power was too high already, and they dreaded that now it might be higher than ever; and moreover, they saw themselves outdone by him in heroism, and felt degraded by the contract thus concluded.

The standard of the Douglas was reared, and the bloody heart flew far over many a lowland dale. The subordinate gentlemen rose with their vassals, and followed the banner of their chief; but the more powerful kept aloof, or sent ambiguous answers. They deemed the undertaking little better than the frenzy of a madman.

There was at that time a powerful Border baron, nicknamed Sir Ringan Redhough, by which name alone he was distinguished all the rest of his life. He was warden of the middle marches, and head of the most warlike and adventurous sept in all that country. The answer which this hero gave to his own cousin, Thomas Middlemas, who came to expostulate with him from Douglas, is still preserved verbatim: "What, man, are a' my brave lads to lie in bloody claes that the Douglas may lie i' snaw-white sheets wi' a bonny bedfellow? Will that keep the braid Border for the king, my master? Tell him to keep their hands fu', an' their haunches toom, an' they'll soon be blythe to leave the lass an' loup at the ladle; an' the fient ae cloot shall cross the Border to gar their pots play brown atween Dirdan-head and Cocketfell. Tell him this, an' tell him that Redhough said it. If he dinna work by wiles he'll never pouch the profit. But if he canna do it, an' owns that he canna do it, let him send word to me, an' I'll tak' it for him."

With these words he turned his back, and abruptly left his cousin, who returned to Douglas, ill satisfied with the success of his message, but nevertheless delivered it faithfully. "That curst carle," said the Douglas, "is a thorn in my side, as well as a buckler on my arm. He's as cunning as a fox, as stubborn as an oak, and as fierce as a lion. I must temporize for the present, as I cannot do without his support; but the time may come that he may be humbled, and made to know his betters. Since one endeavour has failed, we must try another, and, if that do not succeed, another still."

The day after, as Sir Ringan was walking out at his own gate, an old man, with a cowl and a long gray beard, accosted him. "May the great Spirit of the elements shield thee, and be thy protector, knight," said he.

"An' wha may he be, carle, an it be your will?" said Ringan; "an' wha may ye be that gie me sic a sachless benediction? As to my shield and protection, look ye here?" and with that he touched his two-handed sword and a sheaf of arrows that was swung at his shoulder: "an' what are all your saints and lang-nebbet spirits to me?"

"It was a random salutation, knight," said the old man, seeing his mood and temper; "I am not a priest but a prophet. I come not to load you with blessings, curses, nor homilies, all equally unavailing; but to tell you what shall be in the times that are to come. I have had visions of futurity that have torn up the tendrils of my spirit by the roots. Would you like to know what is to befall you and your house in the times that are to come?"

"I never believe a word that you warlocks say," replied the knight; "but I like aye to hear what you *will* say about matters; though it is merely to laugh at ye, for I dinna gie credit to ane o' your predictions. Sin' the Rhymer's days, the spirit o' true warlockry is gane. He foretauld muckle that has turned out true; an something that I hope *will* turn out true: but ye're a' bairns to him."

"Knight," said the stranger, "I can tell you more than ever the Rhymer conceived or thought upon; and, moreover, I can explain the words of True Thomas, which neither you nor those to whom they relate in the smallest degree comprehend. Knowest thou the prophecy of the Hart and the Deer, as it is called?

'Quhere the hearte heavit in het blude over hill and howe,
There shall the dinke deire droule for the dowe:
Two fleite footyde maydenis shall tredde the greine,
And the mone and the starre shall flashe betweine.
Quhere the proude hiche halde and heveye hande beire
Ane fremauch shall feide on ane faderis frene feire,
In dinging at the starris the D shall doupe down,
But the S shall be S quhane the heide S is gone.'"

"I hae heard the reide often and often," said the knight, "but the man's unborn that can understand that. Though the prophecies and the legends of the Rhymer take the lead i' my lear, I hae always been obliged to make that a passover."

"There is not one of all his sayings that relates as much to you and your house, knight. It foretells that the arms of your family shall supersede those of Douglas, which you know are the bloody heart; and that in endeavouring to exalt himself to the stars, the D, that is the Douglas, shall fall, but that your house and name shall remain when the Stuarts are no more."

"By the horned beasts of old England, my father's portion, and my son's undiminished hope," exclaimed the knight, "thou art a cunning man! I now see the bearing o' the prophecy as plainly as I see the hill o' Mountcomyn before my e'e; and, as

I know Thomas never is wrong, I believe it. Now is the time, auld warlock—now is the time; he's ettling at a king's daughter, but his neck lies in wad, and the forfeit will be his undoing."

"The time is not yet come, valiant knight; nevertheless the prophecy is true. Has thy horse's hoof ever trode, or thine eye journeyed, over the Nine Glens of Niddisdale?"

"I hae whiles gotten a gliak o' them."

"They are extensive, rich, and beautiful."

"They're nae less, auld carle; they're nae less. They can send nine thousand leal men an' stout to the field in a pinch."

"It is recorded in the book of fate—it is written there—"

"The devil it is, auld carle; that's mair than I thought o'."

"Hold thy peace: lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and be silent till I explain: I say I have seen it in the visions of the night—I have seen it in the stars of heaven"—

"What! the Nine Glens o' Niddisdale amang the starns o' heaven! by hoof and horn, it was rarely seen, warlock."

"I say that I have seen it—they are all to belong to thy house."

"Niddisdale a' to pertain to my house!"

"All."

"Carle, I gie nae credit to sic forebodings: but I have heard something like this afore. Will ye stay till I bring my son Robin, the young Master of Mountcomyn, and let him hear it! For aince a man takes a mark on his way, I wadna hae him to tine sight o't. Mony a time has the tail o' the King's Elwand pointed me the way to Cumberland; an' as often has the e'e o' the Charlie-wain blinkit me hame again. A man's nae the waur o' a bit beacon o' some kind—a bit hope set afore him, auld carle; an' the Nine Glens o' Niddisdale are nae Willie-an-the-Wisp in a lad's e'e."

"From Roxburgh Castle to the tower of Sark."—

"What's the auld-warld birkie saying?"

"From the Deadwater-fell to the Linns of Cannoby—from the Linns of Cannoby to the heights of Manor and the Deucharswire—shall thy son, and the representatives of thy house, ride on their own lands."

"May ane look at your foot, carle? Take off that huge wooden sandal, an' it be your will."

"Wherefore should I, knight?"

"Because I dread ye are either the devil or Master Michael Scott."

"Whoever I am, I am a friend to you and to yours, and have told you the words of truth. I have but one word more to say:—Act always in concert with the Douglases, while they act in concert with the king your master—not a day, nor an hour, nor a moment longer. It is thus, and thus alone, that you must rise and the Douglas fall. Remember the words of True Thomas—

'Quhane the wingit horn at his maistere sal wince,
Let wyse men cheat the chevysance.'"

"There is something mair about you than other folk, auld man. If ye be my kinsman, Michael Scott the warlock, I crave your pardon, master; but if your are that dreadfu' carle—I mean that learned and wonderfu' man, why, you are welcome to my castle. But you are not to turn my auld wife into a hare, master, an' hunt her up an' down the hills wi' my ain grews; nor my callants into naigs to scamper about on i' the night-time when they hae ither occupations to mind. There is naething i' my tower that isna at your command; for troth, I wad rather brow a' the Ha's and the Howard's afore I beardit you."

"I set no foot in your halls. This night is a night among many to me; and woe would be to me if anything canopied my head save the cope of heaven. There are horoscopes to be read this night for a thousand years to come. One cake of your bread and one cup of your wine is all that the old wizard requests of you, and that he must have."

The knight turned back and led the seer into the inner court, and fed him with bread and wine and every good thing; but well he noted that he asked no holy benediction on them like the palmers and priors that wandered about the country; and, therefore he had some lurking dread of the old man. He did not thank the knight for his courtesy, but wiping his snowy beard, he turned abruptly away, and strode out at the gate of the castle. Sir Ringan kept an eye on him privately till he saw him reach the top of Blake Law, a small dark hill immediately above the castle. There he stopped and looked around him, and taking two green sods, he placed the one above the other, and laid himself down on his back, resting his head upon the two sods—his body half raised and his eyes fixed on heaven. The knight was almost frightened to look at him; but sliding into the cleuch, he ran secretly down to the tower to bring his lady to see this wonderful old warlock. When they came back he was gone, and no trace of him to be seen, nor saw they him any more at that time.

CHAPTER II.

This man's the devil's fellow-commoner,
A verie cloake-bag of iniquitie.
His butteries and his craboun he deschargeth
Flasche, not by airt or reule. Is it meet
A ploydenist should be a *cedant arma togæ*.
Mounted on a trapt palfrey; with a diabe
Of velvatte on his heide, to keepe the brothe
Of his wit warm? The devil, my maisteris,
There is no dame in Venice shall indure it.
Old Play.

Whilst the knight and his lady were looking about in amazement for their mysterious guest, the tower-warder sounded the great bugle, a tremendous horn

that lay on a shelf in the balcony where he kept watch. "One—two—three," said the knight, counting the three distinct notes—a signal of which he well knew the language, "What can that mean? I am wanted, it would appear: another messenger from the Douglas, I warrant."

"Sir Ringan, keep by that is your own," said the lady; "I say, mind your own concerns, and let the Douglas mind his."

"Dame," said the chief, "I hae gotten some mair insight into that affair than you; and we maun talk about it by an' by. In the meantime let us haste home, and see who is arrived."

As they descended from the hill hand in hand (for none walked arm in arm in those days), they saw Richard Dodds, a landward laird, coming to meet them. "Oh," said Sir Ringan, "this is my officious cousin, Dickie o' Dryhope; what business can he be come upon? It will be something that he deems of great importance."

"I hate that old fawning, flattering sycophant," said the lady; "and cannot divine what is the cause of your partiality for him."

"It is his attachment to our house that I admire, and his perfect devotion to my service and interests," said the knight.

"Mere sound," exclaimed the lady bitterly: "Mere waste of superfluous breath! I tell you, Sir Ringan, that, for all your bravery, candour, and kindness, you are a mere novice in the affairs of life, and know less of men and of things than ever knight did."

"It is a great fault in women," said the knight, making his observation general, "that they will aye be meddling wi' things they ken nought about. They think they ken everything, and wad gar ane trow that they can see an inch into a fir deal.—Gude help them! It is just as unfeasible to hear a lady discussing the merits of warriors an' yeomen, as it wad be to see me sitting nursing a wench-bairn."

"Foh, what an uncourtly term!" said the lady. "What would King Robert think if he heard you speaking in that uncouth style?"

"I speak muckle better than him, wi' his short clippit Highland tongue," said the chief; "but hush, here comes the redoubted Dickie o' Dryhope."

No sooner were the knight and his lady's eyes turned so as to meet Dickie's, than he whipped off his bonnet with a graceful swing, and made a low bow, his thin gray locks waving as he bowed. Dickie was a tall, lean, toothless, old bachelor, whose whole soul and body were devoted to the fair sex and the house of his chief. These two mighty concerns divided his attention, and often mingled with one another; his enthusiasm for the one, by any sudden change of subjects or concatenation of ideas, being frequently transferred to the other. Dickie approached bonnet in hand, bowing every time the knight and lady lifted their eyes. When they met, Sir Ringan shook him heartily by the hand, and welcomed him to the castle of Mountcomyn.

"Oh, you are so good and so kind, Sir Ringan, bless you, bless you, bless you, noble sir; how do you thrive, Sir Ringan? bless you, bless you. And my excellent and noble Lady Mountcomyn, how is my noble dame?"

"Thank you," said the lady coldly.

Dickie looked as if he would have shaken hands with her or embraced her, as the custom then was, but she made no proffer of either the one or the other, and he was obliged to keep his distance; but this had no effect in checking his adulations. "I am so glad that my excellent lady is well, and the young squires and maidens all brisk and whole, I hope?"

"All well, cousin," said the chief.

"Eh! all well?" reiterated Dickie; "Oh the dear, delightful, darling souls, oh bless them! If they be but as well as I wish them, and as good as I wish—if the squires be but half so brave as their father, and the noble young sweet dames half so beautiful as their lady mother—Oh bless them, bless them."

"And half so independent and honest as their cousin," said the lady with a rebuking sneer.

"Very pleasant! very pleasant, indeed!" simpered Dickie, without daring to take his lips far asunder, lest his toothless gums should be seen.

"Such babyish flummery!" rejoined the lady with great emphasis. Dickie was somewhat abashed. His eyes, that were kindled with a glow of filial rapture, appeared as with flattened pupils, nevertheless the benignant smile did not altogether desert his features. The knight gave a short look off at one side to his lady. "It is a great fault in ladies, cousin," said he, "that they will always be breaking their jokes on those they like best, and always pretending to keep at a distance from them. My lady thinks to blind my een, as many a dame has done to her husband afore this time; but I ken, and some mae ken too, that if there's ane o' a' my kin that I durstna trust my lady wi' when my back's turned, that ane's Dickie o' Dryhope."

"H'm, h'm, h'm," neighed Dickie, laughing with his lips shut; "my lady's so pleasant, and so kind, but—Oh—no, no—you wrong her, knight; h'm, h'm, h'm! But, all joking and gibing aside—my lady's very pleasant. I came express to inform you, Sir Ringan, that the Douglases are up."

"I knew it."

"And the Maxwells—and the Gordons—and the hurkle-backed Hendersons."

"Well."

"And Sir Christopher Seton is up—and the Elliots and the Laird of Tibbers is up."

"Well, well."

"I came expressly to inform you—"

"Came with piper's news," said the lady, "which the fiddler has told before you."

"That *is very* good," said Dickie; "my lady is

so delightfully pleasant. I thought Sir Ringan would be going to rise with the rest, and came for directions as to raising my men."

"How many men can the powerful Laird of Dryhope muster in support of the warden?" said Lady Mountcomyn.

"Mine are all at his command; my worthy lady knows that," said Dickie, bowing: "every one at his command."

"I think," said she, "that at the battle of Blakehope you furnished only two, who were so famished with hunger, that they could not bear arms, far less fight."

"Very pleasant, in sooth; h'm h'm! I declare I am delighted with my lady's good humour."

"You may, however, keep your couple of scarecrows at home for the present, and give them something to eat," continued she; "the warden has other matters to mind than wasting his vassals that the Douglas may wive."

"Very true, and excellent good sense," said Dickie.

"We'll talk of that anon," said Sir Ringan. And with that they went into the castle, and sat down to dinner. There were twelve gentlemen and nine maidens present, exclusive of the knight's own family, and they took their places on each side as the lady named them. When Sir Ringan lifted up his eyes and saw the station that Dickie occupied, he was dissatisfied, but instantly found a remedy. "Davie's Pate," said he to the lad that waited behind him, "mak that bowiefu' o' cauld plovers change places wi' yon saut-faut instantly, before meat be put to mouth." The order was no sooner given than obeyed, and the new arrangement placed Dickie fairly above the salt.

The dining apparatus at the castle of Mountcomyn was homely, but the fare was abundant. A dozen yeomen stood behind with long knives, and slashed down the beef and venison into small pieces, which they placed before the guests in wooden plates, so that there was no knife used at the dining board. All ate heartily, but none with more industry than Dickie, who took not even time all the while to make the complaisant observation, that "my lady was so pleasant."

Dinner being over, the younger branches of the family retired, and all the kinsmen not of the first rank, pretending some business that called them away, likewise disappeared; so that none were left with the knight and his lady save six. The lady tried the effect of several broad hints on Dickie, but he took them all in good part, and declared that he never saw his lady so pleasant in his life. And now a serious consultation ensued on the propriety of lending assistance to the Douglas. Sir Ringan first put the question to his friends, without any observation. The lady took up the argument, and reasoned strongly against the measure. Dickie was in raptures with his lady's good sense, and declared her arguments unanswerable. Most of the gentlemen seemed to acquiesce in the same measure, on the ground that, as matters stood, they could not rise at the Douglas' call on that occasion, without being considered as a subordinate family, which neither the king nor the Douglas had any right to suppose them: and so strongly and warmly ran the argument on that side, that it was likely to be decided on without the chief having said a word on the subject. Simon of Gemelscleuch alone ventured to dissent: "I have only to remark, my gallant kinsmen," said he, "that our decision in this matter is likely to prove highly eventful. Without our aid the force of the Douglas is incompetent to the task, and the castle will then remain in the hands of the English, than which nothing can be more grievously against our interest. If he be defeated, and forfeit his lands, the power of the Border will then remain with us; but should he succeed without our assistance, and become the king's son-in-law, it will be a hard game with us to keep the footing that we have. I conceive, therefore, that in withdrawing our support we risk everything—in lending it, we risk nothing but blows." All the kinsmen were silent. Dickie looked at my Lady Mountcomyn.

"It is well known that there is an old prophecy existing," said she, "that a Scot shall sit in the Douglas' chair, and be lord of all his domains. Well would it be for the country if that were so. But to support the overgrown power of that house is not the way to accomplish so desirable an object."

"That is true," said Dickie; "I'll defy any man to go beyond what my lady says, or indeed whatever she says."

"Have we not had instances of their jealousy already?" continued she.

"We have had instances of their jealousy already," said Dickie, interrupting her.

"And should we raise him to be the king's son-in-law, he would kick us for our pains," rejoined she.

"Ay, he would kick us for our pains," said Dickie; "think of that."

"Either please to drop your responses, sir," said she sternly, "or leave the hall. I would rather hear a raven croak on my turret in the day of battle than the tongue of a flatterer or sycophant."

"That is very good indeed," said Dickie; "my lady is so pleasant; h'm, h'm, h'm! Excellent! h'm, h'm, h'm!"

Sir Ringan saw his lady drawing herself up in high indignation; and dreading that his poor kinsman would bring on himself such a rebuke as would banish him the hall for ever, he interposed. "Cousin," said he, "it's a great fault in women that they canna bide interruption, an' the mair they stand in need o't they take it the waur. But I have not told you all yet: a very singular circumstance has happened to me this day. Who do you think I found waylaying me at my gate, but our kinsman, the powerful old warlock, Master Michael Scott."

"Master Michael Scott!" exclaimed the whole

circle, every one holding up his hands, "has he ventured to be seen by man once more? Then there is something uncommon to befall, or perhaps the world is coming to an end."

"God forbid!" said Redhough: "it is true that, for seven years, he has been pent up in his enchanted tower at Aikwood, without speaking to any one save his spirits; but though I do not know him, this must have been he, for he has told me such things as will astonish you; and, moreover, when he left me he laid himself down on the top of the Little Law on his back, and the devils carried him away bodily through the air, or down through the earth, and I saw no more of him."

All agreed that it had been the great magician Master Michael Scott. Sir Ringan then rehearsed the conversation that had passed between the wizard and himself. All the circle heard this with astonishment; some with suspense, and others with conviction, but Dickie with raptures of delight. "He assured me," said Redhough, "that my son should ride on his own land from Roxburgh to the Deadwater-fell."

"From Roxburgh to the Deadwater-fell!" cried Dickie, "think of that! all the links of the bonny Teviot and Slitterick, ha, ha, lads, think of that!" and he clapped his hands aloud without daring to turn his eyes to the head of the table.

"And from the Deadwater-fell to the tower o' Sark," rejoined the knight.

"To the tower of Sark!" exclaimed Dickie—"Have a care of us! think of that! All the dales of Liddel, and Ewes, and the fertile fields of Cannoby! Who will be king of the Border, then, my lads? who will be king of the Border, then? ha, ha, ha!"

"And from the fords of Sark to the Deucharswire," added Sir Ringan.

Dickie sprang to his feet, and seizing a huge timber trencher, he waved it round his head. The chief beckoned for silence; but Dickie's eyes were glistening with raptures, and it was with great difficulty he repressed his vociferations.

"And over the Nine Glens of Niddisdale beside," said Sir Ringan.

Dickie could be restrained no longer. He brayed out, "Hurrah, hurrah!" and waved his trencher round his head.

"All the Esk, and the braid Forest, and the Nine Glens o' Niddisdale! Hurrah! Hurrah! Mountcomyn for ever! The warden for ever! hu, hu! hu!"

The knight and his friends were obliged to smile at Dickie's outrageous joy; but the lady rose and went out in high dudgeon. Dickie then gave full vent to his rapture without any mitigation of voice, adding, "My lady for ever!" to the former two; and so shouting, he danced around, waving his immense wooden plate.

The frolic did not take, and Sir Ringan was obliged to call him to order. "You do not consider, cousin," said the warden, "that what a woman accounts excellent sport at one time is at another high offence. See, now, you have driven my lady away from our consultation, on whose advice I have a strong reliance; and I am afraid we will scarcely prevail on her to come back."

"Oh! there's no fear of my lady and me," said Dickie; "we understand one another. My lady is a kind, generous, noble soul, and so pleasant!"

"For as pleasant and kind as she is, I am deceived if she is easily reconciled to you. Ye dinna ken Kate Dunbar, cousin. Boy, tell your lady that we lack her counsel, and expect that she will lend us it for a short space."

The boy did as he was ordered, but returned with an answer, that unless Dickie was dismissed she did not choose to be of the party.

"I am sorry for it," said Sir Ringan; "but you may tell her that she may then remain where she is, for I can't spare my cousin Dickie now, nor any day these five months." And with that he began and discussed the merits of the case *pro* and *con* with his kinsmen, as if nothing had happened; and in the end it was resolved that, with a thousand horsemen, they would scour the east Border to intercept all the supplies that should be sent out of England, and thus enrich themselves, while, at the same time, they would appear to countenance the mad undertaking of Douglas.

CHAPTER III.

"Come, come, my hearts of flint; modestly; decently; soberly; and handsomely.—No man afore his leader.—Ding down the enemy to-morrow—ye shall not come into the field like beggars.—Lord have mercy upon me, what a world this is!—Well, I'll give an hundred pence for as many good feathers, and a hundred more for as many scarts:—wounds, dogs, to set you out withal! Frost and snow, a man cannot fight till he be brave! I say, down with the enemy to-morrow!"—*Sir John Oldcastle.*

The castle of Roxburgh was beleaguered by seven thousand men in armour, but never before had it been so well manned, or rendered so formidable in its buttresses; and to endeavour to scale it, appeared as vain an attempt as that of scaling the moon.

There was a great deal of parading and noise went on, as that of beating drums, and sounding of trumpets and bugles, every day; and scarcely did there one pass on which there were not tilting bouts between the parties, and in these the English generally had the advantage. Never was there, perhaps, a more chivalrous host than that which Musgrave had under his command within the walls of Roxburgh; the enthusiasm, the gallantry, and the fire of the captain were communicated to all the train.

Their horses were much superior to those of the Scots; and, in place of the latter being able to make

any impression on the besieged, they could not, with all the vigilance they were able to use, prevent their posts from being surprised by the English, on which the most desperate encounters sometimes took place. At first the English generally prevailed, but the Scots at length became inured to it, and stood the shocks of the cavalry more firmly. They took care always at the first onset to cut the bridle reins with their broadswords, and by that means they disordered the ranks of their enemies, and often drove them back in confusion to their stronghold.

Thus months flew on in this dashing sort of warfare, and no impression was made on the fortress, nor did any appear practicable; and every one at court began to calculate on the failure and utter ruin of the Douglas. Piercy of Northumberland proffered to raise the country, and lead an army to the relief of the castle; but this interference Musgrave would in nowise admit, it being an infringement of the task imposed on him by his mistress.

Moreover, he said, he cared not if all the men of Scotland lay around the castle, for he would defy them to win it. He further bade the messenger charge Piercy and Howard to have an army ready at the expiry of the Christmas holidays, wherewith to relieve him, and clear the Border, but to take no care nor concern about him till then.

About this time an incident, common in that day, brought a number of noble young adventurers to the camp of Douglas. It chanced, in an encounter between two small rival parties at the back of the convent of Maisondieu, which stood on the south side of the Teviot, that Sir Thomas de Somerville of Carnwath engaged hand to hand with an English knight, named Sir Comes de Moubray, who after a desperate encounter, unhorsed and wounded him. The affair was seen from the walls of Roxburgh, as well as by a part of the Scottish army which was encamped on a rising ground to the south, that overlooked the plain, and of course, like all other chivalrous feats, became the subject of general conversation. Somerville was greatly mortified; and, not finding any other way to recover his honour, he sent a challenge to Moubray to fight him again before the gate of Roxburgh in sight of both armies. Moubray was too gallant to refuse. There was not a knight in the castle who would have declined such a chance of earning fame and recommending himself to his mistress. The challenge was joyfully accepted, and the two knights met in the midst of a circle of gentlemen appointed by both armies, on the castle green, that lay betwixt the moat and the river, immediately under the walls of the castle. Never was there a more gallant combat seen. They rode nine times against each other with full force, twice with lances and seven times with swords, yet always managed with such dexterity that neither was unhorsed nor yet materially wounded. But at the tenth charge, by a most strenuous exertion, Sir Thomas disarmed and threw his opponent out of his saddle, with his sword-arm dislocated. Somerville gained great renown, and his fame was sounded in court and in camp. Other challenges were soon sent from both sides, and as readily accepted; and some of the best blood both of Scotland and England was shed in these mad chivalrous exploits. The ambition of the young Scottish nobles was roused, and many of them flocked as volunteers to the standard of Douglas. Among these were some of the retainers of Redhough, who could not resist such an opportunity of trying their swords against some rivals with whom they had erst exchanged sharp blows on the marches. Simon of Gemelscleuch, his cousin John of Howpasley, and the Laird of Yard-bire, all arrived in the camp of Douglas in one night, in order to distinguish themselves in these tilting bouts. Earl Douglas himself challenged Musgrave, hoping thereby to gain his end, and the prize for which he fought; but the knight, true to his engagement, sent him for answer, that he would first see the beginning of a new year and then he should fight either him or any of his name; but that till then he had undertaken a charge to which all others must be subordinate.

The Laird of Yard-bire, the strongest man of the Border, fought three combats with English squires of the same degree, two on horseback and one on foot, and in all proved victorious. For one whole month the siege presented nothing new save these tiltings, which began at certain hours every day, and always became more obstinate, often proving fatal; and the eagerness of the young gentry of both parties to engage in them grew into a kind of mania: but an event happened which put an end to them at once.

There was a combat one day between two knights of the first degree, who were surrounded as usual by twenty lancers from each army, all the rest being kept at a distance, the English on the tops of their walls, and the Scots on the heights behind, both to the east and west; for there was one division of the army stationed on the hill of Barns and at the head of the Sick-man's Path, and another on the rising ground between the city and castle. The two gentlemen were equally matched, and the issue was doubtful, when the attendant Scottish guards perceived, or thought they perceived, in the bearing of the English knight, some breach of the rules of chivalry; on which with one voice they called out "Foul play." The English answered, "No, no, none." The two judges called to order, on which the spearmen stood still and listened, and hearing that the judges too were of different opinions, they took up the matter themselves, the Scots insisting that the knight should be disarmed and turned from the lists in disgrace, and the English refusing to acquiesce. The judges, dreading some fatal conclusion, gave their joint orders that both parties should retire, and let the matter be judged of afterwards; on which the English prepared to quit the ground with a kind of exultation, for it appeared that they were not certain with regard to

the propriety of their hero's conduct. Unluckily, it so happened that the redoubted Charlie Scott of Yard-bire headed the Scottish pikemen at the lists that day, a very devil for blood and battery, and of strength much beyond that generally allotted to man. When he saw that the insidious knight was going to be conducted off in a sort of triumph, and in a manner so different from what he deemed to suit his demerits, he clenched the handle of his sword with his right hand, and screwed down his eyebrows till they almost touched the top of his nose. "What now, muckle Charlie?" said one that stood by him. "What now?" repeated Charlie, growling like a wolf-dog, and confining the words almost within his own breast, "The deil sal bake me into a ker-cake to gust his gab wi', afore I see that saucy tike ta'en off in sic a way." And with that he dropped his pike, drew his sword, and rushing through the group he seized the knight's horse by the bridle with his left hand, thinking to lead both him and his master away prisoners. The knight struck at him with all his might, but for this Charlie was prepared; he warded the blow most dexterously, and in wrath, by the help of a huge curb-bridle, he threw the horse backward, first on his hams, and then on his back, with his rider under him. "Tak ye that, master, for whistling o' Sundays," said the intrepid Borderer, and began to lay about him at the English, who now attacked him on both sides.

Charlie's first break at the English knight was the watchword for a general attack. The Scots flew to the combat, in perfect silence and determined hatred, and they were received by the other party in the same manner. Not so the onlookers of both hosts—they rent the air with loud and reiterated shouts. The English poured forth in a small narrow column from the east gate along the drawbridge, but the Scottish horsemen, who were all ready mounted the better to see the encounter from their stations, scoured down from the heights like lightning, so that they prevailed at first, before the English could issue forth in numbers sufficient to oppose them. The brave Sir Richard Musgrave, the captain's younger brother, led the English, he having rushed out at their head at the first breaking out of the affray; but notwithstanding all his bravery, he with his party were driven with their backs to the moat, and hard pressed; Douglas, with a strong body of horse, having got betwixt them and the castle gate. The English were so anxious to relieve their young hero that they rushed to the gate in crowds. Douglas suffered a part to issue and then attacking them furiously with the cavalry, he drove them back in such confusion, that he got possession of the drawbridge for several minutes, and would in all likelihood have entered with the crowd, had it not been for the portcullis, the machinery of which the Scots did not understand, nor had they the means of counteracting it; so that just when they were in the hottest part of their enterprise, down it came louder than thunder, separating a few of the most forward from their brethren, who were soon every one cut down, as they refused to yield.

In the meantime it fared hard with Richard, who was overpowered by numbers; and though the English archers galled the Scottish cavalry grievously from the walls, he and all that were with him being forced backward plunged into the moat, and were every one of them either slain or taken prisoners. The younger Musgrave was among the latter, which grieved his brother Sir Philip exceedingly, as it gave Douglas an undue advantage over him, and he knew that, in the desperate state of his undertaking, he would go any lengths to over-reach him. From that day forth, all challenges or accepting of challenges was prohibited by Musgrave, under pain of death; and a proclamation was issued, stating that all who entered the castle should be stripped naked, searched, and examined, on what pretence soever they came, and if any suspicious circumstances appeared against them, they were to be hanged upon a post erected for the purpose, on the top of the wall, in sight of both armies. He was determined to spare no vigilance, and constantly said he would hold Douglas at defiance.

There was only one thing that the besieged had to dread, and it was haply, too, the only thing in which the Scots placed any degree of hope, and that was the total failure of provisions within the castle. Musgrave's plan of getting small supplies at a time from England by night was discovered by Sir Ringan Redhough, and completely cut off; and as Douglas hanged every messenger that fell into his hands, no new plan could be established. The rival armies always grew more inveterate against each other, and the most sharp and deadly measures were exercised by both. Matters went on in this manner till near the end of October, when the nights grew cold, long, and dark. There was nothing but the perils of that castle on the Border talked of over all Scotland and England. Every one, man, maid, and child, became interested in it. It may well be conceived that the two sovereign beauties, the Lady Jane Howard and Princess Margaret of Scotland, were not the least so; and both of them prepared, at the same time, in the true spirit of the age, to take some active part in the matter before it came to a final issue. One of them seemed destined to lose her hero, but both had put on the resolution of performing something worthy of the knights that were enduring so much for their sakes.

CHAPTER IV.

And O that pegis weste is slymme,
And his ee wald garr the daye luke dymme;
His broue is brente, his brestis fayre,
And the deemonde lurkis in hys revan hayre.
Alake for thilke bonnye boye ane leile
That lyes withe oure Kynge in the hie-lande shiele!

Old Rhymc.

I winna gang in, I darena gang in,
Nor sleep i' your arms ava;
Fu' laithly wad a fair maid sleep
Atween you an' the wa'.
War I to lie wi' a belted knight,
In a land that's no my ain,
Fu' dear wad be my courtesye,
An' dreich wad be my pain.

Old Ballad.

One cold biting evening at the beginning of November, Patrick Chisholm of Castle-weary, an old yeoman in the upper part of Teviotdale, sat conversing with his family all in a merry and cheerful mood. They were placed in a circle round a blazing hearth fire, on which hung a huge cauldron, boiling and bubbling like the pool at the foot of a cataract. The lid was suspended by a rope to the iron crook on which this lordly machine was hung, to intercept somewhat the showers of soot that now and then descended from the rafters. These appeared as if they had been covered with pitch or black japanning; and so violently was the kettle boiling, that it made the roof of Pate Chisholm's bigging all to shiver. Notwithstanding these showers of soot, Pate and his four goodly sons eyed the boiling cauldron with looks of great satisfaction, for ever and anon the hough of an immense leg of beef was to be seen cutting its capers in the boil, or coming with a graceful semicircular sweep from one lip of the pot to the other.

"Is it true, callants," said Pate, "that Howard is gaun to make a diversion, as they ca't, in the west border, to draw off the warden frae the Cheviots?"

"As muckle is said, an' as muckle expectit," said Dan, his first-born, a goodly youth, who, with his three brethren, sat in armour. They had come home to their father's house that night with their share of a rich prey that the warden had kidnapped while just collecting to send to Roxburgh under a guard of five thousand men. But Sir Ringan, getting intelligence of it, took possession of the drove before it was placed under the charge of those intended to guard it.

"As muckle is said, an' as muckle expectit," said Dan; "but the west border will never turn out sae weel to us as the east has done. It's o'er near the Johnstones, and the Jardines, and the hurkle-backit Hendersons."

Pate looked from under his bonnet at the hough of beef. "The Cheviot hills hae turned weel out for the warden," continued Dan; "Redhough an' his lads hae been as weel scrieving o'er law and dale as lying getting hard pelts round the stane wa's o' Roxburgh, an' muckle mair gude has he done; for gin they dinna hunger them out o' their hauddin, they'll keep it. Ye'll draw an Englishman by the gab easier than drive him wi' an airn gaud. I wad ride fifty miles to see ony ane o' the bonny dames that a' this pelting and peching is about."

"Twa wanton glaikit gillies, I'll uphaud," said Pate, looking at the restless hough; "o'er muckle marth i' the back, an' meldar i' the brusket. Gin I had the heffing o' them, I sude tak a staup out o' their bickers. Whisht, I thought I heard the clinking o' horse heels. Callant, clap the lid down on the pat; what hae they't hinging geaving up there for?"

The clattering of the horses approached, but apparently with caution; and at length a voice called at the door in an English accent, "Hollo, who holds here?" "Leal men an' for the Scots," answered Dan, starting to his feet, and laying his hand on his sword. "For the Knight of Mountcomyn, the Scottish warden?" inquired the horseman without. "For the same," was the answer. "It is toward his castle that we are bound. Can any of you direct us the way?"

"Troth, that I can," said old Pate, groping to satisfy himself that the lid was close down on the pot, and then running to the door; "I can tell you every fit o' the road, masters. You maun gang by the Fanesh, you see; it lies yon way, you see; an' then up the Brown-rig, as straight as a line through Philhope-head, an' into Borthwick; then up Aitsburn—round the Crib-law—an' wheel to the right; then the burn that ye come to there, ye maun cross that, and three miles farther on you come to the castle of Mountcomyn. Braw cheer there, lade!"

"I am afraid, friend," said the English trooper, "we will make nothing of this direction. Is it far to this same castle of the Scottish warden?"

"O no, naething but a step, some three Scots miles."

"And how is the road?"

"A prime road, man; no a step in't a' wad tak your horse to the brusket; only there's nae track: ye maun just take an ettle. Keep an e'e on the tail o' Charlie's-wain, an' ye'll no gang far wrang."

"Our young lord and master is much fatigued," said the trooper; "I am afraid we shall scarcely make it out. Pray, sir, could you spare us a guide?"

Dan, who was listening behind, now stepped forward and addressed them: "My masters, as the night is o' darkness, I could hardly ride to Mountcomyn mysel, an', far or near, I couldna win there afore day. Gin ye dought accept o' my father's humble cheer the night—"

"The callant's bewiddied, an' waur than bewiddied," said Pate. "We haena cheer for ourscls, let abee for a byking o' English lords an' squires!"

"I would gladly accept of any accommodation," said a sweet delicate voice, like that of a boy; "for the path has been so dreadful that I am almost dead, and unable to proceed further. I have a safe-conduct to the Scottish court, signed by all the wardens of the marches, and every knight, yeoman, and vassal is obliged to give me furtherance."

"I dinna ken muckle about conducts an' signatures," said Pate; "but I trow there winna be many syllables in some o' the names if a' the wardens has signed your libelt; for I ken weel there's ane o' them whase edication brak aff at the letter G. an'

never gat farrer. But I'm no ca'ing ye a leear, southron lord, ye may be a verra honest man; an' as your errand may be something unco express, ye had better post on."

"It sal never be casten up to me, neither in camp nor ha'," said Dan, "that a stranger was cawed frae my auld father's door at this time o' the night. Light down, light down, southron lord, ye are a privileged man; an', as I like to see the meaning o' things, I'll ride wi' ye mysel the morn, fit for fit, to the castle of Mountcomyn."

The strangers were soon all on their feet, and ushered into the family circle, for there was no fire-place in the house but that one. They consisted of five stout troopers, well armed, a page, and a young nobleman, having the appearance of a youth about seventeen or eighteen years of age. Every eye was instantly turned on him, there was something so extraordinary in his appearance. Instead of a steel helmet he wore a velvet cap, shaped like a crown, striped with belts, bars, and crosses of gold wire, and manifestly more for ornament than use. His fair ringlets were peeping in curls out from below his cap, and his face and bright blue eyes were lovely as the dawn of a summer's morning.

They were not well seated till a noise of the tread of horses was again heard.

"The warld be a-wastle us!" cried old Pate, "wha's that now? I think fouk will be eaten up wi' fouk, an' naething for fouk's pains but dry thanks; thanks winna feed the cat—"

He was stopped in his regretful soliloquy by a rough voice at the door; "Ho, wha hauds the house?" The same answer was given as to the former party, and in a minute the strangers entered without law or leave.

"Ye travel unco late, maisters," said old Pate: "how far may ye be for the night?"

"We meant to have reached the tower of Gorranberry to-night," said one of the strangers, "but we have been benighted, and were drawn hither by the light in your bole. I fear we must draw on your hospitality till day."

"Callant Peter, gang an' stap a wisp i' that bole," said Pate, "it seems to be the beacon light to a' the clanjaumphry i' the hale country. I tauld ye aye to big it up; but no ane o' ye heeds what I say. I hae seen houses that *some* fouk whiles gaed by. But, my maisters, its nae gate ava to Gorranberry, a mere haut-stride-and-loup. I'll send a guide to Bilhope-head wi' ye; for troth we hae neither meat nor drink, house-room nor stabling, mair about the toun. We're but poor yeomen, an' haud our mailin for hard service. We hae tholed a foray the night already, an' a double ane wad herrie us out o' house an' hauld. The warld be a-wastle us! I think a' the moss-troopers be abraid the night! Bairns, swee that bouking o' claes aff the fire; ye'll burn it i' the boiling."

The new-comers paid little attention to this address of the old man; they saw that he was superannuated, and had all the narrow selfishness that too generally clings to that last miserable stage of human existence; but drawing nigh they began to eye the southron party with looks of dark suspicion, if not of fierceness.

"I see what maks ye sae frightet at our entrance here," said the first Scots trooper; "ye hae some southron spies amang ye—Gudeman, ye sal answer to the king for this, an' to the Douglas too, whilk ye'll find a waur job."

"Ken where ye are, an' wha ye're speaking to," said Dan, stepping forward and browing the last speaker face to face: "if either the ae party or the ither be spies, or aught else but leal men, ye shall find, ere ye gang far, whase land ye are on, an' whase kipples ye are under. That auld man's my father, an', doitet as he is, the man amang ye that says a saucy word to him, I'll gar sleep in his shoon a fit shorter than he raise i' the morning. Wha are ye, sir, or where do you travel by night on my master the warden's bounds?"

"Sir," answered another trooper, who seemed to be rather a more polished man, "I applaud your spirit, and will answer your demand. We go with our lord and master, Prince Alexander Stuart of Scotland, on a mission to a noble English family. Here is the king's seal, as well as a pass signed by the English warden. We are leal men and true."

"Where is the prince?" said Dan. "A prince of Scotland i' my father's house? Which is he?"

A slender elegant stripling stepped forward. "Here he is, brave yeoman," said the youth. "No ceremony; regard me as your fellow and companion for this night."

Dan whipped off his bonnet and clapped his foot upon it, and bowing low and awkwardly to his prince, he expressed his humble respect as well as he could, and then presented the prince to his father. The title sounded high in the old man's ears; he pulled off his bonnet and looked with an unsteady gaze, as if uncertain on whom to fix it—"A prince! Eh?—Is he a prince o' Scotland? Ay, ay!" said he, "then he'll maybe hae some say wi' our head men—Dan—I say, Dan"—and with that he pulled Dan's sleeve, and said in a whisper loud enough to be heard over all the house, "I say, Dan, man, gin he wad but speak to the warden to let us hae a' the land west the length o' the Frosty lair. Oh it wad lie weel into ours!" "It wad, father, and I daresay we may get it; but hush just now." "Eh? do you think we may get it?" inquired the old man eagerly in the same whispering tremulous voice; "Oh man, it wad lie weel in; an' sae wad Couter's-cleuch. It's no perfect wanting that too. An' we wad be a great deal the better o' twa or three rigs aff Skelfhill for a bit downfa' to the south. See if ye can speak to the lad."

Dan shook his father's hand, and nodded to him by way of acquiescence. The old man brightened

up; "Whar is your titty Bessy, Dan? Whar are a' the idle hizzies? Gar them get something set down to the princely lad. I'se warrant he's e'en hungry.—Ye'll no be used til siccan roads as this, sir? Na, na.—They're unco roads for a prince. Dan, I say, come this way; I want to speak to you—I say" (whispering very low aside), "I wadna let them ken o' the beef, or they'll just gang wi't. Gie them milk an' bread, an' cheese, an' a drap o' the broo; it will do weel aneuch. Hunger's good sauce. But Dan, I say, could ye no contrive to get quat o' thae English? I doubt there will be little made o' them. They're but a wheen gillie-gaupies at the best, an' nae freends to us. Fouk sude aye bow to the bush they get bield frae."

"It's a' true that ye say, father; but we surely needna grudge an Englishman a piece o' an English cow's hip. The beef didna cost you dear; there's mair where it cam frae."

The old man would not give up his point, but persisted in saying it was a dangerous experiment, and an unprofitable waste. However, in spite of his remonstrances, the board was loaded with six wooden bickers filled with beef broth, plenty of bere-meal bannocks, and a full quarter of English ox-beef, to which the travellers did all manner of justice. The prince, as he called himself, was placed at the head of the table, and the young English nobleman by his side. Their eyes were scarcely ever turned from one another's faces, unless in a casual hasty glance to see how others were regarding the same face. The prince had dark raven hair that parted on a brow of snow, a black liquid eye, and round lips, purer than the cherry about to fall from the tree with ripeness. He was also a degree taller than the English lord; but both of them, as well as their two pages, were lovelier than it became men to be. The troopers who attended them seemed disposed to contradict everything that came from the adverse party, and, if possible, to broach a quarrel, had it not been for the two knights, who were all suavity, good breeding, and kindness to each other, and seemed to have formed an attachment at first sight. At length Prince Alexander inquired of his new associate his name, and business at the Scottish court, provided, he said, that it did not require strict secresy. The other said he would tell him everything truly, on condition that he would do the same: which being agreed to, the young English nobleman proceeded as follows:

"My name is Lord Jasper Tudor, second son to the Earl of Pembroke. I am nearly related to the throne of England, and in high favour with the king. The wars on the Borders have greatly harassed the English Dalesmen for these many years, and matters being still getting worse between the nations, the king my cousin has proposed to me to marry the Princess Margaret of Scotland, and obtain as her dowry a confirmation of these Border lands and castles, so that a permanent peace may be established between the nations, and this bloody and desperate work cease. I am on my way to the Scottish court to see the princess your sister; and if I find her to be as lovely and accomplished as fame speaks her, I intend to comply with the king's request, and marry her forthwith."

This speech affected the prince so much that all the guests wondered. He started to his feet, and smiling in astonishment said, "What, you! you marry my m—m—my sister Margaret? She is very much beholden to you, and on my word she will see a becoming youth. But are you sure that she will accept of you for a husband?" "I have little to fear on that head," said the Lord Jasper Tudor jeeringly; "maids are in general not much averse to marriage: and, if I am well informed, your lovely sister is as little averse to it as any of her contemporaries."

The prince blushed deep at this character of his sister, but had not a word to say.

"Pray," continued Tudor, "is she like you? If she is, I think I shall love her—I would not have her just like you either."

"I believe," said the prince, "there is a strong family likeness; but tell me in what features you would wish her to differ from me, and I will describe her minutely to you."

"In the first place," said the amorous blue-eyed Tudor, "I should like her to be a little stouter, and more manly of frame than you, and, at least, to have some appearance of a beard."

All the circle stared. "The devil you would, my lord," said Dan; "wad you like your wife to hae a beard, in earnest? Gude faith, an your sin was like mine, ye wad think ye had eneuch o't forby your wife's." The prince held up his hands in astonishment, and the young English lord blushed deeper than it behoved a knight to do; but at length he tried to laugh it off by pretending that he had unwittingly said one thing when he meant the very contrary, for he wished her to be more feminine, and have less beard." "I think that will hardly be possible," said Dan; "but perhaps there may be a hair here an' there on my lord the prince's chin, when ane comes near it. I wadna disparage my man, far less my king's son."

"Well, my noble lord," said the prince, "your tale has not a little surprised me, as well it may. Our meeting here in like circumstances is the most curious rencounter I ever knew; for, to tell you the plain truth, I am likewise on an errand on the same import, being thus far on my way to see and court the Lady Jane Howard, in order that all her wide domains may be attached to my father's kingdom, and peace and amity thereby established on the Border."

"Gracious heaven!" said young Lord Tudor, "can this that I hear be true? You! And on your way to my cousin, the Lady Jane Howard? Why, do you not know that she is already affianced to Lord Musgrave?"

"Yes, it is certain I do; but that is one of my

principal inducements to gain her from him; that is quite in the true spirit of gallantry; but save her great riches, I am told she has little else to recommend her," said the prince.

"And pray, how does fame report of my cousin Jane?" said Tudor.

"As of a shrew and a coquette," answered the prince; "a wicked minx, that is intemperate in all her passions."

"It is a manifest falsehood," said Tudor, his face glowing with resentment; "I never knew a young lady so moderate and chastened in every passion of the female heart. Her most private thoughts are pure as purity itself, and her—"

"But begging your pardon, my lord, how can you possibly know all this?" said the prince.

"I do know it," said the other, "it is no matter how: I cannot hear my fair cousin wronged; and I know that she will remain true to Musgrave, and have nothing to do with you."

"I will bet an earldom on that head," said the prince, "if I choose to lay siege to her."

"Done!" said the other, and they joined hands on the bargain; but they had no sooner laid their hands into one another's than they hastily withdrew them, with a sort of trepidation, that none of the lookers-on, save the two pages, who kept close by their masters, appeared to comprehend. They, too, were both mistaken in the real cause; but of that it does not behove to speak at present.

"I will let you see," said the prince, recovering himself, "that this celebrated cousin of yours shall not be so ill to win as the castle of Roxburgh; and I'll let Musgrave see for how much truth and virgin fidelity he has put his life in his hand; and when I have her I'll cage her, for I don't like her. I would give that same earldom to have her in my power to-night."

The young Lord Tudor looked about as if he meditated an escape to another part of the table; but, after a touch that his page gave him on the sleeve, he sat still, and mustered up courage for a reply.

"And pray, sir prince, what would you do with her if you had her in your power to-night?"

"Something very different from what I would do with you, my lord. But please describe her to me, for my very heart is yearning to behold her—describe every point of her form and lineament of her features."

"She is esteemed as very beautiful; for my part I think her but so so," said Tudor: "she has fair hair, light full blue eyes, and ruddy cheeks; and her brow, I believe, is as fine and as white as any brow can be."

"O frightful! what a description! what an ugly minx it must be! Fair hair! red, I suppose, or dirty dull yellow! Light blue eyes! mostly white, I fancy? Ah, what a frightful immodest ape it must be! I could spit upon the huzzy!"

"Mary shield us!" exclaimed young Tudor, moving farther away from the prince, and striking lightly with his hand on his doublet as if something unclean had been squirted on it. "Mary shield us! What does the saucy Scot mean?"

Every one of the troopers put his hand to his sword, and watched the eye of his master. The prince beckoned to the Scots to be quiet; but Lord Tudor did no such thing, for he was flustered and wroth.

"Pardon me, my lord," said the prince, "I may perhaps suffer enough from the beauty and perfections of your fair cousin after I see her; you may surely allow me to deride them now. I am trying to depreciate the charms I dread. But I do not like the description of her. Tell me seriously, do you not think her very intolerable?"

"I tell you, prince, I think quite otherwise. I believe Jane to be fifty times more lovely than any dame in Scotland; and a hundred times more beautiful than your tawny virago of a sister, whom I shall rejoice to tame like a spaniel. The haughty, vain, conceited, swart venom, that she should lay her commands on the Douglas to conquer or die for her! A fine presumption, forsooth! But the world shall see whether the charms of my cousin Lady Jane Howard, or those of your grim and tawdry princess, have most power."

"Yes, they shall, my lord," said the prince: "in the meantime let us drop the subject. I see I have given you offence, not knowing that you were in love with Lady Jane, which now I clearly see to be the case. Nevertheless, go on with the description, for I am anxious to hear all about her, and I promise to approve if there be a bare possibility of it."

"Her manner is engaging, and her deportment graceful and easy; her waist is slim, and her limbs slender and elegant beyond anything you ever saw," said Lord Tudor.

"Oh shocking," exclaimed the prince, quite forgetting himself: "worst of all! I declare I have no patience with the creature. After such a description, who can doubt the truth of the reports about the extreme levity of her conduct? Confess now, my lord, that she is very free of her favours, and that the reason why so many young gentlemen visit her is now pretty obvious."

High offence was now manifest in Lord Jasper Tudor's look. He rose from his seat, and said in great indignation, "I did not ween I should be insulted in this guise by the meanest peasant in Scotland, far less by one of its courtiers, and least of all by a prince of the blood royal. Yeomen, I will not, I cannot suffer this degradation. These ruffian Scots are intruders on us—here I desire that you will expel them the house."

The Prince of Scotland was at the head of the table, Tudor was at his right hand; the rest of the English were all on that side, the Scots on the other—their numbers were equal. Dan and his three

brethren sat at the bottom of the board around the old man, who had been plying at the beef with no ordinary degree of perseverance, nor did he cease when the fray began. Every one of the two adverse parties was instantly on his feet, with his sword gleaming in his hand; but finding that the benches from which they had arisen hampered them, they with one accord sprung on the tops of these, and crossed their swords. The pages screamed like women. The two noble adventurers seemed scarcely to know the use of their weapons, but looked on with astonishment. At length the prince, somewhat collecting himself, drew out his slim whinger, and brandished it in a most unwarlike guise, on which the blue-eyed Tudor retreated behind his attendants holding up his hands, but still apparently intent on revenge for the vile obloquy thrown on the character of *his cousin*, Lady Jane Howard. "'Tis just pe te shance she vantit," said the Scot next to the prince.

"My certy, man, we'll get a paick at the louns now," said the second.

"Fat te teel's ta'en 'e bits o' vee laddies to flee a' eet abeet 'er buts o' wheers? I wudnae hae my feet i' their sheen for three placks an' a beedle," said the third.

"Thou's a' i' the wrang boux now, chaps," said the fourth. These were all said with one breath; and before the Englishmen had time to reply, clash went the swords across the table, and the third Scot, the true Aberdonian, was wounded, as were also two of the Englishmen, at the very first pass.

These matters are much sooner done than described. All this was the work of a few seconds, and done before advice could either be given or attended to. Dan now interfered with all the spirit and authority that he was master of. He came dashing along the middle of the board in his great war boots, striking up their swords as he came, and interposing his boardly frame between the combatants. "You madcaps!" cried Dan as loud as he could bawl: "what's fa'en a bobbing at your midriffs now? Ye're a' my father's guests an' mine; an', by the shin-banes o' Sant Peter, the first side that lifts a sword, or says a misbehadden word, my three brethren and I will tak' the tother side, an' amoor the transgressors like as mony moor-poots."

"Keep your feet aff the meat, fool," said old Pate.

"Gude sauff us!" continued Dan, "what has been said to gie ony offence? What though the young gentlewoman dis tak a stown jink o' a chap that's her ain sweetheart whiles? Where's the harm in that? There's little doubt o' the thing. An' for my part, gin she didna—"

Here Dan was interrupted in his elegant harangue by a wrathful hysteric scream from young Tudor, who pulled out his whinyard, and ran at Dan, boring at him in awkward but most angry sort, crying all the while, "I will not bear this insult! Will my followers hear me traduced to my face?"

"Deil's i' 'e wee but steepid laddie," said Buchan the Aberdonian; "it thinks' at 'er preeving it to be a wheer 'e sel o't!"

Dan lifted up his heavy sword in high choler to cleave the stripling, and he would have cloven him to the belt, but curbing his wrath, he only struck his sword, which he made fly into pieces and jingle against the rafters of the house; then seizing the young adventurer by the shoulder, he snatched him up to him on the board, where he still stood, and, taking his head below his arm, he held him fast with the one hand, making signs with the other to his brethren to join the Scots, and disarm the English, who were the aggressors both times. In the meantime, he was saying to Tudor. "Hout, hout, young master, ye hae never been o'er the Border afore; ye sude hae staid at hame an' wantit a wife till ye gathered mair rumelgumption."

The five English squires, now seeing themselves set upon by nine, yielded and suffered themselves to be disarmed.

When Tudor came to himself, he appeared to be exceedingly grieved at his imprudence, and ready to make any acknowledgment, while the prince treated him with still more and more attention; yet these attentions were ever and anon mixed with a teazing curiosity, and a great many inquiries, that the young nobleman could not bear, and did not choose to answer.

It now became necessary to make some arrangement for the parties passing the night. Patrick Chisholm's house had but one fire-place in an apartment which served for kitchen and hall; but it had a kind of *ben end*, as it was then, and is always to this day, denominated in that part of the country. There was scarcely room to move a foot in it; for besides two oaken beds with rowan-tree bars, it contained five huge chests belonging to the father and his sons, that held their clothes and warlike accoutrements. The daughters of yeomen in these days did not sit at table with the men. They were the household servants. Two of Pate's daughters, who had been bustling about all the evening, conducted the two noble youths into this apartment, together with their two pages. The one bed was neatly made down with clean clothes, and the other in a more common way. "Now," said one of the landward lasses, "you twa masters are to sleep thegither in here—in o' this guid bed, ye see, an' the twa lads in o' this ane." The two young noblemen were standing close together, as beloved in such a room. On the girl addressing them thus, their eyes met each other's, but were as instantly withdrawn and fixed on the floor, while a blush of the deepest tint suffused the cheeks of both, spreading over the chin and neck of each. The pages contemplated each other in the same way, but not with the same degree of timidity. The English stripling seemed rather to approve of the arrangement, or at least pretended to do so; for he frankly took

the other by the hand, and said in a sweet voice, but broad dialect, "Weal, yuong Scuot, daghest thou lig woth mey?" The young Caledonian withdrew his hand, and held down his head: "I always lie at my master's feet," said he.

"And so shall you do to-night, Colin," said the prince, "for I will share this bed with you, and let my lord take the good one." I cannot go to bed to-night," said Tudor, "I will rest me on this chest; I am resolved I shan't go to bed, nor throw off my clothes to night."

"Ye winna?" said May Chisholm, who visibly wanted a romp with the young blooming chief—"ye winna gang til nae bed, will ye nae, and me has been at sic pains making it up til ye? Bess, come here an' help me, we sal soon see whether he's gang till his bed or no, an' that no wi' his braw claes on neither." So saying, the two frolicsome queans seized the rosy stripling, and in a moment had him stretched on the bed, and making his doublet fly open all at one rude pull, they were proceeding to undress him, giggling and laughing all the while. Prince Alexander, from a momentary congenial feeling of delicacy, put his hand hastily across to keep the lapels of Tudor's vesture together, without the motion having been perceived by any one in the hurry, and that moment the page flung himself across his master's breast, and reproved the lasses so sharply that they desisted, and left them to settle the matter as they chose.

The prince had, however, made a discovery that astonished him exceedingly; for a few minutes his head was almost turned, but the truth soon began to dawn on his mind, and every reflection, every coincidence, every word that had been said, and offence that had been taken, tended to confirm it; so he determined, not for additional trial, but for the joke's sake, to press matters a little further.

When quietness was again restored, and when the blush and the frown had several times taken alternate sway of the young lord's face, the prince said to him, "After all, my lord, I believe we must take share of the same bed together for this one night. It is more proper and becoming than to sleep with our pages. Besides, I see the bed is good and clean, and I have many things to talk to you about our two countries, and about our two intended brides, or sweethearts, let us call them in the meantime."

"Oh no, no, prince," said Tudor, "indeed I cannot, I may not, I would not sleep in the same bed with another gentleman—No—I never did—never."

"Do not say so, my dear lord, for on my word, I am going to insist on it," said the prince, coming close up to him, his eyes beaming with joy at the discovery he had made. "You shall sleep by my side to-night: nay, I will even take you in my bosom and caress you as if you were my own sweet dear Lady Jane Howard." Tudor was now totally confounded, and knew neither what to say for himself, nor what he did say when he spoke. He held out both his hands, and cried, "Do not, prince, do not—I beg—I implore, do not; for I cannot, cannot consent. I never slept even in the same apartment with a man in all my life."

"What, have you always slept in a room by yourself?" asked the teazing prince.

"No, never, but always with ladies—yes, always!" was the passionate and sincere reply.

Here the prince held up his hands, and turned up his eyes. "What a young profligate!" exclaimed he, "Mary shield us! Have you no conscience with regard to the fair sex, that you have begun so wicked a course, and that so early? Little did I know why you took a joke on your cousin so heinously amiss! I see it now; truth will out! Ah, you are such a youth! I will not go a foot farther to see Lady Jane. What a wicked degraded imp she must be! Do not kindle into a passion again, my dear lord. I can well excuse your feigned wrath, it is highly honourable. I hate the knight that blabs the favours he enjoys from the fair. He is bound to defend the honour that has stooped to him; even though (as in the present instance I suppose) it have stooped to half a dozen more besides."

A great deal of taunting and ill-humour prevailed between these capricious and inexperienced striplings, and sorely was Tudor pressed to take share of a bed with the prince, but in vain—his feelings recoiled from it; and the other being in possession of a secret of which the English lord was not aware, took that advantage of teazing and tormenting him almost beyond sufferance. After all, it was decided that each should sleep with his own page: a decision that did not seem to go well down at all with the Yorkshire boy, who once ventured to expostulate with his lord, but was silenced with a look of angry disdain.

CHAPTER V.

He set her on his milk-white steed,
Himself lap on behind her,
And they are o'er the Highland hills;
Her friends they cannot find her.
As they rode over hill and dale
This lady often fainted,
And cried, "Wo to my cursed moneye,
That this road to me invented."

Ballad of Rob Roy.

O cam ye here to fight, young man,
Or cam ye here to flee?
Or cam ye out o' the wally west
Our bonnie bride to see?

Ballad called Foul Play.

It is by this time needless to inform my readers, that these two young adventurers were no other than the rival beauties of the two nations, for whose charms all this bloody coil was carried on at Roxburgh; and who, without seeing, had hated each other as cordially as any woman is capable of hating

her rival in beauty or favour. So much had the siege and the perils of Roxburgh become the subject of conversation, that the ears of the two maidens had long listened to nothing else, and each of them deemed her honour embarked in the success of her lover. Each of them had set out with the intent of visiting the camp in disguise; and having enough of interest to secure protections for feigned names, each determined to see her rival in the first place, the journey not being far; and neither of them it is supposed went with any kind intent. Each of them had a maid dressed in boy's clothes with her, and five stout troopers, all of whom were utterly ignorant of the secret. The princess had by chance found out her rival's sex; but the Scottish lady and her attendant being both taller and of darker complexions than the other two, no suspicions were entertained against them detrimental to their enterprise. The princess never closed an eye, but lay meditating on the course she should take. She was convinced that she had her rival in her power, and she determined, not over generously, to take advantage of her good fortune. The time drew nigh that Roxburgh must be lost or won, and well she knew that, whichever side succeeded, according to the romantic ideas of that age, the charms of the lady would have all the honour, while she whose hero lost would be degraded—considerations which no woman laying claim to superior and all-powerful charms could withstand.

Next morning Dan was aroused at an early hour by his supposed prince, who said to him, "Brave yeoman, from a long conversation that I have had last night with these English strangers, I am convinced that they are despatched on some traitorous mission; and as the warden is in Northumberland, I propose conveying them straight to Douglas' camp, there to be tried for their lives. If you will engage to take charge of them, and deliver them safely to the captain before night, you shall have a high reward; but if you fail, and suffer any of them to escape, your neck shall answer for it. How many men can you raise for this service?"

"Our men are maistly up already," said Dan; "but muckle Charlie o' Yardbire gaed hame last night wi' twa or three kye like oursels. Gin Charlie an' his lads come, I sal answer for the English chaps, if they war twa to ane. I hae mysel an' my three billies, deil a shank mae; but an Charlie come he's as gude as some three, an' his backman's nae beanswaup neither."

"Then," said the counterfeit prince, "I shall leave all my attendants to assist you, save my page—we two must pursue our journey with all expedition. All that is required of you is to deliver the prisoners safe to the Douglas. I will despatch a message to him by the way, apprising him of the circumstances."

The Lady Margaret and her page then mounted their palfreys and rode off without delay; but instead of taking the road by Gorranberry, as they had proposed over night, they scoured away at a light gallop down the side of the Teviot. At the town of Hawick she caused her page, who was her chief waiting maid and confidant, likewise in boy's clothes, to cut out her beautiful fleece of black hair, that glittered like the wing of the raven, being determined to attend in disguise the issue of the contest. She then procured a red curled wig, and dressing herself in a Highland garb, with a plumed bonnet, tartan jacket and trousers, and Highland hose and brogues, her appearance was so completely altered, that even no one who had seen her the day before, in the character of the prince her brother, could possibly have known her to be the same person; and leaving her page near the camp to await her private orders, she rode straight up to head-quarters by herself.

Being examined as she passed the outposts, she said she brought a message to Douglas of the greatest importance, and that it was from the court; and her address being of such a superior cast, every one furthered her progress till she came to the captain's tent. Scarcely did she know him—care, anxiety, and watching had so worn him down; and her heart was melted when she saw his appearance. Never, perhaps, could she have been said to have loved him till that moment; but the sight of what he had suffered for her sake, the great stake he had ventured, and the almost hopeless uncertainty that appeared in every line of his face, raised in her heart a feeling unknown to her before; and highly did that heart exult at the signal advantage that her good fortune had given him over his rival. Yet she determined on trying the state of his affections and hopes. Before leaving Hawick she had written a letter to him, inclosing a lock of her hair neatly plaited; but this letter she kept back in order to sound her lover first without its influence. He asked her name and her business. She had much business, she said, but not a word save for his private ear. Douglas was struck with the youth's courtly manner, and looked at him with a dark searching eye—"I have no secrets," said he, "with these my kinsmen; I desire, before them, to know your name and business."

"My name," said the princess pertly, "is Colin Roy M'Alpin—I care not who knows my name; but no word further of my message do I disclose save to yourself."

"I must humour this pert stripling," said he turning to his friends; "if his errand turns out to be one of a trivial nature, and that does not require all this ceremony, I shall have him horse-whipped."

With that the rest of the gentlemen went away, and left the two by themselves, Colin, as we must now for brevity's sake term the princess, was at first somewhat abashed before the dark eye of Douglas, but soon displayed all the effrontery that his assumed character warranted, if not three times more.

"Well now, my saucy little master, Colin Roy

M'Alpin, please condescend so far as to tell me whence you are, and what is your business here—this secret business of such vast importance."

"I am from court, my lor'; from the Scottish court, an't please you, my lor'; but not directly as a body may say—my lor'; not directly—here—there—south—west—precipitately, incontrovertibly, ascertaining the scope and bearing of the progressive advance of the discomfiture and gradual wreck of your most flagrant and preposterous undertaking."

"The devil confound the impertinent puppy!"

"Hold, hold, my lor', I mean your presumptuous and foolhardy enterprise, first in presuming to the hand of my mistress, the king's daughter—my lovely and queenly mistress; and then in foolhardily running your head against the walls of Roxburgh to attain this, and your wit and manhood against the superior generalship of a Musgrave."

"By the pock-net of St. Peter, I will cause every bone in your body to be basted to powder, you incorrigible pedant and puppy!" said the Douglas; and seizing him by the collar of the coat, he was about to drag him to the tent-door and throw him into the air.

"Hold, my lor'; please keep off your rough uncourtly hands till I deliver the credentials of my mistress."

"Did you say that you were page to the Princess Margaret? Yes, surely you are; I have erst seen that face, and heard that same flippant tongue. Pray, what word or token does my dear and sovereign lady send me?"

"She bade me say that she does not approve of you at all, my lor'—that, for her sake, you ought to have taken this castle many days ago. And she bade me ask you why you don't enter the castle by the gate, or over the wall, or under the hill, which is only a sand one, and hang up all the Englishmen by the necks, and send the head of Philip Musgrave to his saucy dame?—She bade me ask you why you don't, my lor'?"

"Women will always be women," said Douglas surlily to himself: "I thought the princess superior to her sex, but—"

"But! but what, my lor'? Has she not good occasion for displeasure? She bade me tell you that you don't like her; that you don't like her half so well as Musgrave does his mistress—else why don't you do as much for her? He took the castle for the sake of his mistress, and for her sake he keeps it in spite of you. Therefore she bade me tell you, that you must *go in* and beat the English, and take the castle from them; for she will not suffer it that Lady Jane Howard shall triumph over her."

"Tell her in return," said Douglas, "that I will do what man can do; and when that is done, she shall find that I neither will be slack in requiring the fulfilment of her engagement, nor in performing my own. If that womanish tattling be all that you have to say, begone: the rank of your employer protects you."

"Hold, my lor', she bade me look well, and tell her what you were like, and if I thought you changed since I waited on you at court. On my conscience you look very ill. These are hard ungainly features of yours. I'll tell her you look very shabby, and very surly, and that you have lost all heart. But oh, my lor', I forgot she bade me tell you, that if you found you were clearly beat, it would be as well to draw off your men and abandon the siege; and that she would, perhaps, in pity, give you a moiety of your lands again."

"I have no patience with the impertinence of a puppy, even though the messenger of her I love and esteem above all the world. Get you hence."

"Oh, my lor', I have not third done yet. But, stay, here is a letter I had almost forgot."

Douglas opened the letter. Well he knew the hand; there were but few in Scotland who could write, and none could write like the princess. It contained a gold ring set with rubies, and a lock of her hair. He kissed them both; and tried the ring first on the one little finger, and then on the other, but it would scarcely go over the nail; so he kissed them again, and put them in his bosom. He then read to himself as follows:

"My good lord,—I inclose you two love-tokens of my troth; let them be as beacons to your heart to guide it to deeds of glory and renown. For my sake put down these English. Margaret shall ever pray for your success. Retain my page Colin near your person. He is true-hearted, and his flippancy affected. Whatever you communicate to him will be safely transmitted to

"Margaret."

It may well be supposed how Colin watched the emotions of Douglas while reading this heroic epistle; and in the true spirit of the age, they were abundantly extravagant. He kissed the letter, hugged it in his bosom, and vowed to six or seven saints to do such deeds for his adored princess as never were heard or read of.

"Now, my good lor'," said the page, "you must inform me punctually what hopes you have of success, and if there is anything wanting that the kingdom can afford you."

"My ranks are too thin," replied the Douglas; "and I have engaged to take Roxburgh with my own vassals. The warden is too proud to join his forces to mine on that footing, but keeps scouring the Borders, on pretence of preventing supplies and thus assisting me, but in truth for enriching himself and his followers. If I could have induced him and his whole force to have joined the camp, famine would have compelled the enemy to yield a month agone. But I have now the captain's brother prisoner; and I have already given him to know, that if he does not deliver up the castle to me in four days, I will

hang the young knight up before his eyes—I have sworn to do it, and I swear again to keep my oath."

"I will convey all this to my mistress," said Colin; "so then you have his only brother in your hold? My lor', the victory is your own, and the princess, my mistress, beside. In a few hours will be placed in your hands the primal cause and fomentor of this cruel and bloody war, the Lady Jane Howard."

The Douglas started like one aroused from slumber or a state of lethargy by a sudden wound. "What did you say, boy?" said he. "Either I heard amiss, or you are dreaming. I have offered estates, nay, I have offered an earldom, to any hardy adventurer who would bring me that imperious dame; but the project has been abandoned as quite impracticable."

"Rest content," said Colin: "I have secured her, and she will be delivered into your hands before night. She has safe passports with her to the Scottish court, but they are in favour of Jasper Tudor, son to the Earl of Pembroke; so that the discovery of her sex proves her an impostor, and subjects her to martial law, which I request, for my mistress' sake, you will execute on her. My lady the princess, with all her beauty and high accomplishments, is a very woman; and I know there is nothing on earth she so much dreads as the triumph of Lady Jane over her. Besides, it is evident she was bound to the Scottish court either to poison the princess, or inveigle her into the hands of her enemies. All her attendants are ignorant of her sex save a page, who is said to be a blooming English country maiden. The Prince Alexander bade me charge you never to mention by what means she came into your hands, but to give it out that she was brought to you by a miracle, by witchcraft, or by the power of a mighty magician." "It is well thought of, boy," said the Douglas, greatly elevated; "I have been obliged to have recourse to such means already—this will confirm all. The princess your mistress desires that you should remain with me. You shall be my right-hand page, I will love and favour you; you shall be fed with the bread and wine, and shall sleep in my tent, and I will trust you with all my secrets for the welcome tidings you have brought, and for the sake of the angelic dame that recommends you to me; for she is my beloved, my adored mistress, and for her will I either conquer or die! My sword is her's— my life is her's—nay, my very soul is the right of my beloved!" Poor Colin dropped a tear on hearing this passionate nonsense. Women love extravagance in such matters, but in those days it had no bounds.

It was not long till the prisoners arrived, under the care of muckle Charlie Scott of Yardbire and Dan Chisholm, with their troopers, guarded in a very original manner. When Charlie arrived at old Chisholm's house, and learned that a *prince* had been there, and had given such charges about the prisoners, he determined to make sure work; and as he had always most trust to put in himself, he took the charge of the young English nobleman and his squire as he supposed them to be. The page he took on his huge black horse behind him, lashing him to his body with strong belts cut from a cow's raw hide. His ancles were moreover fastened to the straps at the tops of Charlie's great war-boots; so that the English maiden must have had a very uncomfortable ride. But the other he held on before him, keeping her all the way in his arms, exactly as a countryman holds up a child in the church to be christened.

The Lady Jane Howard had plenty of the spirit of romance about her, but she neither had the frame nor the energy of mind requisite for carrying her wild dreams of female heroism into effect. She was an only child—a spoiled one; having been bred up without perhaps ever being controlled, till she fell into the hands of these Border moss-troopers. Her displeasure was excessive. She complained bitterly of her detention, and much more of being sent a prisoner to the camp. When she found herself in muckle Charlie Scott's arms, borne away to be given up to the man whom of all the world she had most reason to dread, she even forgot herself so far as to burst into tears. Charlie, with all his inordinate strength and prowess, had a heart so soft, that, as he said himself, "a laverock might hae laired in't;" and he further added, that when he saw "the bit bonnie English callan', that was comed o' sic grand blude, grow sae desperately wae, an' fa' a blirting and greeting, the deil a bit but his heart was like to come out at his mouth." This was no lie, for his comrades beheld him two or three times come across his eyes with his mailed sleeve—a right uncouth handkerchief; and then he tried to comfort the youth with the following speech: "Troth, man, but I'm unco wae for ye, ye're sae young an' sae bonny, an' no' a fit man at a' to send out i' thir crabbit times. But tak good heart, and dinna be daunted, for it will soon be over w'ye. Ye'll neither hae muckle to thole nor lang time to dree't, for our captain will hang ye directly. He hangs a' spies an' messengers aff hand; sae it's no worth nacbody's while to greet. Short wark's aye best i' sic cases."

"He cannot, he dares not injure a hair of my head," said Lady Jane passionately.

"*Canna!*" said Charlie; "gude faith, ye ken that's nonsense. He can as easily hang ye, or do ought else w'ye, as I can wipe my beard. An' as for the thing that the Douglas *darena* do, gude faith, ye ken, I never saw it yet. But I'm sure I wish ye *may* be safe, for it wad do little good to me to see your bit pease-weep neck rackit."

"It was most unfair, as well as most ungenerous in your prince to detain me," said she, "as my business required urgency. I had regular signed warrandice, and went on the kindest intent; besides, I have a great aversion to be put into the hands of

Douglas. How many cows and ewes would you take to set me at liberty?"

"Whisht, whisht, sir!" said Charlie: "Gudesake, haud your tongue! That's kittle ground. Never speak o' sic a thing. But how many could ye afford to gie an I *were* to set you at liberty?"

"In the first place, I will give you five hundred head of good English nolt," said Lady Jane.

"Eh? what?" said Charlie, holding his horse still, and turning his ear close round to the lady's face, that he might hear with perfect distinctness the extraordinary proffer. It was repeated. Charlie was almost electrified with astonishment. "Five hunder head o' nout!" exclaimed he: "but d'ye mean their heads by theirsels!—cuttit aff, like?"

"No, no; five hundred good live cattle."

"Mercy on us! gude faith, they wad stock a' Yardbire—an' Raeburn," added he, after a pause, putting his horse again slowly in motion; "an' Watkerrick into the bargain," added he, with a full-drawn sigh, putting the spurs to his beast, that he might go quicker to carry him away from the danger. "For troth, d'ye ken, my lord, we're no that scarce o' grund in Scotland; we can get plenty o' that for little thing, gin we could get ought to lay on't. But it's hard to get beasts, and kittle to keep them i' our country. Five hunder head o' black cattle! Hech! an Charlie Scott had a' thae, how mony braw lads could he tak at his back o'er Craik-corse to join his master the warden! But come, come, it canna be. War somebody a Scots lord, as he's an English ane, an' i' the same danger, I wad risk muckle to set him free. But come, Corby, my fine naig, ye hae carried me into mony a scrape, ye maun carry me out o' this ane, or, gude faith, your master's gane. Ha, lad, ye never had sic a backfu' i' your life! Ye hae five hunder head o' black cattle on't, ye dog, an' ye're carrying them a' away frae your master an' Yardbire wi' as little ceremony as he took you frae Squire Weir o' Cockermouth. Ah, Corby, ye're gayan like your master; ye hae a lang free kind o' conscience, ye tike!"

"But, my dear sir," said Lady Jane, "you have not heard the half of my proffer. You seem to be a generous, sensible, and good-natured gentleman."

"Do I?" said Charlie; "thanks t'ye, my lord."

"Now," continued she, "if you will either set me and my page safely down on English ground, or within the ports of Edinburgh, I'll add five thousand sheep to the proffer I have already made you."

"Are ye no joking?" said Charlie, again stopping his horse.

"On my honour I am not," was the answer.

"They'll stock a' Blake-Esk head an' the Garald-Grains," said Charlie; "Hae ye a free passport to the Scottish court?"

"Yes, I have, and signed with the warden's name."

"Na, na, haud your tongue there; my master has nae name," said Charlie: "He has a good speaking name, an' ane he disna think shame o', but nae name for black an' white."

"I'll show you it," said Lady Jane.

"Na, ye needna fash," said Charlie; "I fear it wad be unmannerly in me to doubt a lord's word."

"How soon could you carry us to Edinburgh?" inquired Lady Jane, anxious to keep muckle Charlie in the humour of taking her anywhere save into the hands of Douglas.

"That's rather a question to speer at Corby than me," said Charlie; "but I think if we miss drowning i' Tweed, an' breaking our necks o'er the Redbrae, an' sinking out o' sight i' Soutra-flow, that I could tak in hand to hae ye in Edinburgh afore twal o'clock at night. Bad things for you, Corby."

"Never say another word about it then," said Lady Jane; "the rest are quite gone before us, and out of sight. Turn to the left, and ride for Edinburgh. Think of the five hundred cows and five thousand sheep."

"Oh, that last beats a'!" said Charlie. "Five thousand sheep! how mony is that? Five score's a hunder—I'm sure o' that. Every hunder's five score then—and how mony hunder makes a thousand?"

"Ten," said the page, who was forced to laugh at Charlie's arithmetic.

"Ten?" repeated Charlie. "Then ten times five hunder, that maks but ae thousand; an' other ten times five hunder—not a bit o' me kens how mony is o' them ava. What does it signify for a man to hae mair gear than he can count? I fancy we had better jog on the gate we're gaun, Corby."

"I am sure, friend, ye never had such a chance o' being rich," said Lady Jane, "and may never, in all likelihood, have such a chance again."

"That is a' true ye're saying, my lord, an' a sair heart it has gi'en me," said Charlie; "but your offer's ower muckle, an' that maks me dread there's something at the bottom o't that I dinna comprehend. Gude faith, an' the warden war to suffer danger or disgrace for my greed o' siller, it wad be a bonny story! Corby, straight on, ye dog: ding the brains out o' the gutters, clear for the camp, ye hellicat of an English hound. What are ye snoring an' cocking your lugs at! 'Od an' ye get company like yoursel, ye careha what mischief ye carry your master into. Get on, I say, an' dinna gie me time to hear another word or think about this business again."

The young lady began here to lose heart, seeing that Charlie had plucked up a determination. But her companion attacked him in her turn with all the flattery and fair promises she could think of, till Charlie found his heart again beginning to waver and calculate; so that he had no other shift but to croon a Border war-song, that he might not hear this dangerous conversation. Still the page persevered, till Charlie, losing all patience, cried out, as loud and as bitterly as he could, "Haud your tongue, ye slee-gabbit limb o' the auld ane. D'ye

think a man's conscience is to be hadden abreed like the mou' of a sack, an' crammed fu' o' beef an' mutton whether he will or no! Corby, another nicker an' another snore, lad, an' we'll soon see you aff at the gallop."

Thus ended the trying colloquy between muckle Charlie Scott o' Yardbire and his two prisoners; the rest of his conversation was to Corby, whom he forthwith pushed on by spur and flattery to the camp.

When the truth came to be discovered, many puzzled themselves endeavouring to guess what Charlie would actually have done had he known by the way what a treasure he had in his arms, the greatest beauty and the greatest heiress in England; for Charlie was as notable for kindness and generosity as he was for bodily strength; and, besides, he was poor, as he frankly acknowledged; but then he only wished for riches to be able to keep more men for the service of his chief. Some thought he would have turned his horse round without further ceremony, and carried her straight to Yardbire, on purpose to keep her there for a wife; others thought he would have risked his neck, honour, and everything, and restored her again to her friends. But it was impossible for any of them to guess what he would have done, as it was proved afterwards that Charlie could not guess himself. When the truth came to be divulged, and was first told to him, his mouth, besides becoming amazingly extended in its dimensions, actually grew four-square with astonishment; and when asked what he would have done had he known, he smacked his lips, and wiped them with the back of his hand as if his teeth had been watering—and, laughing to himself with a chuckling sound like a moor-cock, he turned about his back to conceal his looks, and only answered with these emphatic words: "Gude faith, it was as weel I didna ken."

CHAPTER VI.

Some write of preclair conquerouris,
And some of vallyeant emperouris,
And some of nobill mychtie kingis,
That royally did reull the ringis:
And some of squyris douchty deidis,
That wonderis wrocht in weirly weidis;
Sa I intend the best I can
Descryve the deidis and the man.
Sir Dav. Lindsaye.

Wald God I war now in Pitcary!
Becaus I haif bene se ill deidy.
Adieu! I dar na langer tairy,
I dreid I waif intill ane widdy.
Ibid.

In the same grotesque guise as formerly described, Charlie at length came with his two prisoners to the outposts of the Scottish army. The rest of the train had passed by before him, and warned their friends who was coming, and in what style; for no one thought it worth his while to tarry with Charlie and his overladen horse. When he came near the soldiers they hurra'd and waved their bonnets, and gathering about Charlie in crowds, they would not let him onward. Besides, some fell a-loosing the prisoner behind him, and others holding up their arms to release him of the one he carried before; and, seeing how impatient he was, and how determined to keep his hold, they grew still more importunate in frolic. But it had nearly cost some of them dear; for Charlie, growing wroth, squeezed the Lady Jane so strait with the left arm, that she was forced to cry out; and putting his right over his shoulder, he drew out his tremendous two-hand sword: "Now stand back, devils," cried Charlie, "or, gude faith, I'll gar Corby ride over the taps o' the best o' ye. I hae had ower sair a trial for heart o' flesh already; but when I stood that, it sanna be the arm o' flesh that takes them frae me now, till I gie them into Douglas' ain hands. Stand back, ye devils; a Scott never gies up his trust as lang as his arm can dimple at the elbow."

The soldiers flew away from around him like a flight of geese, and with the same kind of noise too, every one being giggling and laughing, and up rode Charlie to the door of the Douglas' pavilion, where he shouted aloud for the captain. Douglas, impatient to see his illustrious prisoner, left the others abruptly, and hasted out at Charlie's call.

"Gude faith, my lord," said Charlie, "I beg your pardon for garing you come running out that gate; but here's a bit English lord for ye, an' his henchman, sic master, sic man, as the saying is. There war terrible charges gi'en about them, sae I thought I wad secure them, an' gie them into your ain hands."

"I am much beholden to you, gallant Yardbire," said Douglas; "the care and pains you have taken shall not be forgotten."

Thus encouraged, Charlie spoke to the earl with great freedom, who was mightily diverted with his manner, as well as with his mode of securing the prisoners.

"There's his lordship for ye," said Charlie, holding him out like a small bale of goods: "Mind ye hae gotten him safe off my hand; an' here's another chap I hae fastened to my back. An a' the English nobles war like thir twa, I hae been thinking, my lord, that they might tak' our lasses frae us, but we wadna be ill pinched to tak their kye frae them; an' it wad be nae hard bargain for us neither." So saying, he cut his belts and thongs of raw hide, and let the attendant lady, in page's clothes, free of his body. "He's a little, fine, soft, cozie callan this," added Charlie, "he has made my hinderlands as warm as they had been in an oon."

Douglas took Lady Jane off from before the gallant yeoman in his arms. He observed with what

a look she regarded him; and he was sure from the first view he got of her features, that the page Colin must have been right with regard to the sex of the prisoner. He likewise noted the holes in her ears, from which it was apparent that pendant jewels had lately been taken; and he hoped the other part of the page's information might likewise be correct, though how to account for such an extraordinary piece of good fortune he was wholly at a loss. He led her into the inner pavilion, and there, in presence of his secretary and two of his kinsmen, examined her papers and passports. They were found all correct, and signed by the public functionaries of both nations in favour of Jasper Tudor, son to the Earl of Pembroke.

"These are quite sufficient, my young lord," said Douglas; "I see no cause for detaining you further. You shall have a sufficient guard till you are out of the range of my army, and safe furtherance to the Scottish court."

The prisoner's countenance lighted up, and she thanked Douglas in the most grateful terms, blessing herself that she had fallen into the hands of so courteous a knight, and urged the necessity of their sudden departure, Douglas assured her they should be detained no longer than the necessity of the times required; but that it was absolutely requisite, for his own safety, the safety of the realm, and the success of the enterprise in which he was engaged and so deepy concerned, that they should submit to a personal search from head to foot, lest some traitorous correspondence might be secretly conveyed by them.

The countenance of the prisoner again altered at this information. It became at first pale as a lily, and immediately after blushed as deeply as the damask rose, while the tears started to her eyes. It was no wonder, considering the predicament in which she now stood; her delicate lady form to be searched by the hands of rude warriors, her sex discovered, and her mission to the Scottish court found out to be a wild intrigue. She fell instantly on her knees before Douglas, and besought him in moving accents to dispense with the useless formality of searching her and her young kinsman and companion, assuring him at the same time that neither of them had a single scrap of writing that he had not seen, and adjuring him on his honour and generosity as a knight to hearken to this request.

"The thing is impossible, my lord," said Douglas; "and, moreover, the anxiety you manifest about such a trifle argues a consciousness of guilt. You must submit to be searched on the instant. Choose of us whom you will to the office."

"I will never submit to it," said she passionately; "there is not a knight in England would have refused such a request to you."

"I would never have asked it, my lord," said he; "and it is your utter inexperience in the customs of war, that makes you once think of objecting to it. I am sorry we must use force. Bring in two of the guards."

"Hold, hold, my lord," said Lady Jane, "since I must submit to such a degradation, I will submit to yourself. I will be searched by your own hands, and yours alone."

They were already in the inner tent. Douglas desired his friends to go out, which they complied with, and he himself began to search the person of Lady Jane, with the most careful minuteness, as he pretended, well aware what was to be the issue of the search. He examined all her courtly coat, pockets, lining, and sleeves,—he came to her gaudy doublet, stiff with gold embroidery, and began to unloose it, but she laid both her hands upon her breast, and looked in his face with eyes so speaking, and so beseeching, that it was impossible for man to mistake the import. Douglas did not mistake it, but was bent upon having proof positive.

"What!" said he, "do you still resist? What is here you would conceal?"

"Oh, my lord," said she, "do you not see?"

"I see nothing," said he; and while she feebly struggled he loosed the vest, when the fair heaving bosom discovered the sex of his prisoner, and at the same time, with the struggle, the beautiful light locks had escaped from their confinement, and hung over her breast in waving ringlets. The maid stood revealed; and, with the disclosure, all the tender emotions and restrained feelings of the female heart burst forth like a river that has been dammed up from running in its natural channel, and has just got vent anew. She wept and sobbed till her fair breast was like to rend. She even seized on Douglas' hand, and wet it with tears. He, on his part, feigned great amazement.

"How is this?" said he, "a maid!"

"Yes indeed, my lord, you see before you, and in your power, a hapless maid of noble blood, who set out on a crazy expedition of love, but, from inexperience, has fallen into your hands."

"Then the whole pretended mission to our Scottish court is, it appears, a fraud, a deep-laid imposition of some most dangerous intent, as the interest that has been used to accomplish it fully demonstrates. You have subjected yourself and all your followers to military execution; and the only method by which you can procure a respite, either for yourself or them, is to make a full confession of the whole plot."

"Alas, my lord, I have no plot to confess. Mine was merely a romantic expedition of youthful love, and, as you are a knight, and a lover yourself, I beg your clemency, that you will pardon my followers and me. They are innocent; and, save my page, who is likewise a lady, and my own kinswoman, all the rest are as ignorant who I am, and what I am, as the child that is unborn."

"If you would entertain any hopes of a reprieve, I say, madam, either for yourself or them, declare

here to me instantly your name, lineage, and the whole of your business in Scotland, and by whose powerful interest you got this safe-conduct made out, for one who it seems knows nothing of it, or who perhaps does not exist."

"Surely you will not be so ungallant as to insist upon a lady exposing herself and all her relations? No, my lord, whatever become of me, you must never attain to the knowledge of my name, rank, or titles. I intrust myself to your mercy: you can have nothing to fear from the machinations of a love-lorn damsel."

"I am placed in peculiarly hard circumstances, madam; I have enemies abroad and at home, and have nothing but my own energies to rely on to save my house and name from utter oblivion, and my dearest hopes from extinction. This expedition of yours, folded as it is in deceit and forgery, has an ominous and daring appearance. The house of Douglas must not fall for the tears of a deceitful maiden, the daughter of my enemy. Without a full disclosure of all that I request, every one of you shall suffer death in the sight of both armies before the going down of the sun. I will begin with the meanest of your followers, in hopes, for the sake of your youth and your sex, that you will relent and make a full disclosure of your name, and all your motives for such an extraordinary adventure."

Lady Jane continued positive and peremptory, as did also her attendant, who had been thoroughly schooled beforehand, in case of their sex being discovered, never, on any account, to acknowledge who she was, lest it should put Musgrave wholly in Douglas' power. The latter, therefore, to keep up the same system of terror and retribution first practised by his opponent, caused sound the death-knell, and hung out the flag of blood, to apprise those within the fortress that some of their friends were shortly to be led to execution.

The first that was brought out was a thick-set swarthy yeoman, who said his name was Edmund Heaton, and that he had been a servant to Belsay, whom he had followed in the Border wars. When told that he was about to be hanged for a spy and a traitor, he got very angry, even into such a rage that they could not know what he said, for he had a deep rough burr in his throat, and spoke a coarse English dialect. "Hang'd? I hanged? and fogh whot? Domn your abswoghdity! Hang ane mon fogh deying whot his meastegh beeds him?"—He was told that he had not two minutes to live, unless he could discover something of the plot in which his employers were engaged; that it was found he had been accompanying two ladies in disguise, on some traitorous mission which they would not reveal; and it was the law of war that he should suffer for the vile crime in which he was an accomplice.

"Nobbit, I tell you that won't dey at all;—n-n-nor it sha'nt dey neithegh. Do you think you aghe to hang eveghy mon that follows ane woeman? Domn them, I nevigh knew them lead to oughts but ell! If I had known they had been woemen—domn them." He was hauled up to the scaffold, for he refused to walk a foot. "Wh-wh-why, nobbit speak you now," cried he in utter desperation; "why n-n-nobbit you aghe not serious, aghe you!" He was told he should soon find to his experience that they were quite serious. "Why, cworse the whole geneghation of you, the thing is nwot to be bwogha. I won't swoffegh it—that I woll not. It is dwonright mworder. Oh, ho, ho!" and he wept, crying as loud as he could, "Oh-oh! ho: mworder! mworder! Domn eveghy Scwot of you!" In this mode, kicking, crying, and swearing, was he turned off, and hanged in sight of both hosts.

The walls of Roxburgh were crowded with spectators. They could not divine who it was that was suffering; for all kind of communication was forbid by Musgrave, and it was now become exceedingly difficult. Great was their wonder and anxiety when they beheld one trooper after another of their countrymen brought out and hanged like dogs. But it was evident to every beholder, from the unsettled and perturbed motions of those on the wall, that something within the fortress was distressing the besieged. Some hurried to and fro; others stood or moved about in listless languor; and there were a few that gazed without moving, or taking their eyes from the spot where they were fixed. Not one flight of arrows came to disturb the execution, as usual; and it was suspected that their whole stock of arrows was exhausted. This would have been good tidings for the Scots, could they have been sure of it, as they might then have brought their files closer to the walls, and more effectually insured a strict blockade.

Lady Jane's followers were all executed, and herself and companion sore threatened in vain. Douglas, however, meant to reserve them for another purpose than execution—to insure to himself the surrender of the fortress, namely; but of her squires he was glad to be rid, for fear of a discovery being made to the English that the lady was in his hands, which might have brought the whole puissance of the realm upon him; whereas the generality of the nation viewed the siege merely as an affair of Border chivalry, in which they were little interested, and deemed Musgrave free from any danger.

It was on St. Leonard's day that these five Englishmen were executed; and as a retaliation in part, a Scots fisherman was hanged by the English from the wall of the castle; one who indeed had been the mean of doing them a great deal of mischief. And thus stood matters at that period of the siege; namely, the Earl of Douglas and Mar lay before Roxburgh with eight thousand hardy veterans, all his own vassals. The Redhough kept a flying army on the borders of Northumberland, chiefly about the mountains of Cheviot and Cocketdale, interrupting all supplies and communications from that quarter.

and doing excellent service to himself and followers, and more to the Douglas than the latter seemed to admit of. Whenever he found the English gathering to any head, he did not go and attack them, but, leaving a flying party of horse to watch their motions, he instantly made a diversion somewhere else, which drew them off with all expedition. A numerous army, hastily raised, entered Scotland on the west border, on purpose to draw off the warden; but they were surprised and defeated by the Laird of Johnston, who raised the Annandale people, and attacked the English by night. He followed them into Cumberland, and fought two sharp battles with them there, in both of which he had the advantage, and he then fell a spoiling the country. This brought the Northumberland and Durham men into these parts, who mustered under Sir William Fetherstone to the amount of fifteen thousand men. Johnston retired, and the Earl of Galloway, to back him, raised twenty thousand in the west, and came towards the Sarke: so that the siege of Roxburgh was viewed but as an item in the general convulsion, though high was the stake for those that played, and ruthless the game while it lasted. Douglas now looked upon the die as turned in his favour, as he held pledges that would render the keeping of it of no avail to his opponent. The lady was in his power at whose fiat Musgrave had taken and defended the perilous castle so bravely—but of this no man knew save the Douglas himself. Sir Richard Musgrave was likewise in his hand, the captain's youngest, most beloved, and only surviving brother; and Douglas had threatened, against a certain day, if the keys of the castle were not surrendered to him, to hang the young hero publicly, in the view of both hosts; and in all his threats he had never once broke his word. We must now take a peep within the walls of Roxburgh, and see how matters are going on there.

CHAPTER VII.

I cast my net in Largo bay,
And fishes I caught nine;
There were three to roast, and three to boil,
And three to bait the line
Old Song.

Saw never man so faynt a levand wycht,
And na ferlye, for ouir excelland lycht
Corruptis the witt, and garris the blude awail,
Until the harte, thocht it na danger aill.
Quhen it is smorit memberis wirk not rychte,
The dreadfulle terrour swa did him assaile.
Pal. of Hon.

Berwick was then in the hands of the English, and commanded by Sir Thomas Musgrave, the captain of Roxburgh's cousin; so also was Norham, and all the forts between on that side of the river. Notwithstanding of this, the power of the Scots predominated so much in the open field during that reign, that this chain of forts proved finally of no avail to Lord Musgrave (or Sir Philip Musgrave, as he is generally denominated), though he had depended on keeping the communication open, else in victualling Roxburgh he had calculated basely. The garrison were already reduced to the greatest extremities; they were feeding on their horses and on salted hides; and, two or three days previous to this, their only communication with their countrymen had been cut off, they could not tell how. It was at best only precarious, being carried on in the following singular way:—The besieged had two communications with the river, by secret covered ways from the interior of the fortress. In each of these they had a small windlass, that winded on and let off a line nearly a mile in length. The lines were very small, being made of plaited brass wire; and putting a buoy on a hook at the end of each one of these, they let them down the water. Their friends knowing the very spot where they stopped, watched, and put despatches on the hooks, with fish, beef, venison, and every kind of convenience, which they pulled up below the water sometimes for an entire night together; and though this proved but a scanty supply for a whole garrison, it was for a long time quite regular, and they depended a good deal on it.

But one night it so chanced that an old fisherman, who fished for the monastery, had gone out with his coble by night to spear salmon in the river. He had a huge blaze flaming in a grate that stood exalted over the prow of his wherry; and with the light of that he pricked the salmon out of their deep recesses with great acuteness. As he was plying his task he perceived a fish of a very uncommon size and form scouring up the river with no ordinary swiftness. At first he started, thinking he had seen the devil; but a fisher generally strikes at everything he sees in the water. He struck it with his barbed spear, called on Tweed a *leister*, and in a moment had it into his boat. It was an excellent sirloin of beef. The man was in utter amazement, for it was dead, and lay without moving, like other butcher meat; yet he was sure he saw it running up the water at full speed. He never observed the tiny line of plaited wire, nor the hook, which indeed was buried in the sirloin; and we may judge with what surprise he looked on this wonderful fish, this phenomenon of all aquatic productions. However, as it seemed to lie peaceably enough, and looked very well as a piece of beef, he resolved to let it remain, and betake himself again to his business. Never was there an old man so bewildered as he was, when he again looked into the river—never either on Tweed or any other river on earth. Instead of being floated with the current peaceably in his boat, as one naturally expects, he discovered that he was running straight against the stream. He expected to have missed about fifty yards of the river by his adventure with the beef; but—no!—instead of that

he was about the same distance advanced in his return up the stream, the windlass at the castle, and the invisible wire line, of which he had no conception, having been still dragging him gradually up. "Saint Mary, the mother of God, protect and defend poor Sandy Yellowlees!" cried he; "what can be the meaning of this? Is the world turned upside down? Aha! our auld friend Michael Scott has some hand i' this! He's no to cree legs wi': I's be quits wi' him." With that he tumbled his beef again into the water, which held on its course with great rapidity straight up the stream, while he and his boat returned quietly in the contrary and natural direction.

"Aye, there it goes," cried Sandy, "straight on for Aikwood! I's warrant that's for the warlock's an' the deil's dinner the morn. God be praised, I'm free o't, or I should soon have been there too!"

Old Sandy fished down the river, but he could kill no more salmon that night, for his nerves had got a shock with this new species of fishing that he could not overcome. He missed one; wounded another on the tail; and struck a third on the rigback, where no leister can pierce a fish, till he made him spring above water. Sandy grew chagrined at himself and the warlock Michael Scott too—for this last was what he called "a real prime fish." Sandy gripped the leister a little firmer, clenched his teeth, and drew his bonnet over his eyes to shield them from the violence of his blaze. He then internally banned the wizard, and determined to kill the next fish that made its appearance. But, just as he was keeping watch in this guise, he perceived another fish something like the former, but differing in some degree, coming swagging up the river full speed. "My heart laup to my teeth," said Sandy, "when I saw it coming, and I heaved the leister, but durstna strike: but I lookit weel, an' saw plainly that it was either a side o' mutton or venison, I couldna tell whilk. But I loot it gang, an' shook my head. 'Aha, Michael, lad,' quo' I, 'ye hae countit afore your host for aince! Auld Sandy has beguiled ye. But ye weel expeckit to gie him a canter to hell the night.' I rowed my boat to the side, an' made a' the haste hame I could, for I thought auld Michael had ta'en the water to himsel that night."

Sandy took home his few fish, and went to sleep, for all was quiet about the abbey and the cloisters of his friends the monks; and when he awoke next morning he could scarcely believe the evidence of his own senses regarding what he had seen during the night. He arose and examined his fishes, and could see nothing about them that was not about other salmon. Still he strongly suspected they too might be some connections of Michael's—something illusory, if not worse; and took care to eat none of them himself, delivering them all to the cook of the monastery. The monks ate them, and throve very well; and as Sandy had come by no bodily harm, he determined to try the fishing once again, and if he met with any more such fish of passage, to examine them a little better. He went out with his boat, light, and fish-spear as usual; and scarcely had he taken his station, when he perceived one of a very uncommon nature approaching. He did not strike at it, but only put his leister-grains before it as if to stop its course, when he found the pressure against the leister very strong. On pulling the leister towards him, one of the barbs laid hold of the line by which the phenomenon was led; and not being able to get rid of it, he was obliged to pull it into the boat. It was a small cask of Malmsey wine; and at once, owing to the way it was drawn out, he discovered the hook and line fastened to the end of it. These he disengaged with some difficulty, the pull being so strong and constant; and the mystery was thus found out. In a few minutes afterwards he seized a large sheaf of arrows; and some time after, at considerable intervals, a number of excellent sides of beef and venison.

Sandy Yellowlees saw that he could now fish to some purpose, and formed a resolution of being the last man in the world to tell his countrymen of this resource that the enemy had. The thing of which he was most afraid was a discovery. He knew that the articles would soon be missed, and that his light would betray him; and then a flight of arrows, or even a single one from a lurking foe at the side of the river, would put an end to his fishing for ever. Such an opportunity was not to be given up, notwithstanding of this danger; so, after much prying, both by day and by night, Sanders found that at an abrupt crook in the water, whatever the line brought up came close to the side, and when the water was low it even trailed them over a point of level sand-bed quite dry. This was a joyous discovery for Sandy. He had nothing ado but to sail down in his boat when it grew dark, and lie lurking at this crook in the water, and make a prey of whatever came within his reach. The very first night he filled his boat half full of valuable stuff. There was a necessity for disposing of a part of this, and Sandy was obliged to aver that he had discovered a hidden store belonging to the English; and moreover, he hinted that he could supply the towns of Kelso and Roxburgh, the abbey of the one and the priory of the other, for some time to come. Great was the search that was made about the banks of the river, but no one could find the store; yet Sanders Yellowlees continued to supply the market with luxuries, though no one knew how. Intelligence was sent down the stream with the buoys of the seizure of the provisions, and of the place where they were taken off, which they knew from the failure of the weight they were pulling to be always at the same place. The news also spread of Sandy's stores, and both reached the secret friends of the English, from whom the provisions were nightly sent to their besieged friends and benefactors, with all the caution

and secresy possible, it being given them to understand that on that supply alone depended the holding out of the fortress.

Many schemes were now tried to entrap Sandy, but all without effect; for the Scots had a strong post surrounding that very point where Sandy caught all his spoil. It was impossible to reach it but by a boat; and no boat was allowed on the river but that one that belonged to the abbey. At length an English trooper undertook to seize this old depredator. Accordingly, in the dead of the night, when the lines came down, he seized them both, twisted them into one, and walked silently up the side of the river until he came nigh to the spot where the Scots lines on each side joined the stream. He then put the two hooks into his buff belt, and committing himself to the water, was dragged in silence and perfect safety up the pool between the outposts.

The first turn above that was the point where Sandy lay watching. He had only seized one prey that night, and that was of no great value, for they had given over sending up victuals to enrich an old Scots rascal, as they termed honest Sanders. He was glad when he saw the wake of a heavy burden coming slowly towards him. "This is a sack o' sweet-meats," said he to himself: "it must be currans an' raisins, an' sic fine things as are na injured by the fresh water. I shall get a swinging price from the abbey-men for them, to help wi' their Christmas pies."

No sooner did this huge load touch the land, than Sandy seized it with all expedition; but, to his inexpressible horror, the sack of sweetmeats seized him in its turn, and that with such potence that he was instantaneously overpowered. He uttered one piercing cry, and no more, before the trooper gagged and pinioned him. The Scottish lines were alarmed, and all in motion, and the troops on both sides were crowding to the bank of the stream. A party was approaching the spot where the twain were engaged in the unequal struggle. To return down the stream with his prisoner, as he intended, was impracticable; so the trooper had no alternative left but that of throwing himself into Sandy's boat, with its owner in his arms, shoving her from the side into the deep, and trusting himself to the strength of the wire-lines. As the windlasses were made always to exert the same force and no more, by resisting that they could be stopped; so by pushing the boat from the side in the direction of the castle, the line being slackened, that again set them agoing with great velocity; and though they soon slackened in swiftness, the trooper escaped with his prisoner undiscovered, and, by degrees, was dragged up to the mouth of the covered way that led through or under the hill on which the castle stood; and there was poor Sanders Yellowlees delivered into the hands of his incensed and half-famished enemies. It was he who was hanged over the wall of the castle on the day that the five English yeomen were executed.

The English now conceived that their secret was undiscovered, and that their sufferings would forthwith be mitigated by the supply drawn by their lines. They commenced briskly and successfully; but, alas! their success was of short duration. Sanders' secret became known to the Scots army. The night-watchers had often seen the old man's boat leaning on the shore at that point at all hours of the night; for he was always free to go about plodding for fish when he pleased. His cry was heard at that spot, and the boat was now missing: the place was watched, and in two days the Englishmen's secret, on which they so much relied, was discovered and quite cut off; and that powerful garrison was now left with absolute famine staring them in the face.

As in all cases of utter privation, the men grew ungovernable. Their passions were chafed, and foamed like the ocean before a tempest, foreboding nothing but anarchy and commotion. Parties were formed of the most desperate opposition to one another, and every one grew suspicious of his neighbour. Amid all this passion a mutiny broke out—a strong party set themselves to deliver up the fortress to the Scots. But through such a medley of jarring opinions what project could succeed? The plot was soon discovered, the ringleaders secured, and Sir Stephen Vernon, Musgrave's most tried and intimate friend, found to be at the head of it. No pen can do justice to the astonishment of Musgrave when the treachery of his dear friend was fully proven. His whole frame and mind received a shock, and he gazed around him in moody madness, as not knowing whom to trust, and as if he deemed those around him were going to be his assassins.

"Wretch that I am!" cried he, "what is there more to afflict and rend this heart? Do I breathe the same air? Do I live among the same men? Do I partake of the same nature and feelings as I was wont? My own friend and brother Vernon, has he indeed lifted up his hand against me, and become one with my enemies? Whom now shall I trust? Must my dearest hopes—my honour, and the honour of my country, be sacrificed to disaffection and treachery? Oh Vernon, my brother Vernon, how art thou fallen!"

"I confess my crime," said Vernon; "and I submit to my fate, since a crime it must be deemed. But it was out of love and affection to you, that your honour might not stoop to our haughty enemies. To hold out the fortress is impossible, and to persevere in the attempt utter depravity. Suppose you feed on one another, before the termination of the Christmas holidays the remnant that will be left will not be able to guard the sallying ports, even though the ramparts are left unmanned. In a few days I shall see my brave young friend and companion in arms, your brother, disgracefully put down, and ere long, the triumphant Scots enter treading

over the feeble remains of this yet gallant army. I may bide a traitor's blame, and be branded with a traitor's name, but it was to save my friends that I strove; for I tell you, and some of you will live to see it, to hold out the castle is impossible."

"It is false!" cried Musgrave. "It is false! It is false!" cried every voice present in the judgment-hall, with frantic rage; and all the people, great and small, flew on the culprit to tear him to pieces; for their inveteracy against the Scots still grew with their distress.

"It is false! It is false!" shouted they. "Down with the traitor! sooner shall we eat the flesh from our own bones, than deliver up the fortress to the Scots! Down with the false knave! down with the traitor!"—and, in the midst of a tumult that was quite irresistible, Vernon was borne up on their shoulders, and hurried to execution, smiling with derision at their madness, and repeating their frantic cries in mockery. It was in vain that the commander strove to save his friend—as well might he have attempted to stem the river in its course. Vernon and his associates were hanged like dogs, amid shouts of execration, and their bodies flung into a pit. When this was accomplished, the soldiers waved their caps, and cried out, "So fare it with all who take part with our hateful enemies!"

Musgrave shed tears at the fate of his brave companion, and thenceforward was seized with gloomy despondency; for he saw that subordination hung by a thread so brittle that the least concussion would snap it asunder. His manner underwent a visible change, and he often started on the approach of any one, and laid his hand on his sword. The day appointed by the Douglas for the execution of Sir Richard, provided the castle was not delivered up before that period, was fast approaching—an event that Musgrave could not look forward to without distraction; and it was too evident to his associates, that his brave mind was so torn by conflicting passions that it stood in great danger of being rooted up for ever.

It is probable that at this time he would willingly have complied with the dictates of nature, and saved the life of his brother; but to have talked of yielding up the fortress to the Scots, would only have been the prelude to his being torn in pieces. It was no more their captain's affair of love and chivalry that influenced them, but desperate animosity against their besiegers; and every one called aloud for succours. Communication with their friends was impracticable, but they hoped that their condition was known, and that succours would soon appear. Alas, their friends in Northumberland had enough ado to defend themselves, nor could they do it so effectually but that their lands were sometimes harried to their very doors. The warden, with his hardy mountaineers, was indefatigable; and the English garrison were now so closely beleaguered, that all chance of driving a prey from the country faded from their hopes. Never was the portcullis drawn up, nor the drawbridge at either end let down, that intelligence was not communicated by blast of bugle to the whole Scottish army, who were instantly on the alert. The latter fared sumptuously, while those within the walls were famishing; and at length the day appointed for the execution of Sir Richard drew so near that three days only were to run.

It had been customary for the English, whenever the Scots sent out a herald bearing the flag of truce to make any proposal whatsoever, to salute him with a flight of arrows; all communication or listening to proposals being strictly forbidden by the captain, on pain of death. However, that day, when the Douglas' herald appeared on the rising ground called the Hill of Barns, Musgrave caused answer him by a corresponding flag, hoping it might be some proposal of a ransom for the life of his beloved brother, on which the heralds had an interchange of words at the drawbridge. The Scottish herald made demand of the castle in his captain's name, and added, that the Douglas requested it might be done instantly to save the life of a brave and noble youth, whom he would gladly spare, but could not break his word and his oath that he should suffer. He further assured the English captain, that it was in vain for him to sacrifice his brother, for that he had the means in his power to bring him under subjection the day following, if he chose.

A council of the gentlemen in the castle was called. Every one spoke in anger, and treated the demand with derision. Musgrave spoke not a word; but, with a look of unstable attention on every one that spoke, collected their verdicts, and in a few minutes this answer was returned to the requisition of the Scots:

"If Sir Philip Musgrave himself, and every English knight and gentleman in the castle were now in the hands of the Douglas, and doomed to the same fate of their brave young friend, still the Douglas should not gain his point—the castle would not be delivered up! The garrison scorn his proposals, they despise his threats, and they hold his power at defiance. Such tender mercies as he bestows, such shall he experience. He shall only take the castle by treading over the breasts of the last six men that remain alive in it."

This was the general answer for the garrison—in the meantime, Musgrave requested, as a personal favour of the Douglas, that he might see and condole with his brother one hour before his fatal exit. The request was readily complied with, and every assurance of safe conduct and protection added. The Douglas' pavilion stood on the rising ground between the castle and the then splendid city of Roxburgh, a position from which he had a view of both rivers, and all that passed around the castle and in the town; but, since the commencement of winter, he had lodged over night in a tower that stood in the

middle of the High-town, called the King's House, that had prisons underneath, and was strongly guarded; but during the day he continued at the pavilion, in order to keep an eye over the siege.

To this pavilion, therefore, Musgrave was suffered to pass, with only one knight attendant; and all the way from the drawbridge to the tent, they passed between two files of armed soldiers, whose features, forms, and armour, exhibited a strange contrast. The one rank was made up of Mar Highlanders; men short of stature, with red locks, high cheek bones, and looks that indicated a natural ferocity: the other was composed of Lowlanders from the dales of the south and the west; men clothed in gray, with sedate looks, strong athletic frames, and faces of blunt and honest bravery. Musgrave weened himself passing between the ranks of two different nations, instead of the vassals of one Scottish nobleman. At the pavilion, the state, splendour, and number of attendant knights and squires amazed him; but by them all he was received with the most courteous respect.

Sir Richard was brought up from the vaults of the King's House to the tent, as the most convenient place for the meeting with his brother, and for the guards to be stationed around them; and there, being placed in one of the apartments of the pavilion, his brother was ushered in to him. No one was present at the meeting; but, from an inner apartment, all that passed between them was overheard. Musgrave clasped his younger brother in his arms; the other could not return the embrace, for his chains were not taken off; but their meeting was passionately affecting, as the last meeting between two brothers must always be. When the elder retired a step, that they might gaze on each other, what a difference in appearance! what a contrast they exhibited to each other! The man in chains, doomed to instant death, had looks of blooming health and manly fortitude: the free man, the renowned Lord Musgrave, governor of the impregnable but perilous castle of Roxburgh, and the affianced lord and husband to the richest and most beautiful lady in England, was the picture of haggard despair and misfortune. He appeared but the remnant of the hero he had lately been; and a sullen instability of mind flashed loweringly in his dark eye. His brother was almost terrified at his looks, for he regarded him sometimes as with dark suspicion, and as if he dreaded him to be an incendiary.

"My dear brother," said Sir Richard, "what is it that hangs upon your mind, and discomposes you so much? You are indeed an altered man since I had the misfortune to be taken from you. Tell me how fares all within the castle?"

"Oh, very well; quite well, brother. All perfectly secure—quite well within the castle." But as he said this he strode rapidly backward and forward across the small apartment, and eyed the canvas on each side with a grin of rage, as if he suspected that it concealed listeners; nor was he wrong in his conjectures, though it was only caused by the frenzy of habitual distrust. "But how can I be otherwise than discomposed, brother," continued he, "when I am in so short a time to see you sacrificed in the prime of youth and vigour to my own obstinacy and pride perhaps."

"I beg that you will not think of it, or take it at all to heart," said the youth; "I have made up my mind, and can look death in the face without unbecoming dismay. I should have preferred dying on the field of honour, with my sword in my hand, rather than being hanged up between the hosts, like a spy or common malefactor. But let the tears that are shed for Richard be other than salt brine from the eyes of the Englishmen. Let them be the drops of blood from the hearts of our enemies. I charge you by the spirits of our fathers, whom I am so shortly to join, and by the blessed Trinity, that you act in this trying dilemma as the son of the house you represent. Shed not a tear for me, but revenge my death on the haughty house of Douglas."

"There is my hand! Here is my sword! But the vital motion or the light of reason who shall insure to me till these things are fulfilled? Nay, who shall insure them to this wasted frame for one moment! I am not the man I have been, brother. But here I will swear to you, by all the host of heaven, to revenge your death, or die in the fulfilment of my vow. Yes, fully will I revenge it! I will waste! waste! waste! and the fire that is begun within shall be quenched, and no tongue shall utter it! Ha! ha! ha! shall it not be so, brother?"

"This is mere raving, brother; I have nothing from this."

"No, it is not; for there is a fire that you wot not of. But I will quench it, though with my own blood. Brother, there is one thing I wish to know, and for that purpose did I come hither. Do you think it behoves me to suffer you to perish in this affair?"

"That depends entirely upon your internal means of defence," answered Richard. "If there is a certainty, or even a probability, that the castle can hold until relieved by our friends, which will not likely be previous to the time you have appointed for them to attempt it; why, then, I would put no account on the life of one man. Were I in your place, I would retain my integrity in opposition to the views of Douglas; but if it is apparent to you, who know all your own resources, that the castle must yield, it is needless to throw away the life of your brother, sacrificing it to the pride of opposition for a day or a week."

Musgrave seemed to be paying no regard to this heroic and disinterested reasoning, for he was still pacing to and fro, gnawing his lip; and if he was reasoning, or thinking at all, was following out the train of his own unstable mind.—"Because, if I

were sure," said he, "that you felt that I was acting unkindly or unnaturally by you, by the rood, I would carve the man into fragments that would oppose my submission to save my brother. I would teach them that Musgrave was not to be thwarted in his command of the castle that was taken by his own might and device, and to the government of which his sovereign appointed him. If a dog should dare to bay at me in opposition to my will, whatever it were, I would muzzle the hound, and make him repent his audacity."

"My noble brother," said Richard, "what is the meaning of this frenzy? No one is opposing your will, and I well believe no one within the castle will attempt it—"

"Because they dare not!" said he, furiously interrupting his brother: "they dare not, I tell you! But if they durst, what do you think I would do? Ha, ha, ha!"

Douglas overheard all this, and judging it a fit time to interfere, immediately a knight opened the door of the apartment where the two brothers conversed, and announced the Lord Douglas. Musgrave composed himself with wonderful alacrity; and the greeting between the two great chiefs, though dignified, was courteous and apparently free of rancour or jealousy. Douglas first addressed his rival as follows:

"I crave pardon, knights, for thus interrupting you. I will again leave you to yourselves; but I judged it incumbent on me, as a warrior and a knight of honour, to come, before you settled finally on your mode of procedure, and conjure you, Lord Philip Musgrave, to save the life of your brother—"

"Certainly you will not put down my brave brother, Lord Douglas!" said Musgrave, interrupting him.

"As certainly," returned he, "as you put down my two kinsmen, Cleland and Douglas of Rowlaw, in mere spite and wanton cruelty, because they were beloved and respected by me. I am blameless, as it was yourself who began this unwarrantable system, and my word is passed. Sir Richard must die, unless the keys of the castle are delivered to me before Friday at noon. But I shall be blameless in anything further. I conjure you to save him; and as an inducement, assure you, by the honour of knighthood, that your resistance is not only unnatural, but totally useless; for I have the means of commanding your submission when I please."

"Lord Douglas, I defy thee!" answered Musgrave. "You hold the life in your hand that I hold dearest on earth, save one. For these two would I live or die; but, since thy inveterate enmity will not be satisfied with aught short of the life of my only brother, take it; and may my curse and the curse of Heaven be your guerdon. It shall only render the other doubly dear to me; and, for her sake, will I withstand your proud pretensions; and, as she enjoined me, hold this castle, with all its perils, till the expiry of the Christmas holidays, in spite of you. I defy your might and your ire. Let your cruel nature have its full sway. Let it be gorged with the blood of my kinsfolk; it shall only serve to make my opposition the stronger and more determined. For the sake of her whom I serve, the mistress of my heart and soul, I will hold my resolution.—Do your worst!"

"So be it!" said Douglas. "Remember that I do not, like you, fight only in the enthusiasm of love and chivalry, but for the very being of my house. I will stick at no means of retaliating the injuries you have done to me and mine, however unjustifiable these may appear to some—no act of cruelty, to attain the prize for which I contend. Little do you know what you are doomed to suffer, and that in a short space of time. I again conjure you to save the life of your brother, by yielding up to me your ill-got right, and your conditions shall be as liberal as you can desire."

"I will yield you my estate to save my brother, but not the castle of Roxburgh. Name any other ransom but that, and I will treat with you. Ask what I can grant with honour, and command it."

"Would you give up the life of a brave only brother to gratify the vanity and whim of a romantic girl, who, if present herself, would plead for the life of Sir Richard, maugre all other considerations, else she has not the feelings of woman! What would you give, Lord Musgrave, to see that lady, and hear her sentiments on the subject."

"I would give much to see her. But, rather than see her in this place, I would give all the world and my life's blood into the bargain. But of that I need not have any fear. You have conjurors among you, it is said, and witches that can raise up the dead, but their power extends not to the living, else who of my race would have been left?"

"I have more power than you divine; and I will here give you a simple specimen of it, to convince you how vain it is to contend with me. You are waging war with your own vain imagination, and suffer all this wretchedness for a thing that has neither being nor name."

Douglas then lifted a small gilded bugle that hung always at his sword-belt, the language of which was well known to all the army; and on that he gave two blasts not louder than a common whistle, when instantly the door of the apartment opened, and there entered Lady Jane Howard, leaning on her female attendant, dressed in attire of princely magnificence. "Lady Jane Howard!" exclaimed Sir Richard, starting up, and struggling with his fettered arms to embrace her. But when the vision met the eyes of Lord Musgrave, he uttered a shuddering cry of horror, and sprung with a convulsive leap back into the corner of the tent. There he stood, like the statue of distraction, with his raised hands pressed to each side of his helmet, as if he

had been strenuously holding his head from splitting asunder.

"So! Friend and foe have combined against me?" cried he wildly. "Earth and hell have joined their forces in opposition to one impotent human thing! And what his crime? He presumed on no more than what he did, and could have done; but who can stand against the powers of darkness and the unjust decrees of heaven? Yes; unjust! I say unjust! Down with all decrees to the centre! There's no truth in heaven! I weened there was, but it is as false as the rest! I say as false!—falser than both!—I'll brave all the three! Ha, ha ha!"

Douglas had brought Lady Jane the apparel, and commanded her to dress in it; and perceiving the stern, authoritative nature of the chief, she judged it meet to comply. At first she entered with a languid dejected look, for she had been given to understand something of the rueful nature of the meeting she was called on to attend. But when she heard the above infuriated rhapsody, and turned her eyes in terror to look on the speaker, whose voice she well knew, she uttered a scream and fainted. Douglas supported her in his arms; and Sir Richard, whose arms were in fetters, stood and wept over her. But Musgrave himself only strode to and fro over the floor of the pavilion, and uttered now and then a frantic laugh. "That is well!—That is well!" exclaimed he; "just as it should be! I hope she will not recover. Surely she will not!" and then bending himself back, and clasping his hands together, he cried fervently; "O mother of God, take her to thyself, while she is yet pure and uncontaminated, or what heart of flesh can endure the prospect? What a wreck in nature that lovely form will soon be! Oh-oh-oh!"

The lady's swoon was temporary. She soon began to revive, and cast unsettled looks around in search of the object that had so overpowered her; and at the request of Sir Richard, who perceived his brother's intemperate mood, she was removed. She was so struck with the altered features, looks, and deportment of the knight, who in her imagination was everything that was courteous, comely, and noble, and whom she had long considered as destined to be her own, that her heart was unable to stand the shock, and her removal from his presence was an act of humanity.

She was supported out of the tent by Douglas and her female relation; but when Musgrave saw them leading her away, he stepped rapidly in before them and interposed; and, with a twist of his body, put his hand two or three times to the place where the handle of his sword should have been. The lady lifted her eyes to him, but there was no conception in that look, and her lovely face was as pale as if the hand of death had passed over it.

Any one would have thought that such a look from the lady of his love, in such a forlorn situation, and in the hands of his mortal enemy, would have totally uprooted the last fibres of his distempered mind. But who can calculate on the medicine suited to a diseased spirit? The cures even of some bodily diseases are those that would poison a healthy frame. So did it prove in this mental one. He lifted his hand from his left side, where he had thrust it convulsively in search of his sword, and clapping it on his forehead, he seemed to resume the command of himself at once, and looked as calm and serene as in the most collected moments of his life.

When they were gone, he said to Sir Richard, in the hearing of the guards: "Brother, what is the meaning of this? What English traitor has betrayed that angelic maid into the hands of our enemy?"

"To me it is incomprehensible," said Sir Richard: "I was told of it by my keeper last night, but paid no regard to the information, judging it a piece of wanton barbarity; but now my soul shudders at the rest of the information that he added."

"What more did the dog say?" said Musgrave.

"He said he had heard that it was resolved by the Douglases, that, if you did not yield up the fortress and citadel freely, on or before the day of the conception of the blessed Virgin, on that day at noon the lady of your heart should be exhibited in a state not to be named, on a stage erected on the top of the Bush-law, that faces the western tower, and is divided from it only by the moat; and there before your eyes, and in sight of both hosts, compelled to yield to that disgrace which barbarians only could have conceived; and then to have her nose cut off, her eyes put out, and her beauteous frame otherwise disfigured."

"He dares not for his soul's salvation do such a deed!" said Musgrave: "No; there's not a blood-hound that ever mouthed the air of his cursed country durst do a deed like that. And though every Douglas is a hound confessed, where is the mongrel among them that durst but howl of such an outrage in nature? Why, the most absolute fiend would shrink from it; hell would disown it; and do you think the earth would bear it?"

"Brother, suspend your passion, and listen to the voice of reason and of nature. Your cause is lost, but not your honour. You took, and have kept that fortress, to the astonishment of the world. But for what do you now fight? or what can your opposition avail? Let me beseech you not to throw away the lives of those you love most on earth thus wantonly, but capitulate on honourable terms, and rescue your betrothed bride and your only brother from the irritated Scots. Trust not that they will stick at any outrage to accomplish their aim. Loth would I be to know our name were dishonoured by any pusillanimity on the part of my brother; but desperate obstinacy is not bravery. I therefore conjure you to save me, and her in whom all your hopes of future felicity are bound up."

Musgrave was deeply affected; and at that instant, before he had time to reply, Douglas re-entered.

"Scots lord, you have overcome me," said he, with a pathos that could not be exceeded: "Yes, you have conquered, but not with your sword. Not on the field, nor on the rampart, have ye turned the glaive of Musgrave; but either by some infernal power, or else by chicanery and guile. It boots not me to know how you came possessed of this last and only remaining pledge of my submission. It is sufficient you have it. I yield myself your prisoner; let me live or die with those two already in your power."

"No, knight, that must not be," replied Douglas. "You are here on safe conduct and protection; my honour is pledged, and must not be forfeited. You shall return in safety to your kinsmen and soldiers, and act by their counsel. It is not prisoners I want, but the castle of Roxburgh, which is the right of my sovereign and my nation—clandestinely taken, and wrongously held by you. I am neither cruel nor severe beyond the small range that points to that attainment; but that fortress I will have—else woe be to you, and all who advise withholding it as well as all their connections to whom the power of Scotland can extend. If the castle is not delivered up before Friday at noon, your brother shall suffer, that you already know. But at the same hour on the day of the Conception, if it is still madly and wantonly detained, there shall be such a scene transacted before your eyes as shall blur the annals of the Border for ever."

"If you allude to any injury intended to the lady who is your prisoner," said Musgrave, "the cruellest fiend in hell could not have the heart to hurt such angelic purity and loveliness; and it would degrade the honour of knighthood for ever to suffer it. Cruel as you are, you dare not injure a hair of her head."

"Talk not of cruelty in me," said Douglas; "if the knight who is her lover will not save her, how should I? You have it in your power, and certainly it is you who ought to do it; even granting that the stakes for which we fought were equal, the task of redemption and the blame would rest solely with you. And how wide is the difference between the prizes for which we contend? I for my love, my honour, and the very existence of my house and name; and you for you know not what—the miserable pride of opposition. Take your measures, my lord. I will not be mocked."

Douglas left the apartment. Musgrave also arose and embraced his brother, and, as he parted from him, he spoke these ominous words: "Farewell, my dear Richard. May the angels that watch over honour be your guardians in the hour of trial. You know not what I have to endure from tormentors without and within. But hence we meet not again in this state of existence. The ties of love must be broken, and the bands of brotherly love burst asunder —nevertheless I will save you. A long farewell, my brother."

Musgrave was then conducted back to the drawbridge between two long files of soldiers as before, while all the musicians that belonged either to the army or the city were ranked up in a line behind them, on the top of the great precipice that overhangs the Teviot, playing, on all manner of instruments, "Turn the blue bonnets wha can, wha can," with such a tremendous din, that one would have thought every stone in the walls of Roxburgh was singing out the bravado.

CHAPTER VIII.

Quhat weyworde elfin thynge is thaten boie,
That hyngethe still upon myne gaire, as doeth
My synne of harte? And quhome rychte loth, I kis
With not les hanckerynge. His locent eyne,
And his tungis maiter comethe on myne sense
Lyke a remembourance; or lyke ane dreime
That had delytis in it. Quhen I wolde say
"Begone;" lo then my tung mistakethe quyte,
Or fancyinge not the forme, it sayethe, "Come hidder,
Come hidder, crabbed boie, unto myne syde."

Old Play.

That evening, after the departure of the distressed Musgrave, Douglas was sitting all alone musing in a secret apartment of the pavilion, when he heard a gentle tap at the door. "Who is there?" inquired he surlily: "It is I, my lor'," said a petulant treble voice without. "Aha! my excellent nondescript little fellow, Colin Roy, is it you? Why, you may come in." Colin entered, dressed in a most elegant and whimsical livery, and forgetting himself, made the Douglas two or three graceful courtesies instead of bows.

"Ay, hem," said he, "that is very well for the page of a princess. I suppose you have been studying the graces from your accomplished mistress! But where have you been all this while? I have felt the loss of you from my hand grievously."

"I have been waiting on my royal mistress, my lor', informing her of all that is going on at the siege, and of your good fortune in the late captures you have made, wherein she rejoices exceedingly, and wishes you all good fortune and forward success; and, in token of kind remembrance, she sends you this heart of ruby set in gold and diamonds—a gem that befits your lordship well to wear. And many more matters she has given me in charge, my lor'."

Douglas kissed the locket, and put it in his bosom, and then uttered abundance of the extravagant bombast peculiar to that age. He called her his guardian angel, his altar of incense, and the saint of his devotion, the buckler of his arm, the sword in his hand, and the jewel of his heart. "Do you think, Colin," added he, "that ever there was a maiden born like this royal lady of my love?"

"Why, my lor', I am not much skilled in these

matters, but I believe the wench, my mistress, is well enough—that is, she is well formed. And yet she is but so so."

"How dare you, you piece of unparalleled impudence, talk of your royal mistress in that strain? Or where did you ever see a form or features so elegant and so bewitchingly lovely?"

"Do you think so?—Well, I'm glad of it. I think she is coarse and masculine. Where did I ever see such a form, indeed! Yes, I have seen a much finer limb, and an arm, and a hand too! What think you of that for a hand, my lor'?"—(and with that the urchin clapped his hand on the green table, first turning up the one side of it and then the other).—"I say if that hand were as well kept, and that arm as well laden with bracelets, and the fingers with diamond rings, it would be as handsome as your princess's, of which you boast so much—ay, and handsomer too."

"You are a privileged boy, Colin, otherwise I would kick you heartily, and, moreover, cause you to be whipped by the hand of the common executioner. However, you are a confidant—all is well from you; and, to say the truth, yours is a very handsome hand for a boy's hand—so is your arm. But what are they to those of my lovely and royal Margaret?—mere deformity! the husk to the wheat!"

"Indeed, my lor', you have an excellent taste, and a no less gifted discernment!"

"I cannot conceive of any earthly being equalling my beauteous princess, whether in the qualifications of body or mind."

"I rejoice to hear it. How blind love is! Why, in sober reality, there is the Lady Jane Howard. Is there any comparison between the princess and that lady in beauty?"

"She is, I confess, a most exquisite creature, Colin, even though rival to my adorable lady; in justice it must be acknowledged she is *almost* peerless in beauty. I do not wonder at Musgrave's valour when I see the object of it. But why do you redden as with anger, boy, to hear my commendations of that hapless lady?"

"I, my lor'? How should I redden with anger? On my honour, craving my Lord Douglas' pardon, I am highly pleased. I think she is much more beautiful than you have said, and that you should have spoken of her in a more superlative degree, and confessed frankly that you would willingly exchange your betrothed lady for her. I cannot choose but think her very beautiful; too beautiful, indeed, with her blue eyes, white teeth, and ruddy lips. I don't like such bright blue eyes. I could almost find in my heart to scratch them out, she is so like a wanton. So you don't wonder at Lord Musgrave's valour, after having seen his mistress? Well, I advise your lordship, your captainship, and your besiegership, that there are some who wonder very much at your *want* of valour. I tell you this in confidence. My mistress thinks you hold her charms only at a small avail, that you have not *gone into* that castle long ago, and turned out these Englishmen, or hung them up by the necks if they refused. Musgrave went in and took it at once for the favour of his mistress; because, forsooth, he deemed her worthy of the honour of such a bold emprize. Why, then, do not you do the same? My mistress, to be sure, is a woman—a very woman; but she says this, that it is superabundantly ungallant of you not to have *gone in* and taken possession of the castle long ago. Do you know that (poor kind creature!) she has retired to a convent, where she continues in a state of sufferance, using daily invocations at the shrines of saints for your success. And she has moreover made a vow not to braid her hair, nor dress herself in princely apparel, until the day of your final success. Surely, my lor', you ought *to take that castle*, and relieve my dear mistress from this durance. I almost weep when I think of her, and must say with her that she has been shabbily used, and that she has reason to envy Lady Jane Howard even in her captivity."

"Colin, you are abundantly impertinent: but there is no stopping of your tongue once it is set a-going. As to the taking of castles, these things come not under the cognizance of boys or women. But indeed I knew not that my sovereign lady the princess had absconded from the courtly circle of her father's palace, and betaken herself to a convent on my account. Everything that I hear of that jewel endears her to me the more."

"What? even her orders for you *to go into the castle*, and put out the English? I assure you, my lor', she insists upon it. Whether it is her impatience to be your bride, I know not, but she positively will not be satisfied unless you very soon *go into that castle*, and put the Englishmen all to the outside of it, where you are now; or hang them, and bury them out of sight before she visits the place to congratulate you."

"Boy, I have no patience with you. Cease your prating, and inform me where my beloved mistress is, that I may instantly visit her."

"No; not for the Douglas' estate, which is now in the fire, and may soon be brought to the anvil, will I inform you of that. But, my lor', you know I must execute my commission. And I tell you again, unless you take this castle very soon, you will not only lose the favour of my mistress, but you will absolutely break her heart. Nothing less will satisfy her. I told her there was a great moat, more than a hundred feet deep, and as many wide, that surrounded the castle, and flowed up to the base of its walls; that there was a large river on each side of it, and that they were both dammed and appeared like two standing seas—but all availed nought. 'There is a moat,' said I. 'But let him go over that,' said she; 'let him swim it, or put a float on it. What is it to cross a pool a hundred feet wide? How did Lord Musgrave pass over it?' 'There are

strong walls on the other side,' said I. 'But let him go over these,' said she, 'or break a hole through them and go in. Men built the walls; why may not men pull them down? How did Musgrave get over them?' 'There are armed men within,' said I. 'But they are only Englishmen,' said she; 'let Douglas' men put their swords into them, and make them stand back. How did Musgrave get in when it was defended by gallant Scots? Douglas is either no lover, or else no warrior,' added she; 'or perhaps he is neither the one nor the other.'"

"Peace, sapling," said Douglas, frowning and stamping with his foot, "peace, and leave the pavilion instantly." Colin went away visibly repressing a laugh, which irritated Douglas still the more; and as the urchin went, he muttered in a crying whine, "My mistress is very shabbily used!—very shabbily! To have promised herself to a knight if he will but take a castle for her, and to have fasted, and prayed, and vowed vows for him, and yet he dares not go in and take it. And I am shabbily used too; and that I'll tell her! Turned out before I get half her message delivered! But I must inform you, my lor', before I go, that since you are making no better use of the advantage given you, I demand the prisoners back that I lodged in your hand in my lady mistress' name, and by her orders."

"I will do no such thing to the whim of a teasing impertinent stripling, without my lady princess's hand and seal for it," said Douglas.

"You shall not long want that," said Colin; and pulling a letter out from below his sash, he gave it to him. It was the princess's hand and seal—it being an easy matter for Colin to get what letters he listed. Douglas opened it, and read as follows:

"Lord Douglas,—In token of my best wishes for your success, I send you these, with greeting. I hope you will take immediate advantage of the high superiority afforded you in this contest, by putting some indelible mark, or public stain, on the lusty dame I put into your hands. If Musgrave be a knight of any gallantry he will never permit it, but yield. As I cannot attend personally, I request that the mode and degree of punishment you inflict may be left to my page Colin. That you have not been successful by such means already, hath much surprised MARGARET."

"This is not a requisition to give you up the prisoners," said Douglas, "but merely a request that the punishment inflicted may be left to you, a request which must not be denied to the lady of my heart. Now, pray, Master Colin Roy M'Alpin, what punishment do you decree for the Lady Jane Howard? For my part, though I intended to threaten the most obnoxious treatment, to induce my opponent to yield, I could not for my dearest interests injure the person of that exquisite lady."

"You could not in good troth! I suppose my mistress has good reason to be jealous of you two. But since the power is left with me I shall prevent that; I shall see her punished as she deserves: I'll have no shameful exposures of a woman, even were she the meanest plebeian, but I'll mar her beauty that she thinks so much of, and that you think so much of. I'll have her nose cut off; and two of her fore teeth drawn; and her cheeks and brow scalloped. I'll spoil the indecent brightness of her glow! She shall not sparkle with such brilliance again, nor shall the men gloat, feasting their intolerable eyes on her, as they do at present."

"Saint Duthoc buckler me!" exclaimed the Douglas, "what an unnatural tiger cat it is! I have heard that such feelings were sometimes entertained by one sovereign beauty toward another of the same sex; but that a sprightly youth, of an amorous complexion, with bright blushing features and carroty locks, should so depreciate female beauty, and thirst to deface it, surpasses anything I have witnessed in the nature of man. Go to, you are a perverse boy, but shall be humoured as far as my honour and character as a captain and warrior will admit."

Colin paced lightly away, making a slight and graceful courtesy to the Douglas as he glided out. "What an extraordinary, wayward, and accomplished youth that is!" said the chief to himself. "Is it not strange that I should converse so long with a page, as if he were my equal! There is something in his manner and voice that overcomes me; and though he teazes me beyond endurance, there is a sort of enchantment about him, that I cannot give him the check. Ah me! all who submit themselves to women, to be swayed by them or their delegates, will find themselves crossed in every action of importance. I am resolved that no woman shall sway me. I can love, but have not learned to submit."

Colin retired to his little apartment in the pavilion; it was close to the apartment that Douglas occupied while he remained there, and not much longer or broader than its beautiful and romantic inhabitant. Yet there he constantly abode when not employed about his lord, and never mixed or conversed with the other pages. Douglas retired down to the tower, or King's House as it was called (from King Edward having occupied it), at even tide—but Colin Roy remained in his apartment at the pavilion. Alas! that Douglas did not know the value of the life he left exposed in such a place!

On the return of Musgrave into the castle, a council of all the gentlemen in the fortress was called, and with eager readiness they attended in the hall of the great western tower. The governor related to them the heart-rending intelligence of his mistress being in the hands of their enemies, and of the horrid fate that awaited her, as well as his only brother, provided the garrison stood out. Every one present perceived that Musgrave inclined to capitulate; and, as they all admired him, they pitied his woeful

plight. But no one ventured a remark. There they sat a silent circle, in bitter and obstinate rumination. Their brows were plaited down, so as almost to cover their eyes; their under lips were bent upward, and every mouth shaped like a curve, and their arms were crossed on their breasts, while every man's right hand instinctively rested on the hilt of his sword.

Musgrave had taken his measures, whichever way the tide should run. In consequence of this he appeared more calm and collected at this meeting than he had done for many a day. "I do not, my friends, and soldiers, propose any alternative," said he, "I merely state to you the circumstances in which we are placed; and according to your sentiments I mean to conduct myself."

"It is nobly said, brave captain," said Collingwood; "our case is indeed a hard one, but not desperate. The Scots cannot take the castle from us, and shall any one life, or any fifty lives, induce us to yield them the triumph, and all our skill, our bravery, and our sufferings go for nought?"

"We have nothing to eat," said Musgrave.

"I'll eat the one arm, and defend the drawbridge with the other, before the Scots shall set a foot in the castle," said a young man, named Henry Clavering. "So will I," said another. "So will I, so will we all!" echoed through the hall, while a wild gleam of ferocity fired every haggard countenance. It was evident that the demon of animosity and revenge was now conjured up, which to lay was not in the power of man.

"What then do you propose as our mode of action in this grievous dilemma?" said Musgrave.

"I, for my part, would propose decision and ample retaliation," said Clavering. "Do you not perceive that there has been a great storm in the uplands last night and this morning, and that the Tweed and Teviot are roaring like two whirlpools of the ocean, so that neither man nor beast can cross them? There is no communication between the two great divisions of the Scottish army to-night, save by that narrow passage betwixt the moat and the river. Let us issue forth at the deepest hour of midnight, secure that narrow neck of land by a strong guard, while the rest proceed sword in hand to the eastern camp, surround the pavilion of Douglas, and take him and all his associates prisoners, and then see who is most forward in using the rope!"

"It is gallantly proposed, my brave young friend," said Musgrave; "I will lead the onset myself. I do not only ween the scheme practicable, but highly promising; and if we can make good that narrow neck of land against our enemies on the first alarm, I see not why we may not cut off every man in the eastern division of their army; and haply, from the camp and city, secure to ourselves a good supply of provisions before the break of the day."

These were inducements not to be withstood, and there was not one dissenting voice. A gloomy satisfaction rested on every brow, and pervaded every look, taking place of dark and hideous incertitude. Like a winter day that has threatened a tempest from the break of the morning, but becomes at last no longer doubtful as the storm descends on the mountain tops, so was the scene at the breaking up of that meeting, and all was activity and preparation within the castle during the remainder of the day.

The evening at last came; but it was no ordinary evening. The storm had increased in a tenfold degree. The north-west wind roared like thunder. The sleet descended in torrents, and was driven with an impetuosity that no living creature could withstand. The rivers foamed from bank to brae; and the darkness was such as if the heavens had been sealed up. The sound of the great abbey bell, that rung for vespers, was borne away on the tempest; so that nothing was heard, save once or twice a solemn, melancholy sound, apparently at a great distance, as if a spirit had been moaning in the eastern sky.

Animal nature cowered beneath the blast. The hind left not her den in the wood, nor broke her fast until the dawning. The flocks crowded together for shelter in the small hollows of the mountains, and the cattle lowed and bellowed in the shade. The Scottish soldiers dozed under their plaids, or rested on their arms within the shelter of their tents and trenches. Even the outer sentinels, on whose vigilance all depended, crept into some retreat or other that was nearest, to shield them from the violence of the storm. The army was quite secure, for they had the garrison so entirely cooped up within their walls, that no attempt had been made to sally forth for a whole month. Indeed, ever since the English were fairly dislodged from the city, the Bush-law, and all the other outworks, the attempt was no more dreaded; for the heaving up of the portcullis, and the letting down of the drawbridge, made such a noise as at once alarmed the Scottish watchers, and all were instantly on the alert. Besides, the gates and drawbridges (for there were two gates and one drawbridge at each end) were so narrow, that it took a long time for an enemy to pass in any force; and thus it proved an easy matter to prevent them. But, that night, the storm howling in such majesty, and the constant jangling of chains and pulleys swinging to its force, with the roaring of the two rivers over the dams, formed altogether such a hellish concert, that fifty portcullises might have been raised, and as many drawbridges let down, and the prostrate shivering sentinels of the Scottish army have distinguished no additional chord or octave in the infernal bravura.

At midnight the English issued forth with all possible silence. Two hundred, under the command of Grey and Collingwood, were posted on the castle-green, that is, the narrow valley between the moat and the river Tweed, to prevent the junction of the two armies on the first alarm being given. The rest

were parted into two divisions; and, under the command of Musgrave and Henry Clavering, went down the side of each river so as to avoid the strongest part of the Scottish lines, and the ramparts raised on the height. Clavering led his division down by the side of the Teviot, along the bottom of the great precipice, and, owing to the mingled din of the flood and the storm, was never perceived till fairly in the rear of the Scottish lines. Musgrave was not so fortunate, as the main trench ran close to the Tweed. He was obliged to force it with his first column; which he did with a rapidity that nothing could equal. The Englishmen threw themselves over the mound of the great trench, hurling in above their enemies sword in hand, and overpowering them with great ease; then over one breast-work after another, spreading consternation before them and carnage behind. Clavering heard nothing of this turmoil, so intemperate was the night. He stood with impatience, his men drawn up in order, within half a bow-shot of Douglas's pavilion, waiting for the signal agreed on; for their whole energy was to be bent against the tent of the commander, in hopes, not only to capture the Douglas himself, and all his near kinsmen, but likewise their own prisoners. At length among other sounds that began to swell around, Clavering heard the welcome cry of "DUDDOE'S AWAY!" which was as readily answered with "DUDDOE'S HERE!" and at that moment the main camp was attacked on both sides. The flyers from the lines had spread the alarm. The captain's tent was surrounded by a triple circle of lesser tents, all full of armed men, who instantly grasped their weapons, and stood on the defensive. Many rough blows were exchanged at the first onset, and many of the first ranks of the assailants met their death. But though those within fought with valour, they fought without system; whereas the English had arranged everything previously, and each of them had a white linen belt, of which the Scots knew nothing; and in the hurry and terror that ensued, some parties attacked each other, and fell by the hands of their brethren. Finding soon that the battle raged before and behind them, they fled with precipitation toward the city; but there they were waylaid by a strong party, and many of them captured and slain. The English would have slain every man that fell into their power, had it not been for the hopes of taking Douglas, or some of his near kinsmen, and by that means redeeming the precious pledges that the Scots held, so much to their detriment, and by which all their motions were paralyzed. Clavering, with a part of the troops under his command, pursued the flyers that escaped as far as the head of the Market Street, and put the great Douglas himself into no little dismay; for he found it next to impossible to rally his men amid the storm and darkness, such a panic had seized them by this forth-breaking of their enemies. Clavering would doubtless have rifled a part of the city, if not totally ruined that division of the Scottish army, had he not been suddenly called back to oppose a more dangerous inroad behind.

When Musgrave first broke through the right wing of the Scottish lines, the noise and uproar spread amain, as may well be conceived. The warders on the heights then sounded the alarm incessantly: and a most incongruous thing it was to hear them sounding the alarm with such vigour at their posts, after the enemy had passed quietly by them, and at that time were working havoc in the middle of their camp. They knew not what was astir, but they made plenty of din with their cow-horns, leaving those whom they alarmed to find out the cause the best way they could.

The Scottish army that beleaguered the castle to the westward caught the alarm, and rushed to the support of their brethren and commander. The infantry being first in readiness, were first put in motion, but, on the narrowest part of the castle-green, they fell in with the firm-set phalanx of the English, who received them on the point of their lances, and in a few seconds made them give way. The English could not however pursue, their orders being to keep by the spot where they were, and stand firm; so that the Scots had nothing ado but to rally at the head of the green and return to the charge. Still it was with no better success than before. The English stood their ground, and again made them reel and retreat. But, by this time, the horsemen were got ready, and descended to the charge at a sharp trot. They were clad in armour, and had heavy swords by their sides, and long spears like halberts in their hands. The English lines could not withstand the shock given by these, for the men were famishing with hunger and benumbed with cold, the wind blowing with all its fury straight in their faces. They gave way; but they were neither broken nor dispersed. Reduced as they were, they were all veterans, and retreated fighting till they came to the barriers before the drawbridge; and there, having the advantage of situation, they stood their ground.

The horsemen passed on to the scene of confusion in the camp, and came upon the rear of the English host, encumbered with prisoners and spoil. When Clavering was called back, Douglas, who had now rallied about one hundred and forty men around him, wheeled about, and followed Clavering in the rear; so that the English found themselves in the same predicament that the Scots were in about an hour before—beset before and behind—and that principally by horsemen, which placed them under a manifest disadvantage.

It is impossible to give any adequate idea of the uproar and desperate affray that now ensued. The English formed on both sides to defend themselves; but the prisoners being numerous detained a great part of the men from the combat. A cry arose to kill the prisoners; from whom it first issued no one

knew, but it no sooner passed than the men began to put it into execution. The order was easier to give than perform: in half a minute every one of the guards had a prisoner at his throat—the battle became general—every one being particularly engaged through all the interior of the host, many of them struggling in pairs on the earth, who to get uppermost and have the mastery. It was all for life, and no exertion was withheld; but, whenever these single combats ended in close gripes, the Scots had the mastery, their bodies being in so much better condition. They made a great noise, both individually and in their files, but the English scarcely opened their mouths; like bred mastiffs, when desperately engaged, they only aimed at the vital parts of their opponents, without letting their voices be heard.

It is vain at this period to attempt giving a better description of the scenes of that night, for the men that were present in the affray could give no account of it next day. But after a hard encounter and heavy loss, the English fought their way up to their friends before the ramparts, who had all the while been engaged in skirmishing with the foot of the western division, whom they had kept at bay, and thus preserved the entrance clear to themselves and brethren; but ere the rear had got over the half-moon before the bridge, it was heaped full of slain.

There were more of the Scots slain during the conflict of that hideous night than of the English; but by far the greater number of prisoners remained with the former, and several of them were men of note; but such care was taken to conceal rank and titles, after falling into the hands of their enemies, that they could only be guessed at. De Grey was slain, and Collingwood was wounded and taken; so that on taking a muster next day the English found themselves losers by their heroic sally.

They had, however, taken one prize, of which, had they known the value, it would have proved a counterbalance for all their losses, and all the distinguished prisoners that formerly told against them. This was no other than the pretended page, Colin Roy, of whose sex and quality the reader has been formerly apprised, and whom they found concealed among some baggage in the Douglas' tent. Grievous was that page's plight when he found himself thrust into a vault below the castle of Roxburgh, among forty rude soldiers, many of them wounded, and others half naked, and nothing given them to subsist on. Concealment of his true sex for any length of time was now impossible, and to divulge the secret certain ruin to himself and the cause of Douglas.

Next day he pleaded hard for an audience of Musgrave, on pretence of giving him some information that deeply concerned himself; and he pleaded with such eloquence that the guards listened to him, and informed the commander, who ordered the stripling to be brought before him. The next day following was that appointed for the execution of Sir Richard Musgrave. Colin informed the governor that, if he would give him his liberty, he would procure a reprieve for his brother, at least until the day of the Conception, during which period something might occur that would save the life of so brave a youth; that he was the only man on earth who had the power to alter the purpose of Douglas in that instance; and that he would answer with his head for the success, only the charm required immediate application.

Musgrave said it was a coward's trick to preserve his own life—for how could he answer to him for his success when he was at liberty? But that no chance might be lost for saving his brother's life, he would cause him to be conducted to Douglas under a strong guard, allow him what time he required to proffer his suit, and have him brought back to prison till the day of the Conception was over, and if he succeeded he should then have his liberty. This was not exactly what Colin wanted: however he was obliged to accept of the terms, and proceeded to the gate under a guard of ten men. The Scots officer of the advanced guard refused to let any Englishman pass, but answered with his honour to conduct the stripling in safety to his commander, and in two hours return him back to the English at the drawbridge. No more was required; and he was conducted accordingly to the door of Douglas' tent, which, as he desired, he was suffered to enter, the men keeping guard at the door.

In the confusion of that morning, Douglas never had missed the page, nor knew he that he was taken prisoner; and when the boy entered from his own little apartment, he judged him to be in attendance as usual. He had a bundle below his arm tied up in a lady's scarf, and a look that manifested great hurry and alarm. The Douglas, who was busily engaged with two knights, could not help noting his appearance, at which he smiled.

"My lord," said the boy, "I have an engagement of great importance to-day, and the time is at hand. I cannot get out at the door by reason of the crowd, who must not see this. Will it please you to let me pass by your own private door into the city?"

Douglas cursed him for a troublesome imp, and forthwith opened the door into the concealed way; and as all who came from that door passed unquestioned, the page quickly vanished in the suburbs of the city.

The officer and his guard waited and waited until the time was on the point of expiring, and at last grew quite impatient, wondering what the boy could be doing so long with the commander. But at length, to their mortal astonishment, they beheld the stripling coming swaggering up from the high street of the city behind them, putting a number of new and ridiculous airs in practice, and quite unlike one going to be delivered up to enemies to be thrown

into a dungeon, or perhaps hanged like a dog in a day or two.

The officer knew nothing of the concealed door and passage, and was lost in amazement how the page should have escaped from them all without being visible; but he wondered still more how the elf, being once at liberty, should have thought of coming strutting back to deliver himself up again.

"Where the devil have you been, master, an it be your will?" said the officer.

"Eh! What d'ye say, mun?" said the unaccountable puppy. "What do I say, mun?" replied the officer, quite unable to account either for the behaviour of the prisoner or his address; "I say I trow ye hae seen sic a man as Michael Scott some time in your days! Ye hae gi'en me the glaiks aince by turning invisible; but be ye deil, be ye fairy, I sal secure ye now. Ye hae nearly gart me brik my pledge o' honour, whilk I wadna hae done for ten sic necks as yours."

"Your pledge o' honour! What's that, mun? Is that your bit sword? Stand back out o' my gate."

"Shakel my knackers," said the officer laughing, "if I do not crack thy fool's pate! What does the green-kail worm mean! You, sir, I suppose, are presuming to transact a character. You are playing a part in order to get off, but your silly stratagem will fail you. Pray, my young master, what character do you at present appear in?"

"Character me no characters!" said the page, "it is not with you that I transact, nor such as you! Do not you see who I am, and what commission I bear! Bide a great way back out o' my gate, an ye please; and show me where I am to deliver this."

"And who is that bald epistle for, Master Quipes; please to open your sweet mouth, and read me the inscription."

"Do you not see, saucy axeman? Cannot you spell it? 'To James, Earl of Douglas and Mar, with greeting, These.' Herald me to your commander, nadkin; but keep your distance—due proportioned distance, if you please."

"No, no, my little crab cherry; you cheated me by escaping from the tent invisible before, but shall not do it again. We'll get your message done for you; your time is expired, and some more to boot, I fear; come along with us." And forthwith one of their number waited on the chief with the letter, while the rest hauled off the unfortunate page, and delivered him back to the English.

CHAPTER IX.

His doublet was sae trim and neat,
Wi' reid goud to the chin,
Ye wad hae sworn, had ye been there,
That a maiden stood within.
The tears they trickled to his chin,
And fell down on his knee;
Oh had he wist before he kissed,
That the boy was a fair ladye.

Song of May Marley.

Who's she, this dame that comes in such a guise,
Such face of import, and unwonted speech?
Tell me, Cornaro. For methinks I see
Some traits of hell about her.

Trag. of the Prorsa.

In this perilous situation were placed the two most beautiful ladies of England and Scotland, at the close of that memorable year; and in this situation stood the two chiefs with relation to those they valued dearest in life; the one quite unconscious of the misery that awaited him, but the other prepared to stand the severest of trials. Success had for some time past made a show of favouring the Scots, but she had not yet declared herself, and matters with them soon began to look worse. As a commencement of their misfortunes, on the very night that the battle took place, the English received a supply of thirty horse-loads of provisions, with assurances that Sir Thomas Musgrave, the governor of Berwick, was setting out with a strong army to their succour.

The supply was received in this way:—There was a bridge over the Teviot, which communicated only with the castle, the north end of it being within the drawbridge, and of that bridge the English kept possession all the time of the siege. It being of no avail to the Scots, they contented themselves with keeping a guard at the convent of Maisondieu, to prevent any communication between the fortress and the Border. But the English barons to the eastward, whose castles lay contiguous to the Tweed, taking advantage of the great flood, came with a strong body of men, and attacking this post by surprise, they beat them, and chasing them a considerable way up the river, got the convoy along the bridge into the castle.

This temporary relief raised the spirits of the English, or rather cheered their prospects, for higher in inveterate opposition their spirits could not be raised. On the day following, likewise, a flying party of Sir Thomas Musgrave's horse made their appearance on the height above Hume Castle: and blew their horns, and tossed their banners abroad on the wind, that the besieged might see them, and understand that their friends were astir to make a diversion in their favour.

On the same day a new gibbet was erected on the top of the Bush-law, with a shifting wooden battery to protect the executioners; and all within the castle feared that the stern and unyielding Douglas was going to put his threat respecting the life of Sir Richard Musgrave into execution. Therefore, to prevent their captain from seeing the scene, and, if possible, his mind from recurring to it, they contrived to get a council of war called, at which they intentionally argued and contended about matters of importance, in order to detain him until the sufferings of his brother were past.

The Bush-law, on which the Scots had a strong fortification, rises abruptly over against the western tower of the castle of Roxburgh: they were separated

only by the moat, and though at a great height, were so near each other, that men could with ease converse across, and see distinctly what was done. On the top of this battery was the new gibbet erected, the more to gall the English by witnessing the death of their friends.

At noon the Scots, to the number of two hundred, came in procession up from the city, with their prisoner dressed in his knightly robes; and, as they went by, they flouted the English that looked on from the walls; but the latter answered them not, either good or bad. By a circular route to the westward they reached the height, where they exposed the prisoner to the view of the garrison on a semicircular platform, for a few minutes, until a herald made proclamation, that unless the keys of the castle were instantly delivered at the drawbridge, the life of the noble prisoner was forfeited, and the sentence would momently be put in execution; and then he concluded by calling, in a louder voice, "Answer, Yes or no—once—twice." He paused for the space of twenty seconds, and then repeated slowly, and apparently with reluctance, "Once—twice—*thrice*," and the platform folding down, the victim was launched into eternity.

The English returned no answer to the herald, as no command or order had been given. In moody silence they stood till they witnessed the fatal catastrophe, and then a loud groan, or rather growl of abhorrence and vengeance, burst from the troops on the wall, which was answered by the exulting shouts of the Scots. At that fatal moment Musgrave stepped on the battlement, to witness the last dying throes of his brother. By some casualty, the day of the week and month happening to be mentioned in the council hall, in the midst of his confused ideas, that mention brought to his remembrance the fate with which his brother had been threatened. Still he had hopes that it would have been postponed; for, as a drowning man will catch at floating stubble, so had he trusted to the page's mediation. He had examined the stripling on his return to the dungeon, but the imp proved forward and incommunicative, attaching to himself an importance of which the captain could not perceive the propriety; yet though he had nothing to depend on the tender mercies of Douglas, as indeed he had no right, he nevertheless trusted to his policy for the saving of his brother alive; knowing that, in his life, he held a bond round his heart which it was not his interest to snap.

As he left the hall of council, which was in the great western tower, and in the immediate vicinity of the scene then transacting, the murmurs of the one host and the shouts of the other drew him to the battlement, whence his eye momently embraced the heart-rending cause of the tumult. He started, and contracted every muscle of his whole frame, shrinking downward, and looking madly on each hand of him. He seemed in act to make a spring over the wall: and the soldiers around him perceiving this, and haply misjudging the intent of his motion, seized on him to restrain him by main force. But scarcely did he seem to feel that he was held; he stretched out his hands toward his brother, and uttered a loud cry of furious despair, and then in a softer tone cried, "Oh! my brother! my brother! So you would not warn me, you dog?—Nor you?—Nor you?—No, you are all combined against me! That was a sight to gratify you, was it not? My curse on you, and all that have combined against the life of that matchless youth!" and with that he struggled to shake them from him. "My lord! my lord!" was all that the soldiers uttered, as they restrained him.

At that instant Clavering rushed on the battlement. "Unhand the captain!" cried he: "dare you, for the lives that are not your own, presume to lay violent restraint on him, and that in the full view of your enemies?"

"I will have vengeance, Clavering!" cried Musgrave, "ample and uncontrolled vengeance? Where is the deceitful and impertinent stripling that promised so solemnly to gain a reprieve for my brother, and proffered the forfeit of his life if he failed?"

"In the dungeon, my lord, fast and secure."

"He is a favourite parasite of the Douglas; bring him forth that I may see vengeance executed on him the first of them all. I will hang every Scot in our custody; but go and bring him the first. It is a base deceitful cub, and shall dangle opposite to that noble and now lifeless form. It is a poor revenge indeed, but I will sacrifice every Scot of them. Why don't you go and bring the gilded moth, you kennel knaves? Know you to whom you thus scruple obedience?"

Clavering was silent, and the soldiers durst not disobey, though they obeyed with reluctance, knowing the advantages that the Scots possessed over them, both in the numbers and rank of their prisoners. They went into the vaults, and without ceremony or intimation of their intent, lifted the gaudy page in their arms, and carried him to the battlement of the western tower, from whence, *sans* further ceremony, he was suspended from a beam's end.

Douglas could not believe the testimony of his own senses when he saw what had occurred. Till that moment he never knew that his page was a prisoner. Indeed, how could he conceive he was, when he had seen him in his tent the day after the night engagement? His grief was of a cutting and sharp kind, but went not to the heart, for though the boy had maintained a sort of influence over him, even more than he could account for to himself, yet still he was teazing and impertinent, and it was not the sort of influence he desired.

"I wish it had been our blessed Lady's will to have averted this," said he to himself; "but the mischances of war often light upon those least concerned in the event. Poor Colin! thy beauty, playfulness, and flippancy of speech deserved a better guerdon.

How shall I account to my royal mistress for the cruel fate of her favourite?"

With all this partial regret, Douglas felt that by the loss of this officious page of the princess, he would be freed from the control of petticoat government. He perceived that the princess lived in concealment somewhere in the neighbourhood, kept an eye over all his actions and movements, and, by this her agent, checked or upbraided him according to her whimsical inexperience. Douglas was ambitious of having the beautiful princess for his spouse —of being son-in-law to his sovereign, and the first man in the realm; but he liked not to have his counsels impeded, or his arms checked by a froward and romantic girl, however high her lineage or her endowments might soar. So that, upon the whole, though he regretted the death of Colin Roy M'Alpin, he felt like one released from a slight bondage. Alas, noble chief! little didst thou know of the pang that was awaiting thee!

It will be recollected that, when the Lady Margaret first arrived in the camp in the character of Colin her own page, she lodged her maid in the city of Roxburgh, disguised likewise as a boy. With her she communicated every day, and contrived to forward such letters to the court as satisfied her royal mother with regard to the motives of her absence—though these letters were, like many others of the sex, anything but the direct truth. The king was at this period living in retirement at his castle of Logie in Athol, on pretence of ill health.

The name of the maiden of honour thus disguised, was Mary Kirkmichael, the daughter of a knight in the shire of Fife. She was a lady of great beauty and elegant address—shrewd, sly, and enterprising.

Two days after the rueful catastrophe above related, word was brought to Douglas, while engaged in his pavilion, that a lady at the door begged earnestly to see him. "Some petitioner for the life of a prisoner," said he: "What other lady can have business with me? Tell her I have neither leisure nor inclination at present to listen to the complaints and petitions of women."

"I have told her so already," said the knight in waiting; "but she refuses to go away till she speaks with you in private; and says that she has something to communicate that deeply concerns your welfare. She is veiled; but seems a beautiful, accomplished, and courtly dame."

At these words the Douglas started to his feet. He had no doubt that it was the princess, emerged from her concealment in the priory or convent, and come to make inquiries after her favourite, and perhaps establish some other mode of communication with himself. He laid his account with complaints and upbraidings, and upon the whole boded no great good from this domiciliary visit. However he determined to receive his royal mistress with some appearance of form, and in a few seconds, at a given word, squires, yeomen, and grooms, to the amount of seventy, were arranged in due order; every one in his proper place; and up a lane formed of these was the lady conducted to the captain, who received her standing and uncovered; but, after exchanging courtesies with her, and perceiving that it was not the princess, jealous of his dignity, he put on his plumed bonnet, and waited with stately mein the development of her rank and errand.

It was Mary Kirkmichael.

"My noble lord," said she, "I have a word for your private ear, and deeply doth it concern you and all this realm."

Douglas beckoned to his friends and attendants, who withdrew and left him alone with the dame, who began thus with great earnestness of manner: "My lord of Douglas, I have but one question to ask, and, if satisfied with the answer, will not detain you a moment. What is become of the page Colin that attended your hand of late?" Douglas hesitated, deeming the lady to be some agent of the princess Margaret's. "Where is he?" continued she, raising her voice, and advancing a step nearer to the captain. "Tell me, as you would wish your soul to thrive. Is he well? Is he safe!"

"He is sped on a long journey, lady, and you may not expect to meet him again for a season."

"Sped on a long journey! Not see him again for a season! What does this answer mean? Captain, on that youth's well-being hang the safety, the nobility, and the honour of your house. Say but to me he is well, and not exposed to any danger in the message on which he is gone."

"Of his well-being I have no doubt; and the message on which he is gone is a safe one. He is under protection from all danger, commotion, or strife."

"It is well you can say so, else woe would have fallen to your lot, to mine, and to that of our nation."

"I know he was a page of court, and in the confidence of my sovereign and adored Lady Margaret. But how could any misfortune attending a page prove of such overwhelming import?"

"*Was* a page of court, my lord? What do you infer by that *was?* Pray, what is he now? I intreat of you to be more explicit."

"The plain truth of the matter is shortly this: the boy fell into the hands of our enemies that night of the late fierce engagement."

At this the lady uttered a scream; and Douglas, dreading she would fall into hysterics, stretched out his arms to support her. "I pity you, gentle maiden," said he, "for I perceive you two have been lovers."

She withdrew herself, shunning his proffered support, and looking him wildly in the face, said in a passionate voice, "In the hands of the English! O Douglas, haste to redeem him! Give up all the prisoners you have for that page's ransom; and if these will not suffice, give up all the lands of Douglas and Mar; and if all these are still judged inadequate,

give up yourself. But, by your fealty, your honour, your nobility, I charge you, and, in the name of the blessed Virgin, I conjure you to lose no time in redeeming that youth."

Douglas could scarcely contain his gravity at this rhapsody, weening it the frantic remonstrance of a love-sick maid; but she, perceiving the bent of his disposition, held up her hand as a check to his ill-timed levity. "Unhappy chief!" exclaimed she, "little art thou aware what a gulf of misery thou art suspended over, and that by a single thread within reach of the flame, and liable every moment to snap. Know, and to thyself alone be it known, that that page was no other than the princess of Scotland herself, who, impelled by romantic affection, came in that disguise to attend thee in all thy perils, undertaken for her sake. It was she herself who seized her rival, and placed her in your hands, thus giving you an advantage which force could not bestow. And from time to time has she laid such injunctions on you, written and delivered by her own hand, as she judged conducive to your honour or advantage. If you suffer that inestimable lady to lie in durance, or one hair of her head to fall to the ground, after so many marks of affection and concern, you are unworthy of lady's esteem, of the titles you bear, or the honour of knighthood."

When the lady first came out with the fatal secret, and mentioned the princess's name, Douglas strode hastily across the floor of the pavilion, as if he would have run out at the door, or rather fallen against it; but the motion was involuntary; he stopped short, and again turned round to the speaker, gazing on her as if only half comprehending what she said. The truth of the assertion opened to him by degrees; and, it may well be supposed, the intelligence acted upon him like a death-shock. He would fain have disbelieved it, had he been able to lay hold of a pretext to doubt it; but every recollected circumstance coincided in the establishment of the unwelcome fact. All that he could say to the lady, as he stood like a statue gazing her in the face, was, "Who art thou?"

"I am Mary Kirkmichael of Balmedie," said she, "and I came with the princess, disguised as her attendant. I am her friend and confidant, and we held communication every day, till of late that my dear mistress discontinued her visits. O captain, tell me if it is in your power to save her!"

Douglas flung himself on a form in the corner of the tent, hid his face with his hand, and at the same time groaned as if every throb would have burst his heart's casement. He had seen his royal, his affectionate, and adored mistress swung from the enemy's battlements, without one effort to save her, and without a tear wetting his cheek; and his agony of mind became so extreme that he paid no more regard to the lady, who was still standing over him, adding the bitterest censure to lamentation. Yet he told her not of her mistress's melancholy fate—he could not tell her; but the words he ejaculated from time to time, too plainly informed Mary Kirkmichael that the life of her royal mistress was either in jeopardy or irretrievably lost.

The Douglas saw the lady no more, nor regarded her. He rushed from the tent, and gave such orders as quite confounded his warriors, one part being quite incompatible with another; and in the confusion, Mary glided away quietly from the scene without further notice. All the motions of Douglas for two days subsequent to the information were like those of a drunken man; he was enraged without cause, and he acted without consistency; but the only point towards which all these jarring passions constantly turned was revenge on the English—deadly and insatiable revenge. When he looked towards the ramparts of the castle, his dark eye would change colour, and sink deeper under his brow, while his brown cheeks would appear as if furrowed across, and his teeth ground and jarred against one another. His counsels, however, were not of a nature to accomplish anything material against his rivals. He meditated the most deadly retaliation, but was prevented before he could put it in practice.

On the following evening, when the disturbance of his mind had somewhat subsided into a sullen depression of spirit, or rather a softened melancholy, he was accosted by a monk, who had craved and obtained admittance—for a deference to these people was a leading feature of that age. Douglas scarcely regarded him on his first entrance, and to his address only deigned to answer by a slight motion of his head; for the monk's whole appearance augured little beyond contempt. He was of a diminutive stature, had a slight starved make, and a weak treble voice. His conversation, nevertheless, proved of that sort that soon drew the attention of the chief.

"May the blessed Virgin, the mother of God, bless and shield you, captain!"

"Humph!" returned the Douglas, nodding his head.

"May Saint Withold be your helmet and buckler in the day of battle—"

"Amen!" said the Douglas, interrupting him, and taking a searching look of the tiny being that spoke, as if there were something in the tones of his voice that struck him with emotion.

—"And withhold your weapon from the blood of the good," added the monk, "from the breast of the professor of our holy religion, and dispose your heart to peace and amity, that the land may have rest, and the humble servants of the cross protection. Why don't you say 'Amen' to this, knight! Is your profession of Christianity a mere form? and are the blessed tenets which it enjoins, strangers to thy turbulent bosom?"

"Humph!" said Douglas: "with reverence be it spoken, monk, but you holy brethren have got a way of chattering about things that you do not

understand. Adhere to your books and your beads. I am a soldier, and must stick by my profession, bearing arms for my king and country."

"I am a soldier too," rejoined the monk, "and bear arms and suffer in a better cause. But enough of this. I have a strange message for you, captain. You must know that a few weeks ago, a beautiful youth came to our monastery seeking supply of writing materials, which he could not otherwise procure. He was a kind and ingenuous youth. I supplied him, for I loved him; and I have since seen him sundry times in my cell. But last night as I was sitting alone, a little before midnight—I am afraid you will not believe me, captain, for the matter of my message is so strange—I had gone over my breviary, and was sitting with the cross pressed to my lips, when behold the youth entered. I arose to receive him; but he beckoned me to keep away from his person, and glided backward. I then recollected that he must be a spirit, else he could not have got in; and, though I do not recollect all that he said, the purport of his message was to the following effect:

"'Benjamin,' said he, 'arise and go to the captain of the Scottish army, whom you will find in great perplexity, and meditating schemes of cruelty and retaliation, which would be disgraceful to himself and to his country. But let him beware: for there be some at his hand that he does not see; and if he dare in the slightest instance disobey the injunctions which you shall from time to time lay on him, his sight shall be withered by a visitant from another world, whose face he shall too well recognize ever again to find rest. Monk Benjamin, I was not what I seemed. A few days ago I was a lady in the prime of youth and hope. I loved that captain, and was betrothed to him. For his sake I ventured my life, and lost it without a single effort on his part to save me. But his fate is in my hand, and I will use the power. It is given to me to control or further his efforts as I see meet—to turn his sword in the day of battle, or to redouble the strength of his and his warriors' arms. My behests shall be made known to him: and if he would avoid distraction of mind, as well as utter ruin, let him tremble to disobey. In the first place, then, you will find him pondering on a scheme for the recovery of my lifeless body—a scheme of madness which cannot and may not succeed; therefore charge him from me to desist. You will find him further preparing an embassy to my father and mother to inform them of the circumstances of my death, and that not in the words of truth. But let him take care to keep that a secret, for on that depends his success. Tell him further from me to revenge my death, but not on the helpless beings already in his power; to pursue with steady aim his primary object, and his reward shall be greater than he can conceive.'"

"Strange as this story may appear, captain, it is strictly according to truth. You yourself may judge whether it was a true or lying spirit that spoke to me."

"Are you not some demon or spirit yourself," said the Douglas, "who know such things as these! Tell me, are you a thing of flesh and blood, that you can thus unfold to me the thoughts and purposes of my heart?"

"I am a being such as yourself," said the monk—"a poor brother of the Cistercian order, and of the cloister adjoining to this; and I only speak what I was enjoined to speak, without knowing whether it is true or false. I was threatened with trouble and dismay if I declined the commission; and I advise you, captain, for your own peace of mind, to attend to this warning."

Douglas promised that he would, at least for a time; and the monk, taking his leave, left the earl in the utmost consternation. The monk's tale was so simple and unmasked, there was no doubting the truth of it; for without such a communication it was impossible he could have known the things he uttered; and the assurance that a disembodied being should have such a power over him, though it somewhat staggered the Douglas' faith, created an unwonted sensation within his breast—a sensation of wonder and awe, for none of that age were exempt from the sway of an overpowering superstition.

CHAPTER X.

Here awa', there awa', wandering Willie,
Here awa', there awa', haud awa' hame.

Old Song.

The state of mind to which the two commanders were now reduced was pitiable. Within the castle of Roxburgh all was gloom and discontent. In one thing, and that only, were they unanimous, a frantic inveteracy against the Scots: and though Musgrave would gladly have saved those dearest to him in life, yet he found that to have proposed such a thing as yielding to the garrison, would have been but adding fuel to flame. Their small supply soon began again to wear short, and their privations had brought on an infectious distemper among them, of which some died every day; but every item added to their sufferings fell against the Scots, and all the cruelties exercised by the latter to break the spirits of their opponents only militated against themselves. Opposition to the last man was a sentiment nursed in every English bosom within the garrison, with a brooding enthusiasm of delight. There can be no doubt that they felt intensely for their gallant captain, considering the dismal situation in which he stood with respect to their enemies, and the strong hold they had been enabled to keep over his heart. It was probably the burning intensity of these feelings that was the great source of their unhappiness, and gave rise to the fierce spirit of dissension that daily mani-

fested itself. Although they detested the deed of the Scots in executing Sir Richard, yet they felt his death a sort of relief, as by it one-half of the cord held round the breast of their commander was broken; and there is little doubt that they wished themselves free of Lady Jane Howard, by fair and gentle means if possible, but at all events to be rid of that remaining tie, which almost maddened them to think of.

There was one circumstance which of late was to all of them wholly unaccountable. As the day of the Conception of the blessed Virgin approached, the mind of Lord Musgrave, instead of becoming altogether deranged as they had foreboded, became more and more steady and collected. He watched over every part of the economy within that huge fortress, and gave his orders with punctuality and decision, although with a degree of sternness that had not previously been observed.

The dreaded day of the Conception at length arrived; and before noon crowds of the citizens, and people from the surrounding country, began to assemble round the Scottish camp. These were forcibly kept beyond the line of circumvallation, while the regular troops were drawn up in columns both to the east and west of the fortress, and particularly round the gibbet on the Bush-law. At eleven o'clock the Scottish trumpets sounded; the English soldiers crowded to the battlements around the western tower of the citadel, and Lord Musgrave came up among the rest, arrayed in a splendid suit of light armour, and gallantly attended.

These battlements and the new gibbet were, as before stated, right opposite to one another, and separated only by the breadth of the moat and a very small slope on the western ascent; so that every object could be distinctly seen from the one place to the other, and, by raising the voice somewhat, a conversation could be carried on across. At the very time that Lord Musgrave thus appeared on the wall, the Lady Jane Howard and Sir *Richard* Musgrave were introduced on the boards of the gibbet. Yes; read it over again. I say Sir Richard Musgrave, for it was truly he. The Douglas, seeing that he could not prevail, and that the gallant youth was given up by his brother and the English to his fate, could not brook the idea of losing by his death the one half of the influence he held over Musgrave. But that he might try it by stretching it to the very last, he clothed another culprit in Sir Richard's habiliments, tied a white cloth over his face, let him stand a proclaimed space on the boards with the cord about his neck, and, at the last moment of the given time, there being no parley sounded for the delivering up of the keys of the fortress, the board sunk, and the man died; but Sir Richard was safe in hold.

He was again produced that day, being the eighth of December, along with Lady Jane. He was dressed in the suit of armour in which he fought on the day he was taken prisoner, and Lady Jane in snow-white robes, betokening her spotless virginity. Sir Richard's eye beamed with manly courage, but the fresh hues of the rose on the cheeks of Lady Jane had blenched and given place to the most deadly paleness. Both hosts were deeply affected with the sight, and on this occasion both felt alike. There was not a heart amongst them that did not overflow with pity at the fate of the two youthful prisoners, whose doom could now no longer be averted, unless by a sacrifice on the part of the English, with which even the most sanguine of the beleaguering army doubted their compliance.

The Douglas then caused a herald to make proclamation in a stentorian voice; first stating the cause why he had put off the execution of Sir Richard Musgrave until that day, namely, his anxious desire to save the life of the noble youth, on the ground that the purposed holding out of the garrison till the twenty-fourth was a chimera; and secondly, declaring that, unless the keys of the castle were previously delivered up to him, precisely at the hour of noon the noble and gallant Sir Richard, the flower of English chivalry, should be put down; and the beautiful and accomplished Lady Jane Howard, the betrothed bride of Lord Musgrave, subjected to a fate the most humiliating that ever noble maiden suffered, and that in full view of both armies. A loud murmur of detestation sounded from the walls of the castle, but the columns of the Scottish army stood and looked on in mute and tender sorrow. Lord Musgrave placed himself right opposite the prisoners, turned his face straight toward them, and gazed with an undaunted air. Sir Richard addressed him in the same sentiments he had formerly expressed, the purport of which was, it will be remembered, the madness and folly of holding out the castle. now when the bright prize for which he contended was lost. For his own life, he said, he accounted it as nothing in the scale; but the fate that awaited the lady of his love, who had shown such devotion to his interests, was not to be endured or permitted by any knight of honour. Lady Jane cried out to him to save her from a doom before which her whole soul shrunk; adding, that she had done much and suffered much for him, and would he not make one effort, one sacrifice, to save her?

"Lord Douglas," cried Musgrave, "will not a formal consignment of all my lands, titles, and privileges in the dominions of England ransom the lives of these two?"

"Not if they were ten times doubled," returned the Douglas: "nor shall any earthly thing ransom them, save the full and free possession of the castle of Roxburgh. I have myself suffered a loss at your hands, of which you are not aware; and I long and thirst to revenge it on you and your house."

"Then my resolution is fixed!" cried Musgrave; "though all England should deprecate the deed, and though I know my brethren in arms disapprove

of it, I must and will redeem the lives of these two. Yes, I will save them, and that without abating one iota from the honour of the house of Musgrave. Not make one effort, Lady Jane? Not one sacrifice to save your honour and life? Effort, indeed, I will make none. But, *without* an effort, I will make a sacrifice of as high estimation for you as ever knight offered up for the lady of his love. Perhaps it may not be in my power to save you; but in the sight of these rival armies; in yours, my only brother and betrothed bride, and in the sight of Heaven, I offer the last ransom that can be offered by man." As he said these words, he flung himself headlong from the battlement of the western tower, struck on the mural parapet around the lower platform, then on the rampart, from which he flew with a rolling bound, and flashed with prodigious force into the ample moat. There, by the weight of his armour, he sunk forthwith to rise no more. The troops of the rival nations stood aghast, with uplifted hands, gazing on the scene; but no more was to be seen of the gallant Musgrave! A gurgling boil of bloody water arose above him as he sank to the bottom—and that was the last movement of one whose life had been spent in deeds of high chivalry and restless commotion.

Excepting one shriek uttered by Lady Jane, the Douglas was the first to break the awful silence, which he did by these words: "There fell a hero indeed! Noble and resolute Musgrave! I cannot but envy you such a chivalrous fate as this!" Many such expressions of enthusiastic admiration burst from both armies, not in shouts of applause, for these were suppressed by sorrow, but in a low and melting pathos that bespoke the soul's regret as well as approval.

When these first expressions of feeling were over, the dark and manly countenance of Douglas sank into more than usual gloom and dejection. All the advantages given him, and which he had deemed insurmountable by his opponents, were by this desperate act of Musgrave's extinguished. He had now no more power over the English garrison than what he could make good with his sword and his bow. To have executed his threats on Sir Richard and the lovely and romantic Lady Jane, would only have been an act of despicable revenge, which would have disgusted his own followers, and could in no degree have furthered his cause; so he ordered them back to confinement, with directions that they should be attended according to their rank.

What was next to be done? That was the great question. Douglas never once conceived the idea of giving up the enterprise; for though the princess for whom he had undertaken it was now no more, his broad domains were all engaged. The very existence of the house of Douglas depended on his success; and, besides, the king had more daughters, though none like his beloved Margaret. Therefore Douglas had no hesitation regarding the necessity of taking the castle. He was determined to have it. But what to do next, in order to accomplish this determination, was the question. Circumstances were grievously changed with him. The garrison had got a supply across the Teviot bridge during the time of the flood and the tempest, but the Scots could not ascertain to what amount. Sir Thomas Musgrave had been joined by some troops from the shores of Northumberland, and had issued forth with these and the greater part of the garrison of Berwick, to the amount of 5000 men, in order to make a diversion in favour of the garrison of Roxburgh. This movement by the governor of Berwick disconcerted the Douglas most of all. A party of these marauders had shown themselves on the heights about Hume Castle, with trumpets sounding, and colours waving in the air. From thence they marched on, keeping the backs of the hills, until they came into the lower parts of Leaderdale, which they harried, burning in their way the town and castle of Ercildon. They next made a movement towards Melrose, meaning to establish themselves in the rear of Douglas, and either to cut off his supplies, or force him to abandon the siege in order to preserve his own country behind him. But when they came to the river Tweed, they were opposed by the brave abbot Lawrence. He had raised all the abbey vassals and retainers, and showed himself fairly disposed to dispute the passage of the English over the river. In the meantime he posted message after message to Douglas, to come, or send to his assistance, before the abbey of the holy Virgin, with all its sacred stores, should fall into the hands of their ruthless enemies.

Douglas was hardly put to it. If he drew off from a close blockade, the English were sure to take advantage of his absence, make a sally, and procure plenty of provisions; and, in that case, his only probable hope of success was cut off. On the other hand, if he suffered himself to be inclosed between two armies, his situation would become every day more precarious, and perhaps in the issue quite untenable. He was therefore in a manner forced to the resolution of making an effort to join father Lawrence, and of giving the captain of Berwick battle before he attained possession of the rich monastery of Melrose.

The time had now arrived when the support of Sir Ringan Redhough and his Borderers was become absolutely necessary. Without their co-operation in a more close and decisive manner than that which they had hitherto given, he could not now proceed one foot, and his great cause was ruined. He therefore despatched a pressing message to the chief, conjuring him as his friend and fellow-soldier, either to come and supply his place in the blockade of Roxburgh, or march with all expedition to Melrose, and give battle to the governor of Berwick. The dogged and unyielding warden returned for answer, that it had always been his chief and undivided aim to act in concert with his noble and gallant friend

and lord superior, the Earl of Douglas and Mar. But that he had a peculiar charge from his sovereign of the English marches, which it was his bounden duty to attend to prior to all other considerations. Whatever he could do conformably with this first duty should not be wanting. Finally, he sent him word, as he had done formerly, "that if he coudna take the castle, and confessed that he coudna take it, he might send word to him, and he wad take it for him."

"What does the crabbed carle always mean by that answer?" said the Douglas, when it was reported to him: "perhaps he has some means of communication with those within the fortress, some secret friend in disguise among our enemies. Perhaps he knows of some weak or accessible point among these extensive bulwarks, or perhaps he reckons on some plausible means of surmounting them; for the devil's head is not more fruitful in expedients than his. This is a matter of such importance to me at present, that I must try to probe it to the bottom. Were I sure that he could accomplish his boasted feat, I had better engage him to it with one-third of my domains; and at all events, I must procure the active assistance of his energetic force at present, whatever may be the price. Let my white steed Beaver be caparisoned, and my attendants in readiness; I must have an interview with this man of the mountains before I sleep."

The warden had drawn his force down to Wooler, with the intention of co-operating more effectively with the Douglas. He had heard of the advantages that lord held over his adversaries, but nothing of the late catastrophe by which they were all removed. Deeming therefore that the chances were mainly on the side of the Douglas, he judged it his safest course to act in complete concert with him.

This resolution had been taken, and so far acted upon, that trusty agents had been despatched all over the country in disguise, to execute a portion of the great concerted plan, when the Douglas, at a late hour in the evening, arrived in the warden's camp. He then had proofs experimentally of the warden's caution and vigilance. He came upon his outposts at a great distance from the main body of his army. These withstood his passage, but seeing his retinue so small, for he was attended only by two knights, a squire, and a guide, they conducted him from one post to another, till at length they brought him completely guarded to the warden's head-quarters; which was nothing more than a lowly cottage at Wooler haugh-head.

The doughty chief and his kinsmen were still sitting in earnest conversation round a rustic table, with a tremendous torch in the middle of it. This was nothing less than a huge broken jar full of refined ox's tallow, and a flow peat stuck to the head in the middle, which being kindled emitted a blaze like a fish light. The gallant kinsmen were in deep consultation anent their grand plan of warlike operations, and the more they conversed about it, the more eligible did it still appear to them, and the more deeply did they get interested in it; so that when the knight in waiting announced a stranger who requested an interview with Sir Ringan, every one seemed disposed to refuse him admission.

"Tell him I am engaged," said the warden.

"O yes. By all means. Tell him we are engaged," said Dickie o' Dryhope.

"If it is another message from the Douglas, I have had enough of him," said the warden.

"Ay, faith, we have had enough of him," said Dickie.

"Who is he? or what is he like?" inquired the warden.

"Ay, that is the principal thing to be attended to," said Dickie; "what is he like?"

"He is delivered as a knight of most noble bearing and courtly deportment," answered the knight in waiting. "I suppose we must admit him, and hear what he has to say," said the warden, again taking his seat.

"O yes. By all means. Let us hear what he has to say," said Dickie, sitting down likewise.

As the courtly and athletic form of the Lord Douglas came up the hovel, the Border gentlemen stood all up to receive him, save Sir Ringan, who throwing himself back on his seat, leaned his chin on his hand, and in that indifferent posture awaited till the quality of his guest was made manifest. But no sooner did the voice of Douglas reach his ear, than he rose up to salute and receive him with as much ease as if he had been his daily visitor.

"You are hard of admission, noble Sir Ringan," said he, "thus to let your friends wait at the door of your pavilion, after riding so far in the dark to see you."

"I am chafed with visitors from both countries every hour of the day, Lord Douglas; many of them coming with complaints which it is out of my power to rectify. I have therefore a sly inquisition established around me, that might haply give your lordship some interruption. But it was your own blame. Had you announced the name of Douglas, that would have opened a lane for you from my farthest outpost to this chair, which I request you to occupy, while I take my place here at your right hand. You are welcome, noble Earl of Douglas and Mar, to our rude habitation. There is no man more so, beneath our sovereign lord the king. I give you and your attendants all kind welcome and greeting."

"You are become as much an accomplished courtier among these wild wastes, as you were before an accomplished warrior, Sir Ringan," said Douglas.

"I always make points of speaking as I am spoken to, drinking as I am drunk to, and going to a battle when sent for," said the warden. "H'm, h'm, h'm," neighed Dickie o' Dryhope, screwing up his mouth on one side like a shrew: "it is all true our captain tells you, Lord Douglas. That's his rule. Mh!

mh! mh! H'm, h'm, h'm." The Douglas cast at Dickie a curious searching glance from his dark eye that was half hid by a shaggy eyebrow; and then turning to Sir Ringan, replied, "I am heartily glad of it, noble Baron of Mountcomyn, it having been for that very purpose I sought this interview with you. Sir Ringan Redhough, you must to battle with me to-morrow."

"With all my heart, my lord," was the reply.

"Come, that is as it should be. We'll no more of it. We *can* have no more of it," said Douglas: "let us have a flagon of your best wine to drink success to our arms."

The wine was soon produced, with plenty of other good cheer, with which the warden's camp was then abundantly stored; and the two chiefs conversed together with as much freedom, and as little apparent jealousy with regard to rank or fame, as if they had been two brothers. The Douglas delineated his affairs as in that posture in which success could not fail him; at the same time he admitted the ticklish situation in which he stood, owing to the diversion made by the captain of Berwick, and that without an instant effort he would be inclosed between two fires. Sir Ringan answered that he had heard of the incursion, and therefore he had drawn his troops down from the dales of Northumberland to support his friend and firm ally in any case of necessity; and he concluded by boldly proffering either to supply the Douglas' place in the blockade, or march to the west, and hold Sir Thomas Musgrave in check. Douglas was delighted to find the crabbed, cross-grained warden, as he was wont to call him, in such a complaisant humour; and testified that delight by many well-turned encomiums on his vigilance and gallant support. He got introduced to all the gentlemen of the party, with whom he exchanged civilities, desiring them all to regard him as their friend, and one ready to do them a kindness whenever it lay in his power. "And now, Sir Ringan, since you hold the taking of the castle of Roxburgh so light," said he, "I think it is meet that my men and I should march and give battle to Musgrave. Probably you may have taken possession of that troublesome garrison before we return."

"If I do, my lord of Douglas, I take it for myself," replied Sir Ringan: "and claim all the privileges, rights, and immunities that were to devolve on you as the reducer of it. Now, if I should take the castle of Roxburgh before your return, I suspect you would find it as hard work to expel me, and these Border warriors of mine, as the half-starved English that you have there already. I have all these brave fellows to hold in beef and malt, my lord of Douglas; and for their sakes I have laid down a golden rule to walk by, which is, *To do nothing for nothing.* If I take the castle of Roxburgh, I take it for myself and them."

Douglas became now more convinced than ever, that the warden knew of some flaw or some tangible point in the garrison; and if there existed a knowledge of such a thing, he resolved to avail himself of it by any means. He knew Sir Ringan too well to suppose he would confide his secret to him, without a certainty of reaping due advantage; and that, therefore, it behoved to give him a prevailing interest in it. With this view, he answered him jocularly; "Though you were to receive all that was promised to me, in the event of my success, you would probably find yourself only a loser by the guerdon."

"Why, are you not to be made the king's son-in-law," replied Sir Ringan, "and thereby the first subject, or rather the first man of the realm; for by the indolence and retired habits of our sovereign, you would have the whole kingdom at your beck! Call you this nothing, my lord? Or would it be fair and reasonable—supposing the thing possible, which I do not pretend to say it is—that if my warriors and I should put you in possession of all this power, riches, and honours, would it be fair, I say, that we should be again turned out to these Border wastes, to live by our shifts, without reaping anything of the benefit?"

"Should you take the castle for me, in my absence, noble Sir Ringan, your reward shall be of your own naming."

"Would it not be better, Lord Douglas, that the reward were settled beforehand; and then I lose or gain at my own risk and peril. If I deliver you no produce, I ask no pay."

"And what is the reward Sir Ringan would ask for such a piece of incalculable service?"

"My choice of seven baronies on the west Border, to divide amongst these gentlemen commoners, to whose support I owe everything."

"You are a master worth serving, brave Sir Ringan. But such a grant would break my power on the Border for ever."

"It is that your power on the Border may not be broken for ever, Lord Douglas, that I make the proffer. I am safer without the venture. But you are a day's march nearer to the English army—draw off your men silently before the break of day, and march against it. I shall supply your place at the blockade, to the west of the castle, without loss of time, and answer to you at your return for all ingress or egress that takes place in that division. If Sir Thomas proves hard for you, you have only to keep your men together, and fall back toward the entrenchments. You shall find you have some good back-friends there."

Douglas had determined on no account to let this proffer of the warden's ingenious head and powerful arm in the taking of the fortress pass without trial; so, without more ado, he called for the friar's tablets, and made out a grant to Sir Ringan, in free present, of the barony and lands of Gilkersclench, and his choice of seven of the best baronies belonging to the house of Douglas in the districts adjoining to

the west border, in the event of his putting James, Lord of Douglas and Mar, in full possession of the castle of Roxburgh. This grant signed and sealed, the Douglas departed, after pledging the warden and his friends in a hearty stirrup-cup, both chiefs being alike well pleased with the agreement they had entered into. The Douglas posted back to Roxburgh, and reached it just in time to put the western division of his army in motion at break of day; while Sir Ringan made his musters by the light of the moon, and marched off to the siege of Roxburgh.

CHAPTER XI.

Aboon his skins he sat and rockit,
And fiercely up his bonnet cockit;
Then at ha' doors he crousely knockit
Withouten dread,
Till wives and bairns around him flockit;
But now he's dead.

Then he wad claw, and he wad hustle,
Till all the skins played rap and rustle;
While up his thighs, wi' devilish bustle,
Ran mony a ked;
Now they hae lost their gume and gustle,
Sin' Robin's dead.

De'il on the yaud, that I should ban!
That brak the neck of sic ane man;
Now wha will wucked dames traupan
Wi' siccan speed?
Or drive the hides to them wha tan,
Sin' Robin's dead?

Rob Paterson's Elegy.

On the same day that Douglas marched his men up the Tweed towards Melrose, and the warden his troopers across the Border to the siege of Roxburgh, a band of twelve men and thirty horses came up out of Eskdale towards Craik-Cross, the most motley group that had ever been seen traversing that wild country. The men were dressed as English peasants of the lowest order, with broad, unshapely hats, made of a rude felt of wool and hair mixed; wide coarse jockey-coats that came below their knees; and, instead of loops or buttons, these were bound round the middle with a broad buff belt; the rest of their dress was all conformable, save that each of them had a noble broadsword girded by his side. Some of their horses were laden, some of them half-laden, and a few had scarcely anything on their backs at all. But no man will guess what that lading consisted of. Not to keep the reader in suspense, it was of *nolt-hides;* that is, of cow-hides, oxen-hides, bull-hides, and all sorts of hides that ever came from the backs of cattle. There were raw hides and dried hides, black hides and white hides, hides with horns and hides without horns; and of these consisted their lading, and nothing else.

The men alighted at Craik-Cross to bait their horses, and the following conversation ensued, which will let the reader into the secret who these skin-dealers were, thus strangely accoutred.

"Will Laidlaw o' Craik, ye're a gayan auld-farrant chield. Come near me, and sit down, and tell me gin ye hae ony guess what our master the warden can be wanting wi' a' thir confoundit ill-smelled hides?"

"I hae puzzled my brain to nae purpose about it, Dan Chisholm; but am convinced it is some way connected wi' the siege of that unlucky castle; and the maist part o' us trows that they are for making raip-ladders, or rather whing ladders, for climbing ower the wa's; an' gin that be the case, Dan, there will be mony ane o' us throw away our lives to little purpose."

"Now to hear you talk about fock throwing away their lives!—you that wad risk your life for naething but a broken crown every day o' the year. Why, Will Laidlaw, I hae foughten often in the same field wi' you afore this time, and I never saw you set your life at a cow's horn, let be the hide o' ane (for whilk we wad gie a good deal the day). I hae seen ye ride from your ain party, when that wing wasna hotly enough engaged, and blatter into the very thickest and hettest part o' the field, just girning and laying on like some lang-nosed deil come out o' the pit. But let me tell ye, Will o' Craik, it is a sair fault o' yours, and it is a clagg o' the hale clan—the deil be your landlord (as he has already been mine, quietly), gin the hale tott o' ye be nae ill for saying ae thing an' thinking another. If ane hear a Laidlaw complaining o' pinching and poverty, ye may amaist be sure that he has the best stockit mailings and the best filled beef-barrels in the country. If ye hear him complaining that the English are herrying the Scots up, stoop and roop, ye may rely on it the Scots hae been getting the upper hand and enriching themsels; and if ye hear a Laidlaw pretending to be averse to a foray or a battle, ye may depend on it that his very knuckles are itching and his teeth watering to be at it. Na, ye needna waul wi' your muckle een, Will, for ye canna deny the thing; and it is a provoking gate ye hae."

"Hout, dear Dan! we just hae it by kind to try what fock thinks on the subject a wee; to sound them like, afore we tell our hale minds. But a' comes aye freely out ere the hinder-end. But the truth is, about this that we were cracking, ye ken. I dinna mind a bodle what the warden be gaun to do wi' the skins, provided he keep his promise, and gie me a living English cow for the hides of every three dead anes that I bring him."

"There it goes now! There you go again! Weel, I ken ye carena ae doit about the kye. Ye hae plenty o' baith kye and ewes already, and, on the contrary, ye *wad gie them a'* to ken what our chief is gaun to be about wi' thir hides. But it is needless to fight w'ye! Ye canna help that cross gate o'

expressing yoursel. Gin ever ye be drowned, we may seek you up the water. There's ae thing, Will; ye may see the warden means some general good to us a' by this project, whatever it is, for he has sent ae man o' every name to gather up the skins o' his native district. Ae Oliver, ae Armstrong, ae Laidlaw, ae Chisholm, and twa o' the Redhoughs; for ye ken he is always maist behadden to his ain name. But what can be the meaning o' this ugly disguise, I canna form a single conjecture: and he is sae strick about it too, that if ane o' us let oursels be found out, we lose a' chance of reward or advantage. Sae, Will, ye're unco weel kend about Craik and Howpasley, and a' the links o' Borthwick, and so am I about Castle-Wearie and Chisholm, and thereabouts. Gang ye into my father's house a' night, and I'll gang to Craik; gather ye up the hides o' Teviot, and I shall take Borthwick in my road. My father will maybe be a wee sweer to take ye in, but ye maun make your way on him the best gate ye can; he has the best stockit pantry on Teviot-head, but a bit of a Laidlaw's fault, complaining aye maist when he has least reason. He has a capital stock o' hides, but seeing that English disguise he may deny them; therefore try him first, and if he winna produce them, gang up the burn about half a mile, and in a lown crook, weel hidden frae a' the world, ye'll find a bit housie wi' a dozen o' good hides in it. If he winna gi'e you them at a fair price, ye maun e'en take them for naething, as it is a' for his ain advantage."

"Na, na, Dan. Weel I wat I'll do nae sic thing! I wadna dispute wi' the auld man nor anger him for a' the hides in the hale barony."

"There again! Aye the auld man! Now, the Lord forgi'e ye; for ye never met wi' him a' your life but ye baith angered him and disputed wi' him. But nae mair about it. Take ye Sandy Pot o' the Burnfit, the queer hairum-skairum devil Tam Oliver, Bauldy Elliot, and Bauldy Armstrong wi' you; and I'll take Jamie Telfer o' the Dodhead, Jock o' the Delorrin, Jock Anderson o' nae place, and Geordie Bryden o' every place, wi' me, and good luck to the skin trade!"

It was one of those sort of winter days that often occur in January, when the weather is what the shepherds call "in the deadthraw," that is, in a struggle between frost and thaw. There was a dark cloud of rime resting on the tops of the hills, which shrouded them in a veil impervious to vision beyond the space of a few yards, and within that cloud the whole height appeared to be covered with millions of razors, every pile of bent and heath being loaded with ice on the one side, so that each had the exact resemblance to a razor-blade, all of which appeared to be cast in the same mould, and of the same beautiful metal. The feet of the horses as they travelled through this made a jingling noise, as if they had been wading among crystal. As they came lower down on the hills the air became softer, and the ground was free of those ice-candles; but an uncommon gloom hung over holm and dale.

Old Peter Chisholm was walking on the green to the westward of his house, looking at his ewes coming bleating down from among the dark foldings of the rime, and saying to himself, "I wonder what can be word o' thae dirty herd callants the day, that they are letting the sheep come a' stringing in lang raws, and rairing and bleating, into the how o' the water that gate. The country's in a loose state 'enow, for the strength is a' out o't; a raid o' thirty stout English thieves wad herry the hale water. An sic were to come this gate the day, my stock wad be a' gane."

Peter was proud of his ewes for all that, and, giving them a whistle, he threw the plaid over his shoulder, set his broad bonnet up before, and turned about to go home to look after the shepherd lads. As he turned his face to the north, he naturally cast his eye up toward the Limycleuch hills, where it instantly embraced the appalling sight of Will Laidlaw o' Craik, and his disguised compeers, with their fifteen horses, coming stretching down the ridge, right opposite to Pate Chisholm's hirsel of bonny wheel-horned ewes. The old man's eyes were dazzled in his head, and a paralytic affection seized his whole frame. "Lord, pity us! Now see what's coming yonder," said Peter: "I tauld them aye what wad happen! but no ane wad heed me! Oh dool to the day! A man may soon hae muckle, and soon hae naething in this wearifu' country. O Dan, Simon, and Jock, the strength o' my house! wherefore are ye a' gane and left your gear to gang as it came! Dear bought! far sought! and little for the handing."

By the time Peter got thus far with his soliloquy he was quite out of breath; for he was not only walking fast, but he was absolutely running towards home, with a sore stoop, and knees bent much forward. Still as he hobbled he continued to apostrophize in short sentences, as he could gather a little breath now and then to utter a small portion of the concatenation of repulsive ideas that presented themselves one after another—"Naething but trash left, daughter. Bessy Chisholm; heh! are ye therein May Chisholm, where's your titty? Poor tafferal ruined tawpies! What are ye gaun gaindering about that gate for, as ye didna ken whilk end o' ye were uppermost?" "That's easily kend, father. What has come ower ye? Hae ye seen a warlock, that ye are gaping and glowring at sic a dismal rate?" "Waur than ony warlock, ye twa glaikit idle hizzies. Off wi' jerkin and wilycoat, and on wi' doublet, breeks, and buskins instantly. Belt on bow, buckler, and brand, and stand for life, limb, gear, and maidhood, or a's gane in ae kink. Oh dool be to the day! dool be to the day! What are ye standing glinting, and looking at ane anither there for? Cast your een up to the Carlin-rigg, and see what's coming. A' harried, ravaged, and murdered!

Come, come: don your billies' claes; let us make some show; it will maybe save something. Warn the herd callants; let the stoutest of them arm, and the weakest rin and drive sheep and cattle an' a' out o' sight amang the clouds. Oh dool to the day! Na, na; for a' the houses that are in the country here they come straight! Nae winning by this place."

The lasses seeing their father in such a querulous mood, and the motley troop fast approaching, acquiesced in his mandate, and without delay mounted themselves each in a suit of their younger brother's clothes, while old Peter stood over them to see that they put all to rights, always giving such directions as these: "Come, come, come! strap, clasp, belt and buckle; and gudesake fauld up your cuffs. Your arms hing at your shoulder blades as they were off joint. Hout fie! hout fie! Wha ever saw young chields hae sic luchts o' yellow hair hingin fleeing in the wind? Come, come, strap and string down; swaddle it round wi' sax dizzen o' wheelbands, and fasten a steel-belted fur cap ower aboon a'. Yare, yare! Lord sauff us! Here they come! What's to be our fate? Keep close for a wee while."

"Hilloa! Wha hauds the house?" was vollied from the door by the deep-toned voice of Will Laidlaw.

"There's naebody in but me, and I downa come to the door. Ye had better ride on," cried old Peter, in a weak tremulous voice.

"Wilt thou answer to thy name, or hast thou a name to answer to?" said Will, feigning to speak the broad Northumberland dialect, which sorted very ill with his tongue: "An thou be's leel man and true, coome and bid thee guests wailcome. It is God speed, or spulzie wi' thee in three hand-claps."

"Spulzie, quo' the man!" exclaimed Peter; "the muckle fiend spulzie the unmannerly gab that spake it!"—and with that he came stooping over his staff, and coughing to the door, speaking in a quavering treble key. "A bonny like purpose! What wad ye spulzie frae a poor auld man that hasna as muckle atween him and the grave as will pay for howking it, and buy a hagabag winding sheet? Spulzie, quo' he! That is a good joke!—he—he—he (cough) hoh—hoh—hoh. I'm sae ill wi' that host! Eh? wha hae we a' here? Strangers, I think!"

"Goodman, we were directed to your house for a night's entertainment or two, if you are the old rich yeoman yclept Patrick Chisholm of Castle-Weary."

"Na, na! I'm nae rich yeoman. I'm naething but a poor herried, forsaken, reduced auld man! I hae nae up-putting for ought better than a flea. Ye had better ride on down to Commonside. There's plenty there baith for man and horse. Come away, I'll set you down the length o' the ford, and let you see the right gate."

"Come neighbours, let us go away as he says; we'll never make our quarters good on this auld carle," said Sandy Pot, in a whisper to his companions; "and troth do ye ken I wad rather lie at the back o' the dyke, before I imposed myself on ony body. 'Od, my heart's wae for the poor auld niggard."

"Come away, lads, come away," cried Peter. "The days are unco short 'enow; ye haena time to put off."

"Stop short there, my good fellow," cried Laidlaw, "we have some other fish to fry with you before we go. I am informed you have a large stock in hand of the goods in which we deal. You have had lucky lifts this year. Plenty of good hides with you?"

"Rank misprision, and base rascally jests on a poor auld man. Not a single hide about the hale town, forby the ane on my back," cried old Peter.

"My orders are, worthy old yeoman, to give fair prices to such as produce their hides," said Laidlaw. "But whoever refuses, I am obliged to search for them; and if I find any I take them at my own price."

"O dear, honest gentlemen, I downa joke wi' ye: hoh, hoh," coughed Peter. "Gin ye be for a place to stay in a' night, come away as lang as it is daylight."

"Why, with your leave, my good fellow, we must lodge with you to-night. Hearth-room and ha'-room, steed-room and sta'-room, is the friendly stranger's right here. Small things will serve; a stone of English beef or so, and two or three pecks of oats."

"Beef, quoth the man? Ye may as weel look for a white corby as beef in my pantry, or aits in my barn. Will ye no come away?"

"Not till I makes a search for your nolt-hides, honest yoeman. To that am I bound."

The four skin-dealers next the door alighted and went in, leaving their horses with the other two, who went and put them up in a good large stable with plenty of stalls. Peter ran back to the house in perfect agony, speaking to himself all the way. "They are very misleared chaps thae. They maun surely either be Low Dutch, or else sutors o' Selkirk, that they are sae mad about skins. I little wat how I am to get rid o' them."

The two lasses appeared armed cap-a-pie like two young men; and though Bess was Will Laidlaw's own sweetheart, he did not recognize her through the disguise, neither did she once suspect him. The two made a little swaggering about the *pelt-dealers* as they called them entering the pantry, but not choosing to measure arms with them, the weak suffered the strong to pass; and Will having his cue, soon discovered the huge barrels of beef below the ground, with empty ones above them. Old Peter shed tears of vexation when he saw this huge and highly-valued store was all discovered, but had not a word to say for himself, save now and then, "A' fairly come by, and hardly won; and there is nae right nor law that says honest men should be eaten

up wi' sorners. May ane speir where ye come frae, or by wha's right ye do this!"

"Why, man, dost thou no hear and dost thou no see that we're coome joost from Nworthoomberland!"

"Aha!" thought Peter to himself; "English thieves after a'? I had some hopes that I could distinguish Scots tongues in their heads. But a's gane, a's gane!"

"Now, auld yeoman, if thou hast a word of trooth in thee, tell us where the hides are, and we will pay thee for them."

"No ae hide about the town. No ane, either little or muckle."

"Why soore am I them coos doodnae coome to thee withoot heydes, did they? That I can answer for, they had a' heydes and bones baith when they came from hwome."

"Waur than ever! waur than ever!" exclaimed Pate Chisholm to himself as he sought another apartment: "the very men that the kye were reaved frae come to take revenge! Callant, come here and speak wi' me. Haste to a neighbour's house, and raise the fray. We shall never be a' quietly put down wi' half a dozen."

"Dearest father," said May, "I dinna think the men mean ony ill, if ye wad be but civil."

"Civil or no civil, wench, it is as good to have half a dozen armed men lying concealed near us," said Peter: "an we dinna need them, the better. Rin your ways, and gar raise a' the auld men and the young lads in the two neist towns, for there is nae ither left. Pith's good in a' play."

The maid did as she was ordered, and Peter, seeing that no better would be, tried to compel himself to a sort of civility, which however sat on him with a very bad grace. But, hides! hides! nothing but hides was the burden of their inquiries: while Peter durst not for his life produce the hides, deeming that every man would know the hides of his own kine, and wreak tenfold vengeance on himself and household. He knew not, he said, what his son Dan, who took care of all these matters, had made of them—sold them, he supposed, to the curriers and sutors of Selkirk, and more than this Pate would not acknowledge. There was no other thing for it, nor perhaps did Laidlaw want anything else, than for him and his companions to walk up the burn and make a seizure of the whole of Peter's excellent hides, with which they returned laden to his dwelling. His confusion and distress of mind were most appalling when Laidlaw spread them all out before him, and asked in a very particular manner to be informed where he had got them. Oh! Peter knew nothing about them. They were not his at all. He did not know to whom they belonged. But he would not stand to speak, turning his back always on the men, and hasting away, coughing and speaking to himself. He could have seen these presumptuous skin-men roasted on a brander, for they had now put him out of all patience, and all hope!

"Pray thee now, mine good friend, inform me this," said Laidlaw; "did'st thou nwot get this seame fleckered one, and this brwoad one here, on the third of the last mwonth; and here's wother three, did'st thou nwo get them on the twentieth of the seame mwonth? Now tell me this, I say. Why where is thou going groombling inte theesel? Turn about the feace to the heydes, and answer to the pwoint."

"Aff hands is fair play," said old Pate: "I winna be forced wi' ony unmannerly English loun that ever I saw atween the een;" and with that he heaved his staff and struck Laidlaw across the shoulders, and over the steel bonnet repeatedly, who was like to burst with repressed laughter, but still persisted in his queries.

"What ails the owld catwiddied carle," said he, "that he winno answer a ceevil question! I's jwost wanting to tauk to thee aboot boosiness, and thou flees out in a reage and breaks me head. Come tourn again, and tell me when and where thou got'st this one; see, this wheyte one here! What's't moombling at? Wolt thou tell me the price of them, then?"

"I want to hae naething to do wi' you, and as little to say to you; therefore, gang about your business, and dinna plague a poor auld unfeiroch man. The gate is afore ye, and your company's wanted elsewhere."

Will would take none of these hints; he followed his uncourteous host about and about, till at last he fairly holded him beyond the fire; and then he took his seat over against him and conversed on, while his companions dropped in one by one and joined in it. For a while they got it all to themselves, but at length Pate, not being able to make better of it, suffered himself to be drawn in by degrees to join them, still preserving the same strain of disingenuousness. They asked who the two handsome striplings were that attended him, and spread the board with provisions? He answered that they were two sons of his own. "Sons of thine!" said Laidlaw; "whoy, what are their names?" "Simon and John," answered he; "or rather Sim and Jock, for that's how we ca' them."

"Whoy, mon, that is the queerest thing I ever heard," said Laidlaw; "then thou hast two swons of the neame of Jock, and other two of the neame of Sim, for I saw two of that neame, strapping youths, in the warden's camp."

Peter wist not well what answer to make; and therefore only added, "Ay, ay! were you in the warden's camp? Then tell me, is there ony word frae my son Dan!"

"Ay, man, I can tell thee sic news of Dan as thee never heard'st; he has sitten at his supper hand and neive wi' the deil." At these words one of the young men behind them (May Chisholm to wit) uttered a suppressed scream, and from that moment Will Laidlaw smelled a rat, and soon discovered his own beloved Bess Chisholm standing gazing at him.

Bess said to the skin-dealer next to her, who chanced to be Sandy Pot, "Pray, sir, when you were in the camp of Sir Ringan Redhough, did you note a brave trooper, a friend of ours, named Laidlaw?"

"Oh, yes, that I did," said Sandy: "I know him well." This was a glorious joke for Pot, and his comrades were afraid he would persevere in it till he put their secret out altogether.

"How is he reported in the army?" said she: "Is it still alleged that he is the bravest and most successful battler in the baron's array?"

"*Bottler*, I suppose you mean," said Sandy, "for as to his battling, God mend that. He is not noted for ought that I ever heard of, except for keeping a flunkey, or a wal-i'-the-chamber, as the Frenchmen ca' it; and it is reported thro' all the army, that that *wally* o' his is an English girl. I can tell you that your neighbour, Will Laidlaw, is notorious for nothing else beside this."

"It is false as thyself, and thy perjured ungenerous nation," said the disguised maiden. "I know my friend to be honour's self, and of a house whose courage and integrity were never called in question. The man that dares to slander him had better do it somewhere else than in my presence, and under my father's roof. But I degraded him myself, by putting his name into the mouth of such a mean forager as thou art! The man whose actions are base always accuses the brave and generous of deeds such as his own."

"Bless me, what ails the chiel?" said Sandy, laughing good humouredly; "what's the great ill o' keeping a *wally?* I ainee keepit ane mysel, there's nae doubt o't, till my uncle, Gideon Scott, set up his birse, and gart me part wi' the creature."

The rest laughed at Sandy being put out of countenance by the indignant stripling; but Bessy Chisholm turned on her heel, and walked out at the door, muttering expressions about vulgarity, raw hides, and maggots; and Will Laidlaw, not able to contain himself, rose and walked out after her in a visible state of mental agitation. As he approached the stable door quietly, into which she had turned, he heard her saying to herself, "Laidlaw keep an English mistress in disguise! No, the fellow is a poltroon and a liar, and I will not believe it." Will entering at that moment, seized her hand between both his, and kissed it, saying in a passionate style, "My own dear and high-spirited Bess Chisholm still."

Never was there seen such a statue of amazement. The tones of the voice, now uttered in its natural key, were familiar to her. But the figure that uttered them! To be addressed in that style by a great burly thief of an English skin-buyer outwent all comprehension. She was in a man's dress, be it remembered, and there she stood, with her face half raised, her ruddy lips wide apart, and her set eyes of shining blue showing a mixture of astonishment and disdain. "What? what? sir," was all she could say, until the ragamuffin figure reminded her of some love-tokens and vows, of which none knew save one. But, with a woman's natural caprice, she now was angry at him in turn having discovered her true sentiments, and refused to acknowledge him as her lover in that hateful disguise, unless the meaning of it was explained to her. He told her that the meaning of it was unknown to himself; that he took it at his captain's command; but that his fortune depended on the secret being kept."

"There you are safe, at all events," said she; "and it is well you have disclosed yourself in time, for my father has raised the country, and it is not improbable that before to-morrow you should have been all dead men."

"I think we have been in greater jeopardies," said he: "but in the meantime keep up your disguise, that my comrades may not discover your sex; and we two must have some private discourse during the night, for I have much to say to you."

"Not I, master, I winna court ae word wi' a man in the dress of a vulgar English boor; for it is sae hatefu' to me, I can like nought that's within it. Ah me! I wot ill how it is; but I think I hardly detest it sae sair already."

"My bonny, haughty, pawkie, sweet Elizabeth!" cried Laidlaw. But Isaac the curate says, that, being himself a married man, he could not go on with all the overcharged outrageous stuff that passed between these two fond lovers; so he passes it over, as well as the conversation at their evening meal, which Bess took care to make a plentiful and savoury one; and in the meantime, she was in such high spirits herself, that the troopers, who did not know her, took the young man for the most swaggering puppy they had ever seen. She challenged Sandy Pot to fight her with single rapier, knowing well that Laidlaw would find some means of preventing it; but it was evident that old Peter thought her entirely out of her senses, for he tried to get her away from about the house to the residence of one of the neighbouring gentlemen yeomen for the night, but the experiment was vain.

When he saw such a goodly supper, or dinner, (for they were both in one), set down to these uncouth and, to him, unwelcome guests, he could not contain his chagrin, and at first refused to turn out to the board or partake with the rest. But when he saw that the good fare would all go, he grew as restless as if he had been sitting on pins, till Bess, who knew his way, took him by the arm, and pretended to force him jocularly out to the table. But Peter was not ill to force; for in place of receding, he made all the haste into the head of the board that he could, though at the same time always repeating, "I tell ye, callant, it is downright wastery." He, however, plied as good a knife and as good a horn-spoon as any of them all.

While they were yet busily engaged at their meal, the tramp of horses was heard approaching the door in a cautious and uncertain manner, and by a circuitous way.

The two disguised maids (whom by the by we should distinguish by the names of Sim and Jock, as they sustained these that night), were standing eating at the hall-dresser behind the backs of the troopers; and when the trampling was first heard, Jock grew as pale as death, but Sim, who knew what guests were within, which the other did not know, showed a courage so undaunted, that it appeared wonderful to all present, save one, but to Jock in particular: "O ho! The nearer night the mae beggars," cried Sim. "Who have we next?"

"That beats ought I ever heard in my life!" exclaimed Pate; "I think the fock be gane distractedly mad! What brings them a' here? Is there no another ha' house and pantry in the hale country but mine? It is hard to be eaten out o' house and hald wi' sorners and stravagers this gate. May Liberton's luck befa' the hale o' them. Callant Jock, set by that meat out o' sight."—"Stop for a wee bit, an ye like, goodman," said Bauldy Armstrong: "it is best aye to do ae thing afore another."

By this time the dialogue had commenced in the court; Simmy went briskly to the door by himself, and demanded of the strangers who they were, and what they wanted. They answered with hesitation, that they supposed they had lost their way, and requested to know who held the house, and how it was called? "The house is held by my father, a leel Scottish yeoman," said the youth; "and already full of strangers to the door, as well as every stall of his stable with their horses. Pass on your way, and peace be with you." "Did not I tell you we had *lost* our way?" said the first speaker, riding up to the door. "Pray, who are the strangers within? We have lost a party of our friends."

"The men are from the south, master: free-traders, they may be called. Men of horns, hides, and hair, sir. You, I suppose, are of the same profession?" "Precisely of the same," said the stranger, alighting from his horse, and entering the house.

He was followed by other two, for there were but four in all, and the fourth was a boy whom they left holding their horses. When they came in upon Peter and his jolly hide-merchants, they were visibly disappointed, and viewed the grotesque-looking group with marked curiosity. These were not the men they expected to have found, that was evident; but perceiving their English habits, they ventured to address them. They were answered in blunt cutting terms: for our troopers knew them although the disguise prevented their being known again. Having learned the name of the house and its owner, they began forthwith to inquire if anything of a young nobleman had been seen at that place, with such and such attendants; for they had traced them to that very house, they said, and if the possessors could give no account of them they would be held as responsible. Old Peter said there were so many people came to that house, that it was impossible he could tell a tale of one of them distinct from another; but the intrepid Sim, knowing his back friends, told him the whole story in a few words, and then asked them in turn what they had to say concerning it.

"Whoy, I has joost to say this, young chap, that I am to boond thee and all the faymilie, and carry you all to answer before a meeting of the wardens."

"Ay, and it is prwoper reyght and prwoper reason too, that they should, friend," said Laidlaw, pretending to take his part, to see what he would say. Will knew the three men to be three notorious English thieves, of the set of the Halls and Reids, and that they could not, in fact, be sent in search of the Lady Jane Howard; but he could not divine their motive for coming there, or making the inquiry; therefore he took the Northumberland tongue as well as he could, and encouraged them in conversation till a late hour. Yet he could learn nothing; only he was sure they were come about no good end. As for old Peter, when he saw two parties of Englishmen come upon him, and heard that they laid their heads together, he gave himself and all that he had up for lost; and hoping to conciliate their favour in some measure, he actually intreated these last comers to sit down and share of the remnants of their supper, which they did in a right liberal manner, while Peter went out and in to learn the news. He found by this time nine men, well armed, assembled in the barn, that had gathered from the neighbouring houses, whose inhabitants were all bound to rise and assist one another on any emergency. These were mostly old men or very young ones, the flower of the Border districts being all in the warden's camp. Will likewise informed his sweetheart privately of his suspicions; and perceiving that the strangers were extremely well mounted, and heavily armed, he desired her, if possible, to find means of concealing their horses. This the supposed Sim soon effected. The boy still held them at forage by the side of the old castle-wall; and he being brought in and set down to supper, some of those in the barn were warned to take the horses quietly to the concealed house up in the hollow burn. They were soon secured there; and the thieves perceiving that no one left the house, never had the smallest suspicion of any trick, the boy being fast asleep behind the board. At length all of them grew drowsy, and began to compose themselves to rest as they best could, save two fond lovers, that were whispering their vows and their secrets to each other.

About midnight, when all was quiet, these two heard the cry of *Welhee! Welhee!* from a neighbouring mountain, which in a short time was returned from two different places in the valley.

"Now, I will lay my neck in wad," whispered Will to his sweetheart, "that there is a thief-raid to-night; and that these three have either come here to watch you, or to cut your throats in case of resistance; or perhaps they may have indeed lost their party in the mist. But this I ken, neither a Reid nor a Hall ever came thus far into Scotland for good. If the fray rise, take you the command, and fear nothing. My friends and I will defend you, and clear your way."

"But what shall we do, dear Laidlaw, with these three moss-troopers and the boy?"

"We must either slay or bind them the first thing we do, or perhaps leave them to waddle to the hills in their armour on foot the best way they can."

The maiden's heart trembled at the thoughts of what lay before her; as for old Pate, he kept going out and in like a restless spirit; and if he had not lost his daughter, and knew not where she was, he proposed to have fastened doors and windows, and burned all the nine Englishmen where they lay, for he had no faith in any of them, and weened them all come for the purpose of ruining him. As he was going about preparing matters for this laudable purpose, one of the shepherd lads came with the fray, and related a dismal tale. He said, that he and his companions had driven out all the sheep and cattle to the heights among the mist, as they had been commanded; that in the course of the evening they heard many calls and whistles around them; and just as the moon rose a band of English thieves came round them, and drove them all off towards Bilhope-head. Peter's assembled friends advised him to take the skin-men's fifteen horses, and what remained at home of his own, and ride off and try to recover the prey, without alarming his dangerous guests; but Peter was bent on fastening the doors, and burning them skin and bone, for he said they would never get so easily quit of them. The two anxious lovers hearing a bustle without, opened the casement, and overheard a part of these perplexed words and reasonings. Then hastening out to join counsel, they raised the fray openly. The heroic Sim flew to horse, and desired all that were friends to the Scots to follow, while Laidlaw addressed his compeers, saying, "Up lads, and let us ride; our host must not be herried while we are under his roof."

"No, no!" exclaimed the thieves, all in a breath; "he must not be herried and we under his roof;" and no one appeared in half such a hurry as they were to mount and be gone.

"Stop short, my good fellows, till I speak with you for a minute," said Laidlaw: "make me sure which side you will take before you go, else one foot you stir not from that fireside. I know you for Anthony Reid of Whickhope, and those for two of your cousins of Tersithead, and shrewdly suspect you to be at the head of the foray."

Anthony drew his sword: so did Laidlaw. But the English troopers were bold and desperate fellows; and before Laidlaw's friends could gather round him to his assistance. the three having covered themselves with their bucklers, forced their way out, back to back, and ran Sandy Pot through the left shoulder, who pressed on them too rashly. When they missed their horses, and saw that they were clean gone, they foamed like as many furies, and setting their backs to the wall, swore they would fight it out. The combat might have been attended with much bloodshed, had not all the people rushed from the barn and overpowered them. They were then taken into the house and bound, while Pot and May Chisholm, alias Jock, were left as guards on them, with orders to kill the first that should offer to loose either himself or any of his companions. This whole scene was quite beyond Peter Chisholm's capacity. He could in nowise conceive how the one party of Englishmen assisted with such energy in detecting and binding the others. Still he was anything but satisfied; the matter having outgone his comprehension, as well as that of all his associates, save one.

They now mounted without delay, and rode with all speed toward the Pass of the Hermitage, by which path they supposed the droves must proceed; and just as they went down the Redcleuch, leading their horses, they saw the cattle passing at the foot of it. The party amounted scarcely to their own number; but the sheep-drivers were not come in view; so they mounted their horses, and instantly mixed with the men behind the drove, without offering to stop the cattle. At the same time they placed a guard of two farther behind, to prevent all intelligence from passing between the two parties. When this was effected, Simmy challenged the cattle as his father's, and desired the drivers to give them up; but to this the captain of the gang, whose name was Gabriel Reid, the younger brother of Anthony, and captain in his absence, only mocked, imitating the sharp treble notes of the petulant younker, and telling him that he would not give them up for three-score such men as *he* was, else he was better than he looked. As he said this, however, he kept a curious eye on the rough exterior of the tall athletic English peasants by whom the youth was surrounded, which Laidlaw perceiving accosted him in his feigned tone.

"Whoy, friend, we are countrymen of thee own, and know thee full weel. Thou's Gabriel Reid of Trochend. But thee billy Anty is taken prisoner this seame mworning, and if thou disna gie up the kie, his head will be chappit off, as weel as these of thee twa coosins the Ha's. Sae thou hast ney choice left but to yield up thee ill-gotten gain."

"And what dog art thou that takest part against thee own countrymen?" said Reid.

"Oo, I's a dealer in the leather line, as weel as all my friends there. We have our free passages

and warranty for the good of both countries; but we are honest men, and by chance were lodged in the house of the owner of these coos, and must see joostice done to him. I boond thee brwother with mee own handa."

"Then the devil bind thee, thou traitor knave! and for thee reward, this to thy harnpan!" said Gabriel, drawing out his sword, and attacking Laidlaw without more ado. Will, who was never backward at a brulzie, received the encounter without flinching, and calling for fair play and elbow-room, both proceeded to decide the day by single combat, while the rest drew aloof and looked on, encouraging them only with cheers and applausive words. Laidlaw was mounted on Anthony Reid's gallant steed, which Gabriel remarked, and that added to his rancour against the skin-man at least ten degrees. The ground was exceedingly bad, so that they could not wheel for weapon-space without a parley; but neither would ask it. They fought close together, first with their swordblades, and afterwards, as their horses came in contact, they dashed each other with their hilts. Both were slightly wounded, but Laidlaw rather had the worst of it. "Beshrew thine heart, if thou hast been a skin-merchant all thy life," said Gabriel, as he turned his horse in the path for another encounter. They had now changed sides, and this encounter was longer and more inveterate than the first. Laidlaw not being quite master of his mighty and furious steed, was twice in imminent danger, losing his broad slouched hat in the struggle, the crown of which was cross-barred with steel.

Poor Sim had changed colours ten times since the combat began; and, on seeing this last struggle, he lost all command of himself, and rushed with his sword drawn to Laidlaw's rescue. *Himself*, did I say!—alas, no one knew the true sex save her lover, and no one interfered till she was met by an English trooper half-way, who unhorsed and wounded her with as much ease, of course, as she had been a child. Will's eye caught the first glance of her as she was falling, and galloping up to the rescue, bareheaded as he was, he clove the trooper's burgonet, and slew him at the first stroke. Reid followed him up; but Laidlaw's spirit, now fully proportioned to the high mettle of his steed, was a match for anything. He rode against his antagonist with all his fury, and having the advantage of the brae, overthrew horse and man, and galloped over them. Then throwing himself from his horse, and seizing the forlorn warrior by the throat, called out with a voice of fury, "Rescue or no rescue?" "No rescue! Redsdale to the fray!" was the resolute and fatal reply. Will could not stand to reason any more at that time, so, without more ado, he ran him through the body, and flew to the rescue of his beloved and heroic Elizabeth, for there the combat began to thicken. She was on her feet ere he arrived, and well guarded, and mounting her palfrey, she bade her lover head the fray, and pay no regard to her, for she was nothing the worse. He, however, saw the blood upon her bassonet, and was roused to perfect fury. The battle now became general; but it was no regular engagement, being scattered here and there through all the drove—some fought before the cattle, some behind them, and some in the middle. It was reported, that at one time there were fifteen single combats all going on at the same instant. Therefore, to have been an engagement on a small scale, it proved a very bloody one, several being slain and wounded on both sides. But the tremendous skin-merchants bore down all before them wherever they went. These were inured to battle, while the thieving moss-troopers, as well as the hinds on the Scottish side, were only used to desultory warfare. The bare-headed leather-merchant, in particular, was a dismal sight to the foragers, for having soon rid himself of his first antagonist, he continued galloping about the field wherever he saw two engaged, and cut down all of the adverse party as he went, or rode them down, giving, with every stroke, a hard grin and a grunt. The men thought the devil was come among them, or else that he had fairly taken possession of a skin-merchant; and giving up the contest, a few of them tried to escape by flight, which they did by quitting their horses and gaining some inaccessible ground. The drivers of the sheep likewise made their escape, for they found the droves deserted in the Hope. The weakest of the men having been left behind with them, they had come in view of the field of combat, and, marking how it terminated, had sped them away out of danger.

Chisholm's party brought home five prisoners with them, twelve English horses well caparisoned, and all the prey, save one ox that Will Laidlaw had ridden over and slain in the plenitude of his wrath. The Scots had no fewer than nine killed and grievously wounded out of their small party, of whom one of the latter was the brave and lovely Bess Chisholm, who was so faint, that Will was obliged to carry her all the way home on his horse before him, clasped to his bosom, he not failing to kiss her pallid cheek many a time by the way, while all the rest wondered at Laidlaw's great concern about the youth. When Peter saw his child borne into the house pale and wounded, he lost all recollection of the secret of her sex, and cried out, "O my poor Bess! my dear daughter! What had I ado making a man of thee! Thy blood is on thy old father's head. Alas, for my beloved daughter!"

"Daughter!" exclaimed they all again and again. "Daughter!" re-echoed Will Laidlaw, as if he had not known well before. "Daughter!" cried the skin-men; "have we then been led to the field by a maid! Shame on our heads that suffered the overthrow, against the rules of chivalry as her attempt was! Alas, for the gallant and high-spirited young dame!"

They put her to bed, and dressed her wounds, and from all appearances had high hopes that she was more afraid and fatigued than hurt. She soon fell into a quiet slumber, in which they left her, and retired to take some refreshment, and talk over their morning's adventure. It turned out as suggested, that their three prisoners were the three chief men of the gang, who had completely lost themselves and all traces of their companions among the mist; and having heard a report of the seizure formerly made at that place, they cunningly tried to pass themselves off as messengers sent in search of the lost travellers. If they had been with their own party they would have proved an overmatch for the Chisholms. The Reids and Halls had been herried of their whole live stock by the warden's people, and learning that the greater part of it was driven up into these mountains, they naturally wanted to make some reprisals, and recover their own again. Had it not been for their misfortune in separating, and the exertions of the gallant hide-men, they would have effected their purpose with the utmost ease. It proved a luckless raid for them, for they lost all their horses, the greater part of their men, and the chief and six of his friends were sent prisoners to the castle of Mountcomyn.

The country-people at Chisholm's board were loud in praise of the skin-men, and of their trusty and gallant behaviour; in particular, they averred that Laidlaw had killed the half of the thieves with his own hand, for that he rode about the field like a resistless angel, destroying all before him. When Peter heard that he fought so valiantly for the recovery of his stock, and saved his darling daughter's life, his heart warmed toward him, and he bid him ask anything of him he chose that was in his power to give, and he should not be said nay. Will at once asked the maid whose life he had saved for his wife. Peter hesitated, and said it was hard to bestow the flower of all the Chisholms on an English skin-merchant, a man who seemed to have neither house nor name, or was ashamed to own them. However, as he had proved himself a warrior and a hero, Peter consented, provided the maid grew better, and was herself satisfied with the match. Will said he asked her on no other terms, and went to see her before he departed. She was still sound asleep, or pretended to be so; therefore, unwilling to disturb her, he breathed a blessing over her, and impressed two or three warm affectionate kisses on her lips. As he came away he felt a slight pressure of her arms around his neck.

When Sandy Pot learned that the lovely youth with whom he had watched the prisoners all the night and morning of the battle was a maid, and the younger sister of his gallant friend Dan, Sandy's wounds grew so ill that he could not be removed, so he remained where he was, and the other four went off with their uncouth loading. They found Dan Chisholm at Hawick waiting for them in the utmost impatience, having collected no fewer than twenty horse-loads of hides, every one of them in size like a hay-stack, and away the motley train marched and joined the warden on the night after his arrival before the walls of Roxburgh.

CHAPTER XII.

So they shot out and they shot in,
Till the morn that it was day,
When mony o' the Englishmen
About the draw-brigg lay;
When they hae yoket carts and wains,
To ca' their dead away,
And shot auld dikes aboon the lave,
In gutters where they lay.
Ball of Old Mettlin.

The expedition of the Douglas against Musgrave is, like the innumerable Border battles of that reign, only shortly mentioned by historians; and although it was a notable encounter, and is detailed by Isaac at great length, it lies out of our way here. Let it suffice that they skirmished cautiously for two days with various success, and at last came to an engagement on a field right opposite to the junction of the Tweed and Gala. After a hard-fought battle, Douglas' left wing was discomfited; and just as he was arranging his force so as to cover the retreat, an unaccountable confusion was noted among the English ranks, which seemed to be engaged anew, and with one another, there being no other army nigh. Douglas, recalling his routed squadrons, faced about, but advanced with caution, till he saw Musgrave's army broken and flying in all directions. This gallant feat was accomplished by a Sir John Gordon, who was on his way with seven hundred fresh men to the assistance of Douglas; and as he came on the English ranks behind at that important crisis, he broke them at the first onset, and took Sir Thomas Musgrave prisoner with his own hand.

Thus far the affairs of Douglas wore the aspect of prosperity—but a settled gloom hung over his mind; an oppression of spirits was apparent in every sentence he uttered and every plan he suggested, and these were far from being traits of his wonted disposition. But the monk Benjamin had been with him again and again!—had been harassing his soul with commissions and messages from the dead; and one night he heard the voice of his lost princess speaking to him in his tent, as it were out of the canvas. Still the most solemn injunctions of secresy were imposed on him, insomuch that he deemed himself not at liberty to open his mind to any one. Besides all this, the disconsolate Mary Kirkmichael had been constantly lingering nigh, and always presenting herself in the utmost agony of mind, to make inquiries about her royal mistress. That lady's appearance became so terrible to him that he was unable to bear it, and gave strict charges that she

should not be suffered to come within the limits of his camp. But for all that, availing herself of her rank and her sex's privilege, she forced her way to him several times, and at every visit filled his soul with the most racking torments.

After the intrepid Lord Musgrave had sacrificed his own life to save those of his only brother and the lady of his love, Clavering was unanimously chosen captain in his room, and every soldier took a new oath to die in defence of the fortress. The commission of which he accepted was a dismal one; but he entered into all the feelings of the famishing inmates in their hatred of the Scots, and therefore was the very man for their purpose.

Every attempt of the besiegers to scale the walls of the castle, or to gain entrance by fraud or force, had hitherto proved abortive; the determined sons of England laughed at them as freaks of mere insanity, or the gambols of children. The fortress was impregnable with such heroes within, had they been supplied with sufficient stores of food and of arrows, both of which had long been exhausted; and though a small supply of the former had been obtained during the tempest and the flood which followed, yet it proved rather more hurtful than advantageous, for they devoured it with such avidity that the distemper, with which they had formerly been visited, broke out among them with greater violence than ever. Yet disregarding all these privations, which a looker-on would suppose might naturally tend to daunt the resolution of the boldest —with famine and pestilence both staring them in the face—they bound themselves by a new and fearful oath never to yield the fortress to the Scots while a man of them remained alive. Every new calamity acted but as a fresh spur to their resolution; and their food being again on the very eve of exhaustion, their whole concern was how to procure a new supply. Not that they valued their own lives or their own sufferings—these had for a good while been only a secondary consideration, but from the excruciating dread that they should die out, and the Scots obtain the fortress before Christmas.

The warders soon noted the alteration that had taken place in the beleaguering army. They perceived the ground that had formerly been occupied by the Angus men and the Mar Highlanders now taken up by the tall, athletic, and careless-looking Borderers, against whom they found their antipathy was not so mortal: and they had some surmisings of what really was the case, that a strong diversion had been made in their favour, that had drawn off their inveterate enemy Douglas from the siege. Every hour convinced them further of the truth of this suggestion; for they perceived a laxness in the manner of conducting the blockade which they had not witnessed for many days, and all their conversation turned on the manner in which they ought to avail themselves of it. The carelessness of the besiegers themselves, or something subordinate thereto, soon furnished an opportunity to them of putting their policy once more to the test, and that by an adventure the most ardently desired. On the second day after the departure of Douglas, the warder on the topmost tower perceived, on a rising ground two miles to the southward, about thirty head of cattle, that came gradually in view, as a wing of a large drove might be supposed to do; and after they had fed for some time there, two men came before them and chased them back out of sight of the castle, as if a great oversight had been committed by letting them come in view of it. Notice of this important discovery was instantly given to the captain, and the news spreading among the garrison, many a long and wistful look was cast from the battlements and loopholes of the high western tower that day. They were not cast in vain. Just toward the fall of evening they perceived a part of the drove appear again only a very short space from the castle, and they likewise perceived by their colours that they were a drove of English beasts which had been brought from their native pastures by the strong hand of rapine, for the supply of this new-come Border army. They perceived likewise that they approached the army by a concealed way, that the two glances they got of them were merely casual, and that they were very slightly guarded.

A council of war was immediately called, in which it was agreed, without one dissentient voice, that the garrison should make a sham sally at the eastern drawbridge, as if with intent to gain the city, in order that they might draw the attention of the besiegers to that point; and in the meantime the captain, with the choicest of the men, were to march out by Teviot-bridge, of which the garrison had necessarily the sole possession, and endeavour to seize the prey. Thence they were to proceed westward, and try to elude the enemy's posts, or give them battle, if the former were found to be impracticable; but at all events either to die or succeed in attaining that valuable supply, or a part of it. The success of the contest now turned on that single point as on a pivot; the balance was against them, but, that being turned in their favours by an exertion of warrior prowess, they could then reckon on a complete triumph over their unappeasable foes.

Besides, everything seemed to concur in support of their gallant expedition. The nights were dark even beyond their usual darkness at that gloomy season, and the moon did not arise till two in the morning. Both these circumstances were in their favour—the one in obtaining the prey unperceived, and the other in enabling them to fight their way home; for they knew that though they themselves might pass the strong Scottish posts favoured by the deep darkness, still it was impossible to bring the drove through them, and along the bridge, without a hard skirmish. The captain, therefore, gave command to the division left behind, that the more noise they heard of an engagement about the bridge

of Teviot, and the gate towards the west, the more they should press their battle eastward, to divert the strength of the army to that quarter; because on that side the Scots could make no impression, and the English could lose nothing there save a few lives, which they accounted of small consequence; but if the expedition to the west failed, their cause was finally ruined.

That was a busy evening within the walls of Roxburgh, while all was quietness and indifference without. Within there was arming and disarming, for the suits of armour that once fitted these emaciated warriors would not now hang on their frames. There was grinding of swords, pointing of spears and ox-goads, and even the slaughter-houses of the fort were cleared, with a provident concern seldom overlooked by Englishmen; and at eleven o'clock at night, by the convent matin bell, Clavering, with five hundred chosen men, well armed, issued silently from the garrison, creeping along the Teviot-bridge on their hands and knees. From that they proceeded westward in the most profound silence, and so close by the Scottish posts, that they heard them breathing and conversing together. One party crept up all the way within the Water-brae, and the other, led by Clavering himself, passed through between two Scottish posts, drawing themselves along the ground close on their breast, and once or twice were obliged to squat close down, and lie silent for a considerable space, while the following dialogue passed between the sentinels.

"'Od, Sandy Scott, think ye it can be true that the English are eating ane another?"

"There's nae doubt o't. I hear that they're snapping up five o' the fattest o' their number every day. They will eat themselves out bit by bit that gate."

"Aih wow, man! I wad rather die o' hunger than pick the banes of ane acquaintance. Bursten devils that they are!"

"Aha, Sandie billie, ye dinna ken till ye be tried. A man will do ought or he die o' hunger. And do you ken, Sandie Scott, I think our captain has done wrang in bringing sae mony fat bullocks a' sae near the castle at ae time. Thae hungered louns will hae a haud o' some o' them, and maybe cut a wheen o' our throats into the bargain, some o' thir dark nights."

"Now, ye see, neighbour, I ken sae well that our master never does the sma'est thing without some design, that I think he wants to wile out the English, and then kill them; and that he has brought a' thir braw stots o'er the Border, just on the same principle that a fisher throws a bait into the water."

"Na, na, Sandie, that canna be the case, for he has gi'en strict orders that no ane o' them be suffered to come within sight o' the castle. He just thinks the beasts canna be sae safe onywhere else as beside himsel and his lads. But hunger has sharp een, and I wadna wonder if this drove should lead to some hard tulzie."

"Whisht! Godsake, haud your tongue! What's that I hear?"

"The English, I'll warrant you. If hunger hae clear een, fear has unco lang lugs. What was it that Sandie heard?"

"I heard a kind o' rubbing and thristing, as a fox or a foumart had been drawing himsel through a hole aneath the ground. Hilloa! What guard?"

"Howpasley and Gemelscleuch."

"Watch weel. There's something stirring."

"Not a mouse."

"So say the sleeping foresters; but I can tell you, men o' Gemelscleuch and Howpasley, an there be nought stirring aboon the ground, the moudies are very busy aneath it the night. Clap close, and keep an e'e on the withergloom. I had a heavy dream at nightfa', and I'm resolved no to close an e'e. Come, neighbour, tell a tale, or say a rhame to keep us wauken."

"Have ye heard the new ballant made by the rhiming dominie o' Selchrit, the queerest thing ever was heard? It begins this gate:—

"'The Devil he sat in Dornock tower,
And out at a slip-hole keekit he,
And he saw three craws come yont the lift,
And they winged their flight to the Eildon tree.
O whow, O whow, quo' the muckle deil,
But yon's a sight that glads my e'e,
For I'll lay the steel brander o' hell
There's a storm a-brewing in the west countrye'"

. . . . . .

"Whisht, for Heaven's sake! I heard the tod again. Hilloa! Gemelscleuch to the glaive! Hare lug and hawk e'e, or there'll be news afore the morn that's unheard tell o' yet."

"And that there will! Saint David be with us! and the blessed Saint Mary, the mother of God, be with us! Hist havering, say Benedicite."

At that instant a sharp breeze arose which drowned the noise, and Clavering and his men passed fairly by on their perilous expedition. Beyond the next hollow they found the cattle all lying puffing and dozing on a round hill. An immense drove of them there seemed to be, for the hill appeared to be literally covered, but the night was as dark as pitch, and they could see nothing distinctly. Clavering gave his commands in a whisper to his chief men, to surround the whole drove, and drive them furiously, that by these means they might throw the enemy's lines into confusion. "We have the advantage of the ground," said he; "the bridge is clear, and the gates open. Let us play the men for once, and our difficulties are all over. Providence has favoured us beyond our calculation. Our force is superior to that of our enemies on this side the river. On whatever side our column is attacked, let us keep a running fight, so as to push on and preserve the prey, and the day is our own: And now, Saint Anthony for the right!"

The men then formed themselves into a crescent behind the cattle six-line deep, and with club, goad, and spear pushed them on. There were a few dour lazy driving runts behind that bore all the thumps, but the bulk were high-spirited, and galloped off on the path toward Roxburgh with the utmost fury, insomuch that the delighted drivers never got a sight of them. They broke through the Scottish lines without either stop or stay. The alarm was instantly given, but a night muster is always attended with some delay. So the English thought —so they said; and to their great joy they found their suggestions realized; for not till the last cow was past the strong line of posts on the height were they attacked by the Scots. But then, indeed, the Gemelscleuch and Howpasley men set upon them with unparalleled fury, and being every five minutes joined by more of their companions, they pressed hard upon the English, who, being obliged to keep up a retreating battle, fell thick on the brae beyond the bridge. The brave and judicious Longspeare himself led the attack, and behaved like a lion; for though wounded in three different places, he fought in the front of the main battle all that night.

The Scots, to the utter amazement of their enemies, never once offered to stop the cattle, but merely attacking the English crescent behind, drove them and cattle and all towards the bridge. This Clavering and his chief men attributed wholly to the surprise by which the Scots were taken; and when the former saw the dark column of cattle take the bridge, he thanked the God of heaven, the blessed Virgin, and all the saints whose names were known to him, for such a wonderful success. The English host then raised such a shout of triumph, that the echoes called from the castled towers to the forest, and from the forest to the distant rocks. The Scots soon joined in it with equal enthusiasm; and the two armies then engaged at the eastern gate also joined their voices to the general chorus. The Grayfriars of Roxburgh, and the Benedictine monks of Kelso, raised their heads from their flinty pillows, committed themselves to Heaven, and deplored the madness and folly of the men of the world. The city dames wept and prayed, and the men ran to head-quarters to learn the cause of the uproar. The sounds were actually heard in the camp of Douglas, at the distance of sixteen miles; and when this was reported to him next morning, he said, "Then is the Redhough on the ramparts of Roxburgh!"

But man's thoughts are vanity! He cannot judge of events so as to calculate on what is to happen from one moment to another. Never was there an enterprise so nearly overturned as this, although it was not once thought of till afterwards—and it was on this wise:—There was a strong guard of English placed at the south end of the bridge, to guide the foremost of the drove on to it, or help to cut a way for the cattle through such troops as might interpose. The cattle, as was said, came galloping furiously without intervention, and, as if led by an unseen providence, took the bridge with all their vigour, the battle being then raging behind them, and the shouts beginning to rend the sky. This guard had nothing to do, of course, but to open into two lines and give them head. But at the end of the bridge there was a deep puddle, and among the men there chanced to be a little boy, who was running about, and thrashing the cattle as they went through this puddle, that made them spring up the arch with redoubled velocity, which the urchin thought good sport. But in the midst of this frolic he bolted away at once with such abruptness, that he had almost overthrown one of the men in the file, and as he ran he cried out, "Lord, saw ever ony mortal the like o' that!" "What was it, rash idiot!" said the man. "Grace and mercy, man, did you not see how yon great black stot stood straight up on his hin' legs and waded the pool?" said the boy. "Take that to clear your eyes, impertinent brat," said the man, and gave him a blow with his fist that made him run away howling and crying, always repeating as he went, "I'll tell your captain—now! 'at will I that—now!"

The combat behind the cattle thickened apace. The English were sore borne down on the hill, but when they came to the little plain at the bridge-end they stood firm, and gave as hard blows as they got. They had fairly gained their aim, and their spirits, so long depressed, mounted to an unusual height. The last lingering hoof of the whole countless drove was now on the arch, and they could calculate on holding out the fortress against their hated foes not only to Christmas, but till that time twelvemonth. Their shouts of joy were redoubled. So also were those of the Scots. "The people are mad," said they, "thus to shout for their own loss and their own defeat. It is a small trait of the cursed perversity of the whole nation!"

The English narrowed their front and narrowed their front still as their files found room on the arch of the bridge, which was long and narrow, and very steep at the south end, that rose directly from the plain. But the road up to the castle by the two tremendous iron gates was likewise exceedingly steep, and went by a winding ascent, so that the latter end of the drove, those dull driving ones that bore all the strokes, got very slowly up, and with great difficulty. There was a guard of considerable strength left in this gateway by Clavering, lest any attempt should be made by the enemy to enter in his absence. But these men had strict charges to clear the way for the cattle, and help to drive the foremost ones up the steep. The fore part of the drove, however, came up to the steep with such main fury, that the men were glad to clear a way for them, by flying out of the path up to the citadel. There was not a man left in the gateway, save two at each of the iron portcullises, and these stood in deep niches of the wall, out of all danger. Each of these men held the end of a chain that was twisted

round an immense bolt in the wall—and these bolts are to be seen sticking to this day. On untwisting this chain the portcullises fell down, and when they were to be raised up it was done with levers. Well, as the two outermost men stood in their niches, holding by the ends of their chains, they observed that two of the oxen that first came in, nay the very first two that came in, turned round their ugly heads, leaned their sides to the wall, and kept in their places, the one on the one side and the other on the other, till the whole drove passed them. The men could not move from their posts to drive them on with the rest, but they wondered at the beasts; and the one cried to the other, "What can ail them two chaps?" "Oh them are two tired ones," said the other: "Dom them for two ugly monsters! they look as them hod been dead and roosen again."

At length, by dint of sore driving and beating, the last hoof of the warden's choice drove passed inward through the castle gate of Roxburgh, for the maintenance of his irascible enemies. Could anything be so unfortunate? or how was he to set up his face and answer to the Douglas now? But the Redhough was determined that he would set up his face and answer to the Douglas and his country too, as well as to his kinsmen and followers, whom he valued highest of all. Just as the last lazy cow crossed the gate, and when the triumphant shouts of the English were at the loudest, the two great lubberly oxen that stood shaking their ugly heads, and leaning against the wall, ripped up their own bellies; and out of two stuffed hides started up no less men than Sir Ringan Redhough and his doughty friend, Charlie Scott of Yardbire! Off went the heads of the two porters in one moment, and down came the portcullis with a thundering rattle, and a clank that made the foundations of the gate shake. "Now, southern lads, haud ye there!" cried the Redhough. "Time about is fair play. Keep ye the outside o' the door threshold as lang as ye hae gart us keep it."

They next went up and seized the other two porters, whom they saved alive, to teach them how to bolt, bar, open, and shut the gates, but the men had taken the oaths with the rest, and remained obstinate. No threatening could make them move either finger or tongue, except in mockery, which provoked the Redhough so, that he despatched them likewise. On reaching the great square the warden found his men in peaceable possession. Six score brave chosen men had entered among the cattle, each in a stuffed ox or cow-hide, and had now, like their captain, cast their sloughs, and stood armed at all points to execute his commands. They found nothing to do, save a prodigious difficulty in working their way from the western to the eastern gate. There were so many turnings and windings, so many doors and wickets, so many ascents and descents, that an army might have gained possession of the one end, and yet have been kept out of the other for years. But the surprise here was so complete, that the Borderers had in fact nothing to do but to keep the possession thus obtained in so easy and at the same time so gallant a style. The shouts that arose from the western battle had so much encouraged those at the eastern gate, that they had sallied out, and attacking the besiegers sword in hand had driven them back within their strong line of defence. This retreat was a part of the plan of the Scots to draw off the remaining force from the gate, and while they were in the hottest of the skirmish, down came Redhough and his lads from the interior of the castle behind them, cut down the few guards about the entrance and the drawbridge with ease, and having raised that, and shut the double gates on that quarter likewise, he placed the Armstrongs there as a guard, and returned into the interior, still uncertain what enemies he had to combat within.

This mighty fortress was, from the one drawbridge to the other, a full quarter of a mile in length, walled and moated round, and contained seven distinct squares or castles, every one of which was a fortress of itself. But the strongest of all was the division on the western part, which was denominated the citadel, and had gates and bars of its own, and towers that rose far above the rest. Into this strong place the sole remnant of the English soldiers had retreated, which consisted merely of the guard that kept the western porch and made way for the cattle, a few stragglers besides, and some official people that kept always within. Through every other part of the castle the Scots found free passage; and by the time the moon had been risen for an hour, the shouts of "A Douglas! a Douglas! a Redhough! a Redhough!" were heard from every part of the walls excepting the western tower. There, indeed, a faint and subdued shout announced at intervals the name of the King of England, for it was now no more a Musgrave! and as for Clavering, they wist not whether he was dead or alive, taken or at liberty.

When the first ranks of the Englishmen that came up behind the cattle saw the gates shut against them, they took it for some accident, or some mistake that the porters had fallen into, on listening to the shouts of the adverse parties; but after calling and remonstrating to no purpose, they began to suspect that there was treason at the bottom of it, and the whisper of treason spread among that part of the forces which was now driven against the gate. They could do nothing; for they neither had room to fight nor fly, and they knew not whom to suspect or what had befallen them. As for those at the farther end of the bridge, they were so hotly engaged with their opponents that they had little time to consider of anything; but finding themselves fixed to the spot, and no movement making toward the gate, they conceived that something there was wrong which retarded the regular entrance of the troops for so long a time. They now fought only three to three abreast on the steep arch of the bridge, down which the English drove the Scots six or seven

times, the latter always returning to the charge with that vigour which a certainty of success inspires. Clavering fought them in the rear, and in the hottest of the battle, still encouraging his men to deeds of desperate valour, little weening how matters went within. But when the names of the Scottish chiefs were resounded from the walls, every heart among the English was chilled, and every arm unnerved in one instant. They had no conception how the thing could have happened; it appeared so far beyond all human power to have effected it, that it was several hours before it gained general credit among them. They had kept the fortress so long, with so little dread of its being wrested from them, and withal suffered so much in it, that they could not believe the evidence of their senses, that by a course of events entirely of their own planning, they should be all without the walls and the Scots within. It was like a work of enchantment. The Scots could make no impression on them upon that long narrow bridge; but they could not long stand cooped up there, and when they saw that all hope of regaining entrance was lost, they threw themselves over a high parapet, and took possession of the steep bank between the bottom of the southern wall and the river Teviot. The river being dammed below, it stood like a frith round the bottom of this bank, which was so steep that they could not stand on it, but were obliged to clamber along it on their hands and feet. Escape being impracticable, the Scots suffered them to take possession of that bank undisputed, and to keep it, supposing they must surrender next day; but a great number were slain before the latter end of the train was disentangled of the bridge.

The Scots had now free access to the gate, into which Gemelscleuch and Howpasley were admitted. The warden embraced them, and thanked them for their wise counsel, as well as their great bravery, and they again set about traversing and surveying the fortress, concerning which Charlie Scott said, "It wad tak a man a year and a day to find out a' the turnings and windings about it."

The battle at the eastern drawbridge had continued from midnight without intermission; and after the break of day our chiefs witnessed a scene from the walls that was without a parallel. That division of the Scots army was composed of Douglas' men, being the same troops that were there before, and they were commanded by Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith. That knight got private intelligence of the warden's intention to storm the castle, by what means he knew not, but resolved to hold himself in readiness; and, as he was desired, when the sortie was made, he retreated at first, drawing them off from the gate. When the cry arose that the castle was taken, his men became frantic with joy, and resolute on taking ample vengeance on their enemies, they burst upon them without regularity, making great havoc, and at the same time throwing away many of their own lives. Sir James with great difficulty restrained them, called a parley, and offered the expelled garrison quarter; but they returned for answer, that they weened he had called the parley to ask quarter of them, and they had determined to refuse it. They concluded by telling him to see to himself, and insult them no more by such messages, for as yet he knew not with whom he was warring. The battle was then renewed by the light of the moon with greater fury than ever; they fought like baited bears, with recklessness of life and the silence of death. Deadly hate was in every thrust, and the last words of every falling warrior were, "Have at them yet."

When the daylight arose, the English fought within a semicircular wall of mangled carcasses; for, grievous to relate, they were not corpses; yet were they piled in a heap higher than a man's height, which was moving with agonized life from top to bottom, and from the one end to the other; for the men having all fallen by sword-wounds, few of them were quite dead. The English were now reduced to a small number, yet in the strife their ardour seemed to prevail over that of their opponents. The Border chiefs, inured as they were to war, stood amazed, and even shocked, at the scene presented to their view. Yardbire was the first to deprecate in these words: "Gude faith, sirs, it strikes me that this is rather carrying war to an extremity."

"Rescue! rescue!" shouted the warden: "give quarter to these men, for my sake. I will pay their ransom myself."

When the Douglas' vassals heard this, they lowered the points of their swords, and drew back from the slaughter, commanding the English to ground their weapons. The latter consulted together for a few minutes, and void of all dread, save that of being obliged to submit to the Scots, they broke with one consent over the pile of human bodies, and carrying destruction before them, opened a way into the middle of the Scottish columns; nor ceased they fighting until every man of them was cut down. The rest of the English army were in a fold. Escape was impossible. Ten men could have prevented it on all sides, yet for a whole day and night did they hold their tenure of that perpendicular bank, although before the evening many were losing their holds and rolling into the river from exhaustion. Then the sudden immersion arousing them somewhat from their torpor, scores of them might be seen at a time crawling to the side of the water, and endeavouring to clamber once more up the bank: but at last they sunk back into the deep, and their last breath arose to the surface in small fetid air bubbles. No one knew what became of the young and intrepid Clavering—at what time or in what place he fell; and without a head as these men were, it was not till the second morning, when the breath of revenge had cooled, and after much expostulation on the part of the conquerors, that the wretched remnant yielded themselves prisoners of war, and

Keeley Halswelle. Thomas Brown.

KING OF ROXBURGH.

THE SURPRISE AT THE EASTERN GATE.

BLACKIE & SON GLASGOW EDINBURGH & LONDON.

were all suffered to depart on their parole, with high encomiums on their valour. But these commendations were received with the gall of bitterness; and none of them could tell when they went home how or by what means they were expelled.

The warden and his men now set themselves to take the citadel; and feebly as it was defended, it cost them no little trouble. It is probable that it might have held out a few days longer, but when Douglas and his army were seen approaching on their return from the battle, the impatience of the Borderers could be no longer restrained; and Yardbire, with a remnant of his Olivers, Pots, and Laidlaws, scaled the wall in the faces of the enemy, who had scarcely power left to cleave a head without a helmet, and throwing themselves into the square, became masters of the gate in a few minutes; so that before Douglas reached the top of the hill of Barns, his colours were placed on the topmost tower of the citadel.

It may easily be conceived with what joy and wonder he gazed on this phenomenon. Joy that his broad lands and possessions were thus insured to him, of which for some time past he scarcely retained a hope; and wonder how that indefatigable chief had accomplished in a few days that which he had exerted himself in vain to accomplish for the space of as many months. The idea of being so far outdone in policy was without doubt somewhat bitter to the palate of a Douglas, for never till this day can they brook a competitor in the field: but, considering how matters stood, it would have been the worst of policy to have let such a feeling appear. Douglas therefore testified the highest satisfaction, extolling the warden's head to conceive and hand to accomplish, in terms as he never had been heard to utter. "Glorious Redhough! unparelleled Redhough!" exclaimed he again and again: "Thou and thy lads are the men to trust."

The chief received him at the castle gate, welcoming him in jocular terms of high chivalry to the castle of Roxburgh, which he took care always to denominate "my castle." This was noted by the Douglas; and as soon as they entered the governor's house in the citadel, Douglas made over to him, by regular deeds and instruments, the seven first baronies he chose to name. This document, together with the royal charters confirming it, is extant, and in the possession of one of the warden's lineal descendants at this day. On receiving this grant, signed, sealed, and witnessed, Sir Ringan delivered over the keys of the castle to the Earl of Douglas and Mar, and the two exchanged seats at the table. Douglas also conferred the honour of knighthood on Charlie Scott, Simon Longspeare, and John of Howpasley; while Sir Ringan bestowed one of his new baronies on each of these brave gentlemen in support of their new dignities, burdened only with a few additional servitudes. On his right-hand hero, the hereditary claimant of the post of honour, he conferred the barony of Raeburn and Craik, that he might thenceforward be the natural head of his hard-headed Olivers and skrae-shankit Laidlaws. To Longspeare he gave Temadale, and to Howpasley Phingland and Langshaw. When Charlie first rose from his knee, and was saluted as Sir Charles Scott of Raeburn and Yardbire, he appeared quite cast down, and could not answer a word. It was supposed that his grateful heart was overcome with the thought that the reward bestowed on him by his generous chief had been far above his merits.

The news of the capture were transmitted to court with all expedition; on which King Robert returned word that he would, with his queen, visit the Douglas in the castle of Roxburgh, and there, in the presence of the royal family, and the nobles of the court, confer on him his daughter's hand in marriage, along with such other royal grants and privileges as his high gallantry deserved. He added, that he had just been apprised by his consort, that his daughter the Princess Margaret, had been for some time living in close concealment in the vicinity of Roxburgh, watching the progress of her lover. If the Douglas was aware of this, which the king had some reasons for supposing, he requested that he would defer seeing her until in the presence of her royal parents. There was a thrust indeed! An eclaircissement was approaching too much for man to bear. But that heart-rending catastrophe must be left to the next chapter.

Abundance of all the good things that the kingdom could produce was now poured into the castle, and every preparation was made for the reception of the King and Queen of Scotland. The carnage had been so great at the two gates that night the fortress was taken, that the citizens of Roxburgh, as well as the three establishments of monks and friars in the vicinity, besought of Douglas that the slain might not be buried nigh to the city, for fear of infection; and if this was granted, they proffered to be at the sole charge of removing and burying them with all holy observances. This was readily granted, and they were removed to a little plain behind the present village, where thousands of their bones have lately been dug up. The burying continued for three days.

CHAPTER XIII.

Oh I hae seen the gude auld day,
The day o' pride and chieftain glory,
When royal Stuarts bore the sway,
And ne'er heard tell o' Whig nor Tory.
Though lyart be my locks and gray,
And eild has crook'd me down,—what matter?
I'll dance and sing as ither day,
That day our king comes o'er the water.

Jacobite Song.

From the time of the taking of the castle until the arrival of King Robert was an interval of high festivity. The Border chiefs and yeomen went home

with abundant spoil, having been loaded with rich presents from the Douglas, as well as their share of Sir Ringan's numberless booties, which he always divided among them with great liberality; and it was computed that, in the course of that predatory warfare, he drove thirty thousand domestic animals out of the English territory. The Scottish Border districts were never so well stocked before. For a century previous they had lain waste, having been entirely depopulated, and left no better than a hunting forest. That reign enriched them, and its happy effects have never since been obliterated.

Among other things that happened in this joyful interval, old Peter Chisholm received a message one day, informing him that the stranger to whom he had betrothed his daughter would appear next day to claim the fulfilment of his promise.

"They'll eat up everything that's within the house," said Peter: "if he will have her, it wad suit better for us to meet them at Hawick. The half o' the expenses there wad lye to him at ony rate; and if he made weel through wi' his hides, mayhap he wad pay the halewort. He's a brave chield enough, it wad appear; but I wish he had fawn aff the tap o' his humphed ill-smelled hides, and broken the bane o' his neck; for it will be a wae sight to me to see the flower of a' the Chisholms gang away wi' an English cadger. Oh, wae be to the day!"

"What is a man but his word, father?" said Dan. "I think the gallant way in which the stranger behaved entitles him well, not only to the flower o' the Chisholms, but to the best in the house beside."

"Ay, ay, that's aye the gate! fling away! fling away! till ye'll soon fling away every plack your auld father has gathered for ye. But, hark ye, callant Dan, gin ye will stand by me, I'll gainsay the fellow yet, and refuse to gie him my Bess."

"Hear what Bess says hersel," said Dan, "and then I'll gie my answer."

Bess was sent for, who declared not only her willingness, but her resolution to abide by her father's agreement; but added, that if a better came before him, and made her an offer, she would not wait a minute on her leather-merchant.

"Heard ever ony body the like o' that?" said Peter; "what trow ye is the chance for that? How lang hae ye hung on the tree wi' a red cheek an' a ripe lip, and never man to streek out the hand to pu' ye? There was aince a neighbour I had some hopes o'; an' he has a good heart too, for a' his jibes, an ane durst but tell him!"

Peter said these last words to himself, as he was turning about to leave the apartment—for he was at that time forming in his mind one of those superlative schemes which strike dotage as plans of the mightiest and most acute device, but which youth and energy laugh at. This was no other than to be early astir next morning, and before any of his family was aware, gallop over to Craik, a matter of seven miles, and beg of Will Laidlaw to come and run off with his daughter before she fell into the hands of an English skinman. This grand scheme he actually put in practice, but met Laidlaw and his jovial party by the way, who wondered not a little when they saw old Pate coming galloping up the Fanesh ridge, having his great pike staff heaved over his shoulder, with which he was every now and then saluting the far loin of his mare, and that with an energy that made all his accoutrements wallop. He never perceived the bridal party till close on them, and till he was asked by half a score voices at once, "What's the great haste, Castle-weary! Where are ye gaun at sic a rate sae early in the morning! Are your ha's burnt! Are your cattle driven! Have the Ha's and the Reids been o'er the fells aince mair!" And many other such questions were put, before Peter got a word spoken or a thought thought. He only bit his lip, and looked very angry at being caught in such a plight. But seeing Will Laidlaw at the head of his kinsmen, he took him aside, and imparted his grand secret. Will's sides were like to burst with laughter. He however contained himself, while Peter went on, "But ye had better turn a' that clan again, wha hae nought ado at a' wi' us but put things to waste. The less din about the thing the better."

"But how are we to answer the skin-merchant when he comes then, Castle-weary? That tremendous buyer of hides will hew us all to pieces."

"Ay, ye maun just take a' the blame on yourseln, you and Bess. He'll no mak muckle at the Laidlaw's hands, or he'll do what never ony did afore him."

"I certainly have the greatest respect for your daughter; but times are hard and dangerous, and I have nae great opinion o' marriage."

"Come now, I like to hear that; for ye ken fock maun aye read a Laidlaw backward; and if the times are hard, I shall be satisfied with a very small dowry. Perhaps the matter o' ten tup hoggs aff the Crib-law, sax owsen off Hosecot, and——"

"Hold there, my old friend; and I will run all risks, and take away your daughter Elizabeth: let the skinman look to himself."

"Weel, God bless ye wi' her. Ye'll get the flower of a' the Chisholms, and the best bairn o' the bike."

Bess was a winsome and a blithe bride that day, and though the wounds she received in the engagement with the marauders were not quite whole, she danced the best at the wedding, and was the first that lighted on Craik-green. Dan entertained his fellow-soldiers nobly; but old Peter was terribly in the fidgets, not only at the huge waste of meat and drink that he now saw going on, but for fear of the arrival of the outrageous and ill-used hide-merchant, and never till his dying day could he be brought to identify his son-in-law with the stranger to whom he first promised his daughter. But for many a day, when the dogs barked, he hasted out in great agita-

tion, lest the dealer in skins and his associates should come upon him unawares. Sandy Pot having found a very kind, attentive, and withal a very indulgent nurse, in the younger daughter, May Chisholm, there chanced two weddings at Castleweary on the same day.

Among all the festivities at Roxburgh, and all the mighty preparations for the reception of royalty, and the spending of the Christmas holidays in such company, the countenance of Douglas was overcast. He affected mirth, but a hideous gloom frequently settled on his dark manly countenance. The princess's shameful death hung heavy on his mind, and the secret of it still heavier. His conscience upbraided him, not with any blame in the matter, for he was alike ignorant of the rank and sex of his fantastical page: but her devotion to his cause and person; the manner in which she had exerted herself by putting her rival into his hands; the love-tokens slily given to him by her own dear self; her admonitory letters; and all her whimsical and teazing inuendoes, came over his mind, and combined in rendering her memory ten times dearer to him than ever he conceived that of human being could have been. And then how was all this requited? by bad humour, disrespect, and a total disregard of her danger. The most enthusiastic, affectionate, and accomplished lady of the age was suffered to be put down as a common criminal, without one effort to save her; and that delicate and beautiful form thrust down into a common charnel-house among the vulgar dead. Knowing all these things as he did, how could he again behold her royal parents? and knowing all these things as he did, why had he not related the lamentable facts as they had happened, and conducted himself accordingly? There was fixed the acme of his dilemma. The detail of that lady's love and fate rose before his mind's eye, like a dark unseemly arch, of which this was the keystone; and there was a power stood above it that held his soul in control, and beyond that he could not pass. Was it indeed true that the spirit of his beloved mistress walked the earth, and from day to day laid her stern behests upon him? and could it be that such a spirit attended upon him in his most secret retirements, and, though unseen, watched over all his motions, words, and actions? Or how else could the very purposes of his heart, together with his most secret transactions, be repeated to him by this holy monk? Nay, though he had never actually seen this apparition, he had heard his mistress's voice one night speaking to him as from behind the hangings, and charging him, as he respected his own and her soul's welfare, to keep her fate concealed from all flesh.

Whenever the Douglas got leisure to think at all, amid the hurry of his military duties, these cogitations preyed on his mind; and one night when they had thrown him into a deep reverie, the monk Benjamin was announced.

"I cannot see him to-night: tell him to come and speak with me to-morrow," said Douglas.

"He craves only a few moments' audience, lord of Douglas; and he says that unless he is admitted, a visitor of another nature will wait on you forthwith."

"What is the meaning of this?" said Douglas: "must my privacy be broken in upon, and my mind placed on the rack, at the pleasure of every fanatical devotee? Tell him that I will not be disturbed to-night. But—I think not what I am saying. Admit him. Well, reverend and holy father—madman rather! What is your important business with me?"

"That saintly vision has again been with me."

"Out upon thee, maniac and liar! There has been no such thing with thee; and thou hast trumped up a story in order to keep the power of the Douglas under thy ghostly and interested control."

"If I am a visionary, lord, it is for thyself to judge. I speak nothing as of myself, but the words of one that has sent me. If thou darest say they are the visions of a maniac, in future I keep them to myself and do you abide by the consequences."

"Thinkest thou that I will not or that I dare not abide by any consequences? Hence! Begone!"

"Rash, precipitate man! thou shalt repent this! What interest can I possibly have in whispering these truths in thine ear? Did I ever ask or hint at a favour from thee? Or was aught ever, save thy own welfare, the purport of my messages? Adieu, my lord! There must another commissioner wait on you presently, and one who will elude the most vigilant of your sentinels."

"Stay, Benjamin: thou art indeed blameless. If thou hast aught to warn me of, say it and have done, for I am not in a mood to be trifled with."

"I have been bid to caution you to look to yourself, for that there is treason within the walls of this castle. Will you answer me one or two queries truly and seriously, that I may know whether tho being that commissioned me be a true spirit or a false one?"

"I will."

"Have you got a private offer to a prodigious amount for the ransom of Lady Jane Howard?"

"Monk, thou hast had this from hell.—I have."

"Which thou hast rejected, with the secret intent of asking her in marriage yourself, should circumstances concur to favour the device?"

"It is false!—false as the source whence thou hadst it."

"Ah! then have I done! my informant is a false one."

"Or if I had, it was some passing thought, which no man can gainsay, and for which none are accountable."

"Neither is it true that you visited her in disguise last night?"

The Douglas gazed upon the monk in silence,

with an eye in which there was an unnatural gleam of madness. He drew his breath three times, as if he would have spoken, but made no answer. The monk continued: "If these are truths, then list to the following behest; if they are false, thou needest not regard it: There is a conspiracy among thy people for the rescue of Lady Jane. They have been bribed by unheard-of rewards. Thy guards are of course to be cut down, otherwise the rescue cannot be effected; and if thy own head is added to the convoy, the guerdons are all to be doubled."

The Douglas started to his feet, and held up both his hands: "By the blessed Virgin, it is true!" exclaimed he—"true every word of it! There have been petitions made to me for the use of certain keys already. Ay, and I have granted some of them too. I see through a part of the conspiracy. But I'll sift the traitors! I'll make carrion of them."

"If I am rightly informed, it may yet be prevented without being made manifest, which would be greatly preferable. Beware of Kinlossie. And list, for my time is expired: if you value your own name, see not the face of Lady Jane again till you present her to your sovereign."

The monk retired with precipitation, and left the Douglas overwhelmed with tumultuary and adverse passions. "Still the Lady Jane Howard!" said he to himself: "nothing but the Lady Jane Howard! Is it possible this can be an agent of hers? But the inference contradicts the whole scope and tendency of his missions. I must investigate this matter without delay." He raised his small bugle to his mouth, for in those days that answered all the purposes of a house-bell, and many more. Every officer in castle or camp knew, by the blast blown, when his personal attendance was required. Douglas lifted his to his mouth, but before he sounded it, the knight in waiting announced "a lady." No bolder heart than that of Douglas beat in a Scottish bosom. Nevertheless it quaked; for he thought of the threatening of the monk, that another commissioner should visit him whom his guards should not be able to repel. His agitation was now wrought up to the highest pitch, for he attempted to pronounce some words, of which the knight knew not the import, probably it was a command to expel her or to call in some guards; but before the order could be understood or complied with, the lady herself entered. "There she is, my lord!" said the knight in a whisper; "and none of us know whence or how she came hither."

The lady came slowly by, and the knight retired with all speed. She bore indeed the figure and form of the late princess, but the roses of youth and beauty were gone, and in their room a clayey paleness pervaded the features, which were even whiter than the cambric by which the face was surrounded. The figure held up its right hand as it advanced, and fixed its eyes on the earl; but no man to this day ever knew anything further of that conference. The knight in waiting, shortly after he had retired, heard a noise within as of a man choking and endeavouring to cry out; and, bringing two more attendants with him, they all three rushed into the apartment, and found the Douglas fallen back on the embroidered couch in a state of mental abstraction, or rather of total insensibility, and the lady was gone. They immediately applied themselves to the restoration of their lord, which they effected in a short time. Animation soon returned, but reason wavered for several hours. During that period he had for a number of times inquired who admitted that stranger, or who saw her depart! The men assured him each time, that no one saw her till she was observed standing in the ante-chamber; and that none was either admitted into the citadel or seen depart, save the starveling monk who attended him frequently as his confessor. "There has been another lady," they added, "begging admission to your presence for a whole day and night, which has always been refused her, in consequence of your peremptory order. She has at the last resorted to the means always at a woman's command, tears and threatenings; and she vows, that if she is not admitted to an audience, you shall dearly repent it."

"What another still!" said the Douglas: "no, I'll see no more women to-day, nor to-morrow, nor next day. Do you know, Eveldon, what I think of women!"

"No, Lord Douglas, but well what I think of them myself, which is, that they are nature's masterpieces."

"The pests of society, Eveldon. I deem them subordinate creatures, created solely for man's disquietude. The warrior is naturally surrounded by dangers; but, till he engages with women, he rises superior to them all; it is then that his troubles and perils begin. No, I'll see no more women to-night."

"Might I advise, my lord, it would be that you should give her admission. It appears so strange to see a lovely and most courtly dame standing weeping at your gate. The very commonest of the people sympathize with her, and blame your neglect. Beshrew me if any knight in the realm would refuse such a suit; no, not the king himself."

"Do you think, Sir John of Eveldon, that I can submit to be ruled by women and their agents! I, who never held them as aught save as beings formed for man's pleasures or his interests. My hands are free of their blood, Sir John; my heart, if ever it was in bonds, is now emancipated; and yet, by their means, has my life of late been held in thraldom."

"Say that I may admit this dame, my lord."

"Well, be it so, and let us be quit of her. In the meantime, let the guards be tripled, and stand to your arms. I have had strange intelligence to-night; if true, there will be a dangerous commotion in less than an hour hence."

"The forces of the two kingdoms cannot disturb you here to-night, Lord Douglas."

"See to it—there is treason within our walls. Who are on guard?"

"The Gordons, and Lindsay of Kinlossie's men."

"The Gordons I can trust—let the others be changed without delay, Sir John, and see them consorted to the camp. Call up the Douglases of the Dales, and let them look to themselves. Admit that petitioner in whom you are so much interested, and call me on the slightest appearance of insubordination."

Sir John did as he was commanded, and forthwith introduced Mary Kirkmichael of Balmedie. The impatience and mortification of the Douglas under this trial is not to be described, for he had promised to give her information of her royal mistress as soon as he had it in his power; and yet he neither had the heart nor the resolution, after the charges he had received of secresy, to tell her of her mistress's woeful fate. At Mary's first entrance into his presence, she rushed forward and kneeled at his feet, crying in the most passionate manner, "O, my dear lord, tell me what has become of my mistress. This suspense is dreadful. The castle is now in your hands, and all the prisoners, if such there were; but there are shocking insinuations whispered abroad. Her father and mother are on their way to visit you here; and what shall I say to them for the loss of my dear mistress! O, Lord Douglas, if you know of her, as know of her you must, tell me where I can see her. Dead or alive, let me but see her. Or tell me when I shall see her."

"Lady, that is more than I can tell you; but if it will give you any heart's ease, as certainly as I speak to you I saw her in this apartment to-night."

"Blessed are the news to me, my lord! But why, then, won't you admit me to her? Send me instantly to her presence, Lord Douglas, for I know she cannot be in any state of concealment in which my company cannot be welcome. I implore of you to send me forthwith to her presence."

"Send you to her presence? That would be a cruel act! Dame, you and your sex have moved my spirit from its erect and heavenward position. It is like a tree bowed by the wind, and the branch of memory is stripped of its fruit. Did I say I saw the Princess Margaret in this apartment?—You must not credit it. There's an incoherence in the principle, or nature has hasty productions not accounted for. You must not believe it, lady; for till the porter opens the great gate to you, your royal mistress you shall not see again."

"Are not all the gates opened or shut at your control, my lord? You speak to me in paradoxes. I comprehend it all well enough, however. I will go in or out at any gate; only, in one word, conduct me to my mistress."

"Hell has no plague like this! No, there are no other fiends that can torment a man in this manner." He blew his bugle. "Eveldon, conduct this dame to her mistress. She is in the great state prison, you know, the receptacle of royalty and thraldom, and let me not hear another word. I'll throw him over the battlements that next mentions the name of a woman to me."

The lady curtsied, and thanked the Douglas; and Sir John, mistaking his lord's frantic sarcasm for a serious command, hurried Mary Kirkmichael upstairs to the topmost apartment of the great tower, and ushered her in, without further ceremony, to Lady Jane Howard and her attendant. Lady Jane rose and came running toward them; but seeing who approached, she started, and retreated to her place. As the two ascended the narrow staircase, there was a great commotion in the square below, therefore, Sir John turned the key and hastened down again. The noise increased, and he heard there was a stern engagement, in which the name of Lady Jane was given as a rallying word on the one side. At the bottom of the stair the conspirators met him, having broken through the ranks in that direction; for the Gordons flew to guard the apartments of the Douglas, not knowing what the object of the insurrection was. Sir John had just time to shut a double-barred door in front of them; and, retreating up one story, he shouted from the balcony to apprise the Douglas, else the Lady Jane Howard was gone. One from the ranks ran to apprise the captain, but losing himself among the intricacies of the entrance, he shouted out, "Lord Douglas! Lord Douglas!" with the utmost vociferation. The Douglas was sitting in a deep reverie; his drawn sword was lying on the table beside him. He heaved it above his shoulder, and running to the door of the apartment, opened it, and asked the fellow, who was still bawling in the dark, what it was? "'Tis the Lady Jane Howard!" answered he, in the same shouting voice. "Damnation on the tongue that says it!" exclaimed the Douglas in ire: "am I never more to hear aught repeated but the names of women? Do you know the penalty of that word, recreant? I have sworn to throw you from the battlements, but that shall not prevent me from cleaving you to the earth in the first place. Women! women! nothing but one woman after another! I'll cut down every man that dares name one to me in that manner!" As he said these words, he rushed toward the soldier with his heavy sword heaved, but the man, flying with all expedition. escaped into the court. The Douglas followed him, and was soon in the midst of a confused engagement; and hearing the conspirators shouting the same name, "Lady Jane Howard!" he took it as in derision, and flew on their ranks with such fury, that every man at whom he struck fell to the ground. The Gordons followed him up, crying "A Douglas!" but the conspirators were the stronger party, and would ultimately have prevailed, had not the

Douglases of the Dales arrived to change guard as formerly ordered; and then, Kinlossie having fallen in an attempt to slay the Douglas, his party surrendered. There was a strong troop of English horsemen waiting on the other side of the Teviot with a raft, to whom she was to have been let down from the wall. But the information lodged by the monk not only frustrated the whole of this desperate expedition of the Howards, but saved the life of Douglas. For the conspirators receiving the unexpected orders to depart to the camp, were driven to make the attempt prematurely, before their measures were ripe for execution.

Of all the circumstances that had hitherto occurred, the reflection upon this bewildered the mind of Douglas the most. The manner in which these secret combinations had been revealed to him filled his heart both with gratitude and amazement; and as all endeavours at reconciling them with nature only increased the mystery, he resolved to shake the load from his spirits and think no more of them. That he might effect this with greater promptitude, he kept his noble kinsmen constantly about him, by night as well as by day. The Redhough also returned from his visit to Mountcomyn, as did all the knights and gentlemen commoners of his party from their respective homes, mounted in their most splendid accoutrements, to greet their sovereign, render him an account of their services, and proffer him due homage.

The arrival of these heroes added a great deal to the hilarity, tilting, and other military amusements at Roxburgh; until at last the 24th of December arrived, and with it the tidings that the king and queen were on their way to Roxburgh, and approaching by the wild path of Soutra-edge. There was no bustle at the castle or city of Roxburgh, save by the city dames and maidens, for whom the approaching festival appeared a glorious epoch; for since the days of Edward Longshanks, who kept his court there for some weeks, there had not been a crowned head within the precincts of that illustrious city. Consequently, with these fair denizens, and with the merchants who attended that mart once a year from many of the towns on the Continent, it was a time of hurry and preparation; but with the warriors it was far otherwise. They were ready before; every one being alike anxious to fulfil the part intrusted to him, so that they had nothing ado but to mount and ride in the order assigned to them.

First of all rode Sir Ringan Redhough, supported by all the gentlemen of the middle and west marches —the Scotts, the Elliots, the Armstrongs, and the Olivers were the most powerful of these: and next in order came the Laidlaws, the Brydens, the Glendonyngs, and the Pots. After them rode the copper-nosed Kers, the towzy Turnbulls, and the redwudd Ridderfords; for in those days every sept had some additional appellative or by-name. These were also mixed with a number of smaller septs, such as the Robsons, the Dicksons, the hurkle-backed Hendersons, and the rough-riding Kiddels; and they were all headed by the doughty Sir Andrew Ker of Altonburn. Next in order rode Old Willie Wiliecoat, named also *Willie wi' the white doublet*, the ancestor of the Earls of Home—a brave and dauntless character, who for the space of forty years had been a sight of terror to the English with his white jacket. With him rode the gentlemen of his own name, the hard-rackle Homes, the dorty Dunbars, the strait-laced Somervilles, and the Bailies. Then came the proud Pringles, a powerful sept mixed with a countless number of dependent families, headed by Pringle of Galashiels; and after them the Gordons, led by Sir John of that ilk.

All these held lands of the Douglas on conditions of certain services; they were nevertheless all independent chiefs, these services performed; but at this time they attended personally, with their kinsmen, to pay their dutiful respects to their sovereign. Last of all came the Douglases, in five separate bodies, every one headed by a lord or knight of the name; and these made up one-third of the whole cavalcade, the earl himself being with the last party of all, and most gallantly attended.

The two parties met at Earlston, but the royal party was nothing in point of bearing and splendour to that of the Douglases. The king and queen travelled each in a litter borne by two gallant steeds. These carriages were very splendid in their decorations, and constructed in the same way as a sedan chair, and it was truly wonderful with what velocity they were borne along. They were contrived for the king's use, who had a halt, and could not travel on horseback; and they suited the state of the roads in Scotland at that period exceedingly. Two heralds rode before his majesty, who introduced the various chiefs to him as he passed. The whole procession then drew up in files until their majesties passed, after which they fell all into their places, the order of precedency being then reversed, and the Douglases next to the sovereign. There was no time for delay, considering the season, the darkness of the night, and the shortness of the day; so they posted on with all expedition, and yet it was dark before they reached the abbey of Kelso. But all the way, by the cloisters, the bridge, and up the High Street of the city of Roxburgh, there were tiers of torches raised above one another that made it lighter than the noon-day. Never was there such a scene of splendour witnessed in that ancient city, to which the darkness of the canopy above and the glare of torch-light below added inconceivable grandeur. It seemed as if all the light of the universe had been confined within that narrow space, for without all was blackness impervious to the eye, but within there was nothing but brilliancy and joy. Seven score musical instruments, and as many trilling but discordant voices, yelled forth, from the one end of the street to the other, that old song beginning—

"The King came to our town;
Ca' Cuddie, ca' Cuddie!
The King came to our town,
Low on the Border."

The trumpets sounded before and the bugles behind; and the Border youths and maidens were filled with enthusiastic delight at the novelty of the spectacle. They followed with shouts to the castle-gate, and then returned to talk of what they had seen, and what they should see on the morrow.

The royal party was conducted to the citadel, where everything was in readiness for a grand entertainment; and there the Douglas delivered into the king's hands the keys of the castle of Roxburgh. His majesty received them most graciously, and thanked him for all the trouble he had taken for the good of the realm; and added that he came prepared in heart and mind to fulfil his engagements to him in return. There was now a manifest embarrassment on the part of the Douglas; his countenance changed, and he looked as he would have asked for the princess, or at least as if some one were wanting that ought to have been there; but after an agitated pause, he could only stammer out that "he was much beholden to his majesty, who might at all times command his utmost services without bounty or reward."

"I trust that is not as much as to say that you now decline the stipulated reward for this high service," said the king.

"Sire, I see none either for your majesty to give or your servant to receive," said the Douglas; and at the same time he cast a hasty and perturbed glance at the courtiers and warriors ranged around the hall. The king nodded by way of assent to his hint; and at the same time said to him aside, "I understand you, Lord Douglas. You will explain this gallantry of yours in keeping your sovereign's daughter in concealment from her natural guardians in private to-morrow. But, pray, can we not see our darling to-night?"

"Alas, my liege lord and sovereign," said Douglas, passionately, "sure you jest with your servant, thus to tax him with that of which he is innocent."

The king smiled, and waving his hand jocularly, by way of intimating that he thought his affected secresy prudence at that time, left him, and forthwith went halting up among the Borderers, to converse with them about the affairs of the English marches.

CHAPTER XIV.

I want none of your gold, Douglas,
I want none of your fee,
But swear by the faith of thy right hand
That you'll love only me:
And I'll leave my country and my kin
And wend along with thee.
May Marley.

When the mass and a plentiful morning meal were over next day, every one began to prepare for such exercises as the season admitted. All lingered about for some time, but seeing that no orders were likely to be given out for any procession or general rendezvous during the day, which every one had expected, some betook them to the chase, others to equestrian exercises with sword and spear, while the Homes and the Gordons joined in an excursion into English ground, keeping along the southern bank of the Tweed. The king observing them all about to disperse, reminded the Douglas that it was a high festal day; on which the latter made a low obeisance, and remarked that he was only now a guest in the castle of Roxburgh, and that his honoured liege sovereign was host; that his foresters and sumptuary officers had got timeous notice, and nothing would be lacking that his majesty could desire for the entertainment of his nobles and friends. The king then caused it to be intimated, that he would be happy to meet all his lords and nobles in the banquet-hall at even-tide, where every knight, gentleman, and yeoman were expected to attend in their several places, and all should be heartily welcome. "And now, Lord Douglas," said he, leading the way into an ante-chamber, "let us two retire by ourselves, and consult what is to be done next."

Lord Douglas followed, but ill prepared to answer the inquiries about to be put to him. He had received injunctions of secresy from one who had in no instance misled him, and to whom he had been of late indebted for the preservation of his life. But how was he now to conduct himself, or how answer his sovereign in any other way than according to the truth as it had been stated unto him? His predicament was a hard one: for he was, in the first place, ashamed of the part he had acted, of never having discovered his royal mistress while attached to his side, notwithstanding all the evidences in confirmation of the fact, which he had never once seen till too late. And then to have suffered even his mistress's page to fall a victim to such a shameful death, without either making an effort to save him, or so much as missing him from his hand, or mentioning his loss, were circumstances not quite consistent with the high spirit of gallantry as well as chivalry, he had displayed at first by the perilous undertaking. Gladly would he have kept his knowledge of the transaction a secret; but then there was the monk Benjamin, who, by some supernatural agency, had been given to understand the whole scope and tenor of it; and there was dame Mary Kirkmichael, who knew the whole, except the degrading catastrophe, and had unfolded it all to him when it was too late. He ran over all these things in his mind, and was as little, as at any previous period, prepared what part to act, when the king turned round, and, in the most anxious and earnest manner, said, "Lord Douglas, where is our daughter?"

"My liege lord and sovereign, ought not I rather to have asked that question of you?" said the Douglas; "and I would have done it at our first meeting, only that I would not trifle with your feelings in such a serious matter, perceiving that you laboured under a grievous misconception regarding my conduct. You have not, it seems, brought the Princess Margaret along with you, as was expected by all my friends and followers?"

"Not by yourself, I am certain. I say, Lord Douglas, where is my daughter? I demand a categorical answer."

"Sire, in what way am I accountable for your daughter?"

"Lord Douglas, I hate all evasion; I request an answer as express as my question. I know my darling child, in admiration of your chivalrous enterprise, resolved, in the true spirit of this romantic age, to take some active part in the perils undertaken solely on her account; I know that her ingenuity, which was always boundless, was instrumental in performing some signal services to you; and that, finally, she attached herself to your side in a disguise which she deemed would insure her a kind and honourable protection. Thus far I know; and, though the whole was undertaken and transacted without my knowledge, when I was absent in the Highlands, I am certain as to the truth of every circumstance; and I am further certified that you know all this."

"Hear me, my liege sovereign. Admitting that your daughter, or any other king's, lord's, or commoner's daughter, should put herself into a page's raiment, and"———

"Silence, lord!" cried the king, furiously interrupting him; "am I to be mocked thus, and answered only with circumlocution, notwithstanding my express command to the contrary? Answer me in one word. My lord of Douglas, where is my daughter?"

"Where God will, sire," was the short and emphatic reply. The king eyed Douglas with a keen and stern regard, and the eagle eye of the latter met that of his sovereign without any abashment. But yet this look of the Douglas, unyielding as it was, manifested no daring or offensive pride: it was one rather of stern sorrow and regret; nevertheless he would not withdraw it, but, standing erect, he looked King Robert in the face, until the eyes of the latter were gradually raised from his toward heaven. "Almighty Father!" cried he, clasping his hands together—"Where, then, is it thy will that my beloved child should be? O Douglas! Douglas! In the impatience and warmth of temper peculiar to my race, I was offended at your pertinacity; but I dread it was out of respect to a father's feelings. I forgive it, now that I see you are affected; only, in pity to this yearning bosom, relate to me all that you know. Douglas! can you inform me what has befallen to my daughter?"

"No, my liege, I cannot. I know nothing, or at least little save from report, but the little that I have heard, and the little that I have seen, shall never be reported by my tongue."

"Then hope is extinct!" cried the king. "The scene that can draw tears from the stern eye of the Douglas, even by an after-reflection, is one unmeet for a parent's ear. The will of the Almighty be done! He hath given and he hath taken away; blessed be his name! But why have the men of my household, and the friends in whom I trusted combined against my peace?" The king said this in a querulous mood. "Why did you not tell me sooner?" cried he, turning to Douglas, his tone altering gradually from one of penitence and deep humiliation to one of high displeasure: "why bring me on this fool's errand, when I ought to have been sitting in sackcloth and ashes, and humbling myself for the sins of my house? These must have been grievous indeed, that have drawn down such punishments on me. But the indifference of those in whom we trusted is the worst of all! O, my child! My darling child, Margaret: never was there a parent so blest in a daughter as I was in thee! The playfulness of the lamb or the kid, the affection of the turtle-dove, were thine. Thy breast was all enthusiasm and benevolence, and every emotion of thy soul as pure as the ray of heaven. I loved thee with more than parental affection, and if I am bereaved of thee, I will go mourning to my grave. Is there no one in this place that can inform me of my daughter's fate? Her lady-confidant, I understand, is still lingering here. Send for her instantly. Send for her confessor also, that I may confront you altogether, and ascertain the hideous and unwelcome truth. If I cannot have it here, I shall have it elsewhere, or woe be to all that have either been instrumental in her fate or lax in warding it off. Do you think, lord of Douglas, that I can be put off with a hum and a haw, and a shake of the head, and, 'it's God's will!' Do you think I should, when I am inquiring about my own daughter, whom I held dearest of all earthly beings? No, I'll scrutinise it to a pin's point. I'll wring every syllable of the truth out of the most secret heart and the most lying tongue. I'll move heaven and hell, but I'll know every circumstance that has befallen my daughter. Send, I say, for her foster-sister and faithful attendant, dame Mary Kirkmichael. Send also for her confessor, and for all to whom she has but once spoken since she arrived here. Why are they not sent for before this time?"

"My liege lord, restrain your impatience. They are sent for; but they will tell you nothing that can mitigate your sorrow. If it be all true that has been told to me, and that you yourself have told to me of the disguise the princess assumed, then is it also true that you will never again see your daughter in this state of existence."

"Ah! is it even so? Then is the flower of the

realm fallen! then is the solace of my old age departed! But she is happy in the realms of blessedness. While love, joy, and truth are the delight of heaven, there will my Margaret find a place! Oh that she had stayed by her father's hand! Why was my jewel intrusted to the care and honour of those who care but for themselves, and who have suffered the loveliest flower of the world to be cropped in its early blossom? nay, left it to be sullied and trodden down in forgetfulness. Lord Douglas, did you see my daughter perish?"

"Now, my liege lord, can I act the man no longer. Forgive me: and may the holy Virgin, the mother of God, forgive me; for I indeed saw with these eyes that inestimable treasure cut off, without one effort on my part to save her, and without a tear wetting my cheeks."

"Then, may all the powers of darkness blast thy soul, thou unfeeling traitor! Thus, thus will I avenge me on the culprit who could give up his sovereign's daughter, and his own betrothed bride, to a violent death, and that without a tear! O thou incarnate fiend! shalt thou not bewail this adown the longest times of eternity? Darest thou not draw against an injured father and king?"

"Put up thy sword, sire. The Douglas draws not but on his equals, and thou art none of them. Thy person is sacred, and thy frame debilitated. He holds thee inviolate; but he holds thee also as nothing!"

"Thou shalt know, proud lord, that the King of Scotland fears no single arm, and that he can stand on one limb to avenge the blood of his royal house."

"My gracious lord, this is the mere raving of a wounded spirit, and I grieve that I should have for one moment regarded it otherwise than with veneration. I had deserved to die an hundred deaths, if I had known who the dear sufferer was; but, alas! I knew not aught of the sex or rank of my page, who was taken prisoner in the great night engagement. But I can tell you no more, sire; nor is it needful; you now know all. I am guiltless as the babe unborn of my royal mistress's blood; but I will never forgive myself for my negligence and want of perception; nor do I anticipate any more happiness in this world. I have been laid under some mysterious restraints, and have suffered deeply already. And now, my gracious lord, I submit myself to your awards."

"Alas, Lord Douglas, you are little aware of the treasure you have lost. Your loss is even greater than mine. It behoves us therefore to lament and bewail our misfortunes together, rather than indulge in bitter upbraidings."

Here they were interrupted by the entrance of the queen, who brought with her the Lady Jane Howard, dressed in a style of eastern magnificence, to introduce her to the king. The king, amid all the grief that overwhelmed his spirit, was struck with her great beauty, and paid that respect and homage to her which high birth and misfortune always command from the truly great; and the queen, with the new-fangledness of her sex, appeared wholly attached to this captive stranger, and had brought her down at that time to intercede with the king and Lord Douglas for her liberty, loading her with commendations and kind attentions. To check the queen's volatility of spirits, the king informed her shortly of the irreparable loss both of them had suffered, but the effect was manifestly not at all proportionate to the cause. She appeared indeed much moved, and had well-nigh fallen into hysterics; but if her grief was not assumed, it bore strong symptoms of being so. She first railed at, and then tried to comfort the Douglas; but finally turned again to Lady Jane (who wept bitterly, out of true sympathy for the princess's cruel and untimely fate) and caressed her, trying to console her in the most extravagant terms. The king, on the other hand, sobbed from his inmost soul, and bewailed his loss in terms so pathetic and moving, that the firm soul of Douglas was overcome, and he entered into all his sovereign's feelings with the keenest sensations. It was a scene of sorrow and despair, which was rather increased than mitigated by the arrival of two more who had lately been sent for. These were the monk Benjamin and the Lady Mary Kirkmichael, whom the king began anew to examine, dwelling on every circumstance that occurred during the course of his darling child's extravagant adventure with a painful anxiety. But every now and then he became heated with anger, blaming some one for the want of discernment or respect. When he came to examine the monk, who showed great energy and acuteness of speech, he lost his temper altogether at some part of the colloquy; but the monk was not to be daunted; he repelled every invective with serenity of voice and manner, and at sundry times rather put the monarch to shame.

"Hadst thou ever an opportunity of confessing and shriving my child, previous to the time she fell into the hands of her enemies, reverend brother?"

"No, sire, she never made confession to me, nor asked absolution at my hand."

"And wherefore didst thou not proffer it, thou shrivelled starveling? Were there no grants to bestow, no rich benefices to confer, for the well-being of a royal virgin's soul, that caused thee to withhold these poor alms of grace? Who was it that bestowed on thy unconscionable order all that they possess in this realm? And yet thou wilt suffer one of their posterity to come into thy cell to ask thy assistance, without bestowing a mass or benediction for the sake of Heaven."

"Sire, it is only to the ignorant and the simple that we proffer our ghostly rites. Those who are enlightened in the truths and mysteries of religion it behoves to judge for themselves, and to themselves we leave the state of their consciences, in all ordinary cases." The monk was robed in a very wide

flowing gray frock, and cowled over the eyes, while his thin and effeminate-looking beard trembled adown his breast with the fervency of his address. As he said these last words, he stretched his right hand forth toward the king, and raising the left up behind him, his robe was by that means extended and spread forth in a manner that increased the tiny monk to triple the size he was before. "And for you, King of Scotland," added he, raising his keen voice that quavered with energy, "I say such a demeanour is unseemly. Is it becoming the head and guardian of the Christian church in this realm —him that should be a pattern to all in the lower walks of life—thus to threat and fume beneath the chastening of his Maker? You ask me who bestowed these ample bounds on my order? I ask you in return who it was that bestowed them on thy progenitors and thee, and for what purpose? Who gave thee a kingdom, a people, and a family of thine own? Was it not he before whose altar thou hast this day kneeled, and vowed to be for him and not for another? And what he has bestowed has he not a right to require of thee again, in his own time, and in his own way?" The king bowed with submission to the truth of this bold expostulation, and the impetuous and undaunted monk went on: "It is rather thy duty, most reverend monarch, to bow with deep humiliation to the righteous awards of the Almighty, for just and righteous they are, however unequal they may appear to the purblind eyes of mortal men. If he has taken a beloved child from thee, rest assured that he has only snatched her from evil to come, and translated her to a better and a happier home. Why then wilt thou not acknowledge the justice of this dispensation, and rather speak comfort to the weaker vessels than give way to ill-timed and unkingly wrath?"

"As for thee, noble lord, to the eyes of men thine may appear a hard lot indeed. For the love of one thou adventuredst thy life and the very existence of thy house and name. The stake was prodigious, and when thou hadst won it with great labour and perseverance, the prize was snatched from thy grasp. Thy case will to all ages appear a peculiarly hard one; still there is this consolation in it—"

"There is no grain of consolation in it," said Douglas, interrupting him: "there can be none! The blow on my head, and my hopes of happiness, is irretrievable."

"Yes, lord, there is," said the monk; "for has it not been decreed in heaven above, that this union was never to be consummated? Man may propose and scheme, and lay out plans for futurity, but it is good for him that the fulfilment is vested in other hands than his. This then is consolation, to know that it was predestinated in the counsels of One who cannot err, that that royal maid never was to be thine; and therefore all manner of repining is not only unmanly and unmeet, but sinful. It behoves now thy sovereign, in reward of thy faithful services, to bestow on thee another spouse with the same dowry he meant to bestow on his daughter. And it behoves you to accept of this as the gift of Heaven, proffered to thee in place of the one it snatched from thy grasp. As its agent, therefore, and the promoter of peace, love, and happiness among men, I propose that King Robert bestow upon thee this noble and high born dame for thy consort. Both of you have been bereaved of those to whom you were betrothed, and it cannot fail to strike every one that this seems a fortune appointed for you two by Providence; nor can I form in my mind the slightest objection that can be urged to it on either side. It is desirable on every account, and may be the means of promoting peace between the two sister kingdoms, wasted by warfare and blood, which every true Christian must deplore. I propose it as a natural consequence, and a thing apparently foreordained by my Master; and give my voice for it. King and Queen of Scotland, what say you?"

"I hold the matter that this holy and enlightened brother has uttered to be consistent with truth, reason, and religion," said the king—"and the union has my hearty and free approval. I further promise to behave to this lady as a father to a daughter, and to bestow upon our trusty and leal cousin, the Lord Douglas, such honours, power, and distinction, as are most due for the great services rendered to this realm. The match has my hearty concurrence."

"And mine," said the queen: "I not only acquiesce in the reverend brother's proposal, but I lay my commands on my noble kinsman the Lord Douglas to accept of this high boon of Heaven."

"Pause, my sovereign lady," said the Douglas, "before you proceed too far. In pity to the feelings that rend this bosom, let me hear no more of the subject at present. In pity to that lovely and angelic lady's feelings, that must be acute as my own, I implore that you will not insist further in this proposal. Do not wound a delicate female breast, pressed down by misfortunes."

"This is something like affectation, Lord Douglas," rejoined the queen: "if I answer for the Lady Jane's consent, what have you then to say against this holy brother's proposal?"

"Ay, if your queen stand security for the lady's consent, and if *I stand security for it likewise*," said the monk, "what have you to say against the union then? Look at her again, lord. Is not she a *lovely* and *angelic* being? Confess the truth now. For I know it to be the truth, that never since you could distinguish beauty from deformity, have your eyes beheld *so lovely* and *so angelic* a lady. Pressed down by misfortunes, too! Does not that add a triple charm to all her excellences? You know what has been done for her, what has been suffered for her, what a noble and gallant life was laid down for her. Was such a sacrifice ever made for a lady or princess of your own country? No, never, heroic

lord! Therefore, bless your stars that have paved out a way for your union with such a dame, and take her! take her to your longing and aching bosom."

"Moderate your fervour, holy brother," said the Douglas, "which appears to me rather to be running to unwarrantable extremes. Granting that the Lady Jane Howard is perhaps unequalled in beauty and elegant accomplishments—"

"Why then do you hesitate, and make all this foolish opposition to an union which we all know you are eager to consummate?" said the monk.

"Holy brother, what unaccountable frenzy has seized upon you," said the Douglas; "and why this waste of declamation? Let me not hear another sentence, nor another word on the subject: only suffer me to finish what I had begun. I say then, granting that the Lady Jane were peerless in beauty and accomplishments, still there is an impression engraven on my heart that can never be removed, or give place to another; and there will I cherish it as sacred till the day of my death. And that no reckless importunity may ever be wasted on me again, here I kneel before the holy rood, which I kiss, and swear before God and his holy angels, that since I have been bereaved of the sovereign mistress of my heart and all my affections, of her in whom all my hopes of happiness in this world were placed, and who to me was all in all of womankind, that never shall another of the sex be folded in the arms of Douglas, or shall call him husband! So help me, thou blessed One, and all thy holy saints and martyrs, in the performance of this vow!"

During the time of this last speech and solemn oath, the sobs of the monk Benjamin became so audible that all eyes were turned to him, for they thought that his delicate frame would burst with its emotions. And besides, he was all the while fumbling about his throat, so that they dreaded he had purposed some mortal injury to himself. But in place of that, he had been unloosing some clasps or knots about his tunic; for with a motion quicker than thought, he flung at once his cowl, frock, and beard away—and there stood arrayed as a royal bride the Princess Margaret of Scotland! "Journeyer of earth, where art thou now?"

Yes; there stood in one moment, disclosed to the eyes of all present, *the Princess Margaret Stuart herself*, embellished in all the ornaments of virgin royalty, and blooming in a glow of new-born beauties.

"Thank Heaven, I have been deceived!" cried she, with great emphasis; and when she had said this, she stood up motionless by the side of Lady Jane Howard, and cast her eyes on the ground. No pen can do justice to the scene. It must be left wholly to conception, after the fact is told that no one present had the slightest conception of the disguise save the queen, who had been initiated into the princess's project of trying the real state of the Douglas' affections on the preceding night. It was like a scene of enchantment. But a moment ago all was sorrow and despair; now all was one burst of joyful surprise. And, to make it still more interesting, there stood the two rival beauties of Scotland and England, side by side, as if each were vying with the other for the palm to be bestowed on her native country. But to this day the connoisseurs in female beauty have never decided whether the dark falcon eyes and lofty forehead of the one, or the soft blushing roses and blue liquid eyes of the other, were the most irresistible.

The king was the first to burst from the silence of surprise. He flew to his daughter's arms with more vigour than a cripple could well be supposed to exert, kissed and embraced her, took her on his knee and wept on her neck; then striking his crutch on the floor, he scolded her most heartily for the poignant and unnecessary pain she had occasioned to him. "And the worst of it is," added he, "that you have caused me to show too much interest in an imp that has been the constant plague of my life with her whims and vagaries; an interest, and an intensity of feeling, that I shall be ashamed of the longest day I have to live."

"Indeed but you shall not, my dear lord and father, for I will now tease another than you, and tease him only to deeds of valour and renown; to lead your troops to certain conquest, till you are fully avenged of the oppressors of your people."

Mary Kirkmichael hung by her seymar and wept. The Douglas kneeled at her feet, and in an ecstasy took her hand and pressed it to his lips. "I do not know whether or not I shall have reason to bless Heaven all my life for this singular restoration," said he; "but for the present I do it with all my heart. Tell me, thou lovely cameleon, what am I to think of this? Wert thou indeed, as was related to me, the page Colin Roy M'Alpin? He with the carroty locks and the flippant tongue?"

"You need not doubt it, Lord Douglas. I was. And I think during our first intimacy that I teased you sufficiently."

"Then that delicate neck of yours, for all its taper form and lily hue, is a charmed one, and rope-proof; for, sure as I look on you now, I saw you swing from a beam's end on the battlement of this same tower."

"Oh no, no, my lord! It was not I. Never trust this head again if it should suffer its neck to be noosed. *You* suffered it though; that you must confess; and I dare say, though a little sorry, felt a dead weight removed from about your neck. You suffered me to be taken prisoner out of your tent, and mured up among rude and desperate men in a dungeon. It cost me all my wits then to obtain my release. But I effected it. Swung from a beam's end, quoth he! Oh! what a vulgar idea! No, my lord, the page whom you saw swung was *a tailor's apprentice*, whom I hired to carry a packet up to your lordship, with my green suit of clothes,

and promise of a high place of preferment, and I kept my word to the brat! an intolerable ape it was. Many better lives have been lost in this contention; few of less value.—I never deemed he was so soon to be strung, and my heart smote me for the part I had acted. But the scheme of turning monk and confessor suited me best of all: I then got my shackles of mystery riveted on you; and, heavens! what secrets I have found out."

The marriage of the Princess Margaret of Scotland and the Earl of Douglas was not now long delayed. The Border never witnessed such splendour of array, such tournaments, such feasting, and such high wassail, as accompanied the wedding. The streets of the city, and the square of the fortress, that had so lately been dyed with blood, now "ran red with Rhenish wine." And be it further known, that Sir Charles Scott of Raeburn and Yardbire, and his horse Corbie, bore off every prize in the tilting matches, till at last no knight would enter the lists with him; but the fair dames were all in raptures with the gallantry of his bearing and the suavity of his manners. In short, Charlie Scott, or the Knight of Raeburn, was of all the gallants quite the favourite at that splendid festival in the hall, as well as the hero in the lists, in which he six times received the prize of honour from the hands of the royal bride and those of Lady Jane Howard, who, at the queen's earnest request, was made principal bride's-maid, and presiding lady at the sports.

CHAPTER XV.

This general doctrine of the text explained, I proceed, in what remains of this discourse, to point out to you three important and material considerations concerning the nature and character of woman. These shall be, 1*stly*, What she was; 2*dly*, What she is; and, 3*dly*, What she will be hereafter. And are not these, my brethren, matters of high importance?

Dickson's Sermons.

All things of this world wear to an end, so also did this high Christmas festival within the halls and towers of Roxburgh. The Lady Jane had borne a principal share in all the sports, both in and out of doors. In the hall she was led up to every dance, and in the lists she presided as the queen of the games, distributing the prizes with her own fair hands to the Scottish heroes, and of course crowning her old friend Charlie with the bays at least once a day. Sir Charles was a most unassuming character, and seldom adventured on addressing his superiors first. But when once they addressed discourse to him, he never failed answering them with perfect ease and unconcern; and often, as is well known ere this time, with more volubility than he himself approved of. Once, and only once, during all these days of his triumph and high honours, did the Lady Jane remember him of having brought her into captivity, and of the high bribe he had refused for her liberty. "An' if it be your will, honoured lady, I wish ye wadna say ony mair about that matter," said Sir Charles; "for mony queer fidgetty kind o' feelings I hae had about it sin syne. And if I had kend then what I ken now—if I had kend wha I had in my arms, and what I had in my arms, I had nae borne the honours that I wear the day. My heart had some sair misgiving since about you, when there were hard news gaun of your great jeopardy; but now that you are in sic high favour, I am e'en glad that I brought you, for truth ye hae a face and a form that does ane good to look at."

The Lady Jane only sighed at this address, and looked down, thinking, without doubt, of the long and dismal *widowhood* which it would behove her to keep for the dismal end of her betrothed knight, and then a virgin widowhood too, which was the worst of all. An obscure glimpse of the same sort of ideas glanced on Charlie's mind as he viewed her downcast blushing countenance; and afraid of giving birth to any painful sensations in such a lovely lady's mind, he desisted from further conversation.

The queen was still so much interested in that lady as to endeavour by all means to procure her liberty without any ransom, somewhat contrary to her son-in-law's opinion. The queen reasoned that she was not a lawful prisoner of war; the Douglas that she was, there being no bond of peace subsisting between the nations, and she entering Scotland with forged credentials, at least signed and sealed in favour of another and non-existing person. She applied to the king, who gave his consent, but, at the same time, professed having nothing to do in the matter. At length she teased Lord Douglas so much that he resolved to indulge her majesty before the court took leave of him.

Meanwhile Lady Douglas (lately the Princess Margaret of Scotland), through the instrumentality of her tire-woman, Mary Kirkmichael, furthers, in the following manner, a match between Sir Charles Scott and her former rival, Lady Jane Howard. One day Sir Charles, alias Muckle Charlie of Yardbire, was standing at the head of his hard-headed Olivers, his grimy Pots, and his skrae-shankit Laidlaws, in all amounting now to one hundred and forty brave and well-appointed soldiers. He had them all dressed out in their best light uniform, consisting of deer-skin jackets with the hair outside; buckskin breeches, tanned white as snow, with the hair inside; blue bonnets as broad as the rim of a lady's spinning-wheel, and clouted single-soled shoes. He was training them to some evolutions for a grand parade before the king, and was himself dressed in his splendid battle array, with his plumes and tassels of gold. His bonnet was of the form of a turban, and his tall nodding plumes consisted of three fox-tails, two of them dyed black, and the middle one crimson. A goodlier sight than Sir Charles at the head of his

Borderers no eye of man (or woman either) ever beheld. As he stood thus giving the word of command, and brandishing his Eskdale sword, by way of example, in the great square in the middle of the fortress, a little maid came suddenly to his side and touched him. Charles was extending his voice at the time, and the interruption made him start inordinately, and cut a loud syllable short in the middle. The maid made a low courtesy, while Charles stooped forward and looked at her as a man does who has dropped a curious gem or pin on the ground, and cannot find it. "Eh! God bless us, what is't, hinney? Ye amaist gart me start."

"My mistress requests a few minutes' private conversation with you, sir knight."

"Whisht, dame! speak laigh," said Sir Charles, half whispering, and looking raised-like at his warriors: "wha's your mistress, my little bonnie dow? Eh? Oh you're nodding and smirking, are you? Harkee, it's no the auld queen, is it? Eh?

"You will see who it is presently, gallant knight. It is a matter of the greatest import to you, as well as your captain."

"Ha! gude faith, then, it maunna be neglected. I'll be w'ye even now, lads; saunter about, but dinna quit this great four-nooked fauld till I come back again. Come along then, my wee bonny hen chicken. Raux up, and gie me a grip o' your fingerends. Side for side's neighbour like." So away went Sir Charles, leading his tiny conductor by the hand, and was by her introduced into one of the hundred apartments in the citadel.

"Our captain is gaun aff at the nail now," said Will Laidlaw; "thae new honours o' his are gaun to be his ruin. He's getting far ower muckle in favour wi' the grit fock."

"I wonder to hear ye speak that gate," said Gideon Pot of Bilhope: "I think it be true that the country says, that ye maun aye read a Laidlaw backward. What can contribute sae muckle to advance a gentleman and his friends as to be in favour with the great?"

"I am a wee inclined to be of Laidlaw's opinion," said Peter Oliver of the Langburnshiels (for these three were the headsmen of the three names marshalled under Sir Charles)—"Sudden rise, sudden fa'; that was a saying o' my grandfather's, and he was very seldom in the wrong. I wadna wonder a bit to see our new knight get his head choppit off; for I think, if he haud on as he is like to do, he'll soon be ower grit wi' the queen. Fock should bow to the bush they get bield frae, but take care o' lying ower near the laiggens o't. That was a saying o' my grandfather's aince when they wantit him to visit at the castle of Mountcomyn."

"There is he to the gate now," said Laidlaw, "and left his men, his bread-winners, in the very mids o' their lessons; and as sure as he saw it, some o' thae imps will hae his simple honest head into Hoy's net wi' some o' thae braw women. Wha wins at their hands will lose at naething. I never bodit ony good for my part o' the gowden cuishes and the gorget, and the three walloping tod tails. Mere eel-baits for catching herons!"

"Ay weel I wat that's little short of a billy-blinder, lad!" said Peter Oliver: "I trow I may say to you as my grandfather said to the ghost, 'Ay, ay, Billy Baneless, an a' tales be true, yours is nae lie,' quo' he; and he was a right auld-farrant man."

But as this talk was going on among the Borderers, Sir Charles, as before said, was introduced into a private chamber, where sat no less a dame than the officious and important lady of all close secrets, Mistress Mary Kirkmichael of Balmedie, who rose and made three low courtesies, and then with an affected faltering tongue and downcast look addressed Sir Charles as follows: "Most noble and gallant—knight, hem!—pardon a modest and diffident maiden, sir knight!—pink of all chivalry and hero of the Border: I say be so generous as to forgive the zeal of a blushing virgin for thus presuming to interrupt your warrior avocations. (Sir Charles bowed.) But, O knight—hem—there is a plot laying, or laid against your freedom. Pray may I take the liberty to ask, are you free of any love engagement?"

"Perfectly so, madam, at—hem!——

"At my service. Come, that is so far well. You could not then possibly have any objections to a young lady of twenty-one or thereby, nobly descended, heir to seven ploughgates of land, and five half davochs, and most violently in love with you?"

"I maun see her first, and hear her speak," said the knight, "and ken what blood and what name; and whether she be Scots or English."

"Suppose that you *have* seen her and heard her speak," said the dame; "and suppose she was of Fife blood and that her name was *Lady* Mary Kirkmichael: what would you then say against her?"

"Nothing at all, madam," said Sir Charles, bowing extremely low.

"Do you then consent to accept of such a one for your lady?"

"How can I possibly tell? Let me see her."

"Oh Sir Charles! gallant and generous knight! do not force a young blushing virgin to disclose what she would gladly conceal. You *do* see her, Sir Charles! You *do* see her and hear her speak too. Nay you see her kneeling at your feet, brave and generous knight! You see her *tears* and you hear her *weep*, and what hero can withstand that? Oh Sir Charles—"

"Hout, hout, hout!" cried Sir Charles, interrupting her, and raising her gently with both hands; "hout, hout, hout! for Heaven's sake behave yoursel, and dinna flee away wi' the joke a'thegether, sweet lady. Ye may be very weel, and ye are very weel for ought that I see, but troth, ye ken a man

maun do ae thing afore another, and a woman too. Ye deserve muckle better than the likes o' me, but I dinna incline marriage; and mair than that, I hae nae time to spare."

"Ah, Sir Charles, you should not be so cruel. You should think better of the fair sex, Sir Charles! look at this face. What objections have you to it, Sir Charles?"

"The face is weel enough, but it will maybe change. The last blooming face that took me in turned out a very different article the next day. Ah, lady! ye little ken what I hae suffered by women and witchcraft, or ye wadna bid me think weel o' them."

"Well, knight, since I cannot melt your heart, I must tell you that there is a plot against your liberty, and you will be a married man before to-morrow's night. It is a grand plot, and I am convinced it is made solely to entrap you to marry an English heiress that is a captive here, who is fallen so deeply in love with you, that if she does not attain you for her lover and husband her heart will break. She has made her case known to the queen, and I have come by it; therefore, sir knight, as you value my life, keep this a *profound* secret. I thought it a pity not to keep you out of English connections; therefore I sent for you privily to offer you my own hand, and then you could get off on the score of engagement."

"Thank you kindly, madam."

"Well, sir. On pretence of an appendage to the marriage of the king's favourite daughter with the greatest nobleman of the land, before the festal conclude, it is agreed on that there are to be a number of weddings beside, which are all to be richly endowed. The ladies are to choose among the heroes of the games; and this Lady Jane Howard is going to make choice of you, and the law is to be framed in such a manner that there will be no evading it with honour. You have been a mortal enemy to the English; so have they to you. Had not you better then avoid the connection, say, by a previous marriage or an engagement?"

"I think I'll rather take chance, with your leave, madam: always begging your pardon, ye see. But, depend on it, I'll keep your secret, and am indebted to you for your kind intentions. I'll take chance. They winna surely force a wife on ane whether he will or no?"

"Perhaps not. One who does *not incline marriage*, and has not *time to spare* to be married, may be excused. Tell me, seriously; surely you will never think of accepting of her?"

"It is time to decide about that when aince I get the offer. I can hardly trow what ye say is true; but if the king and the warden will hae it sae, ye ken what can a body do?"

"Ah, there it is! Cruel Sir Charles! But you know you really have not a minute's *time to spare* for marriage, and the want of *inclination* is still worse. I have told you, sir knight, and the plot will be accomplished to-morrow. I would you would break her heart, and absolutely refuse her, for I hate the rosy minx. But three earldoms and nine hundred thousand merks go far! Ah me! Goodbye, noble knight. Be secret for my sake."

Sir Charles returned to his men in the great square, laughing in his sleeve all the way. He spoke somewhat to himself likewise, but it was only one short sentence, which was this: "Three earldoms and nine hundred thousand merks! Gude faith, Corbie will be astonished."

It was reported afterwards, that this grand story of Mary's to Sir Charles was nothing at all in comparison with what she told to Lady Jane, of flames and darts, heroism, royal favour, and distinction: and finally, of endless captivity in the event of utter rejection. However that was, when the troops assembled around the fortress in the evening and the leaders in the hall, proclamations were made in every quarter, setting forth, that all the champions who had gained prizes since the commencement of the Christmas games were to meet together, and contend at the same exercises before the king, for other prizes of higher value; and further, that every successful candidate should have an opportunity of acquiring his mistress's hand in marriage, with rich dowries, honours, manors, and privileges to be conferred by the king and queen; who, at the same time, gave forth their peremptory commands that these gallants should meet with no denial, and this on pain of forfeiting the royal favour and protection, not only towards the dame so refusing, but likewise to her parents, guardians, and other relations.

Never was there a proclamation issued that made such a deray among the fair sex as this. All the beauty of the Lowlands of Scotland was assembled at this royal festival. The city of Roxburgh and the town of Kelso were full of visitors—choke full of them! There were ladies in every house beside the inmates; and generally speaking, three *at an average* for every male, whether in the city or suburbs. Yet, for all these lovely women of high rank and accomplishments, none else fled from the consequences of the mandate but one alone, who dreaded a rival being preferred, a proof how little averse the ladies of that age were to the bonds of matrimony. Such a night as that was in the city! There were running to and fro, rapping at doors, and calling of names, during the whole night. It was a terrible night for the dressmakers: for there was such a run upon them, and they had so much ado, that they got nothing done at all, except the receiving of orders which there was no time to execute.

Next morning, at eight of the day, by the abbey bell, the multitude were assembled, when the names of the heroes were all called over, and sixteen appeared. The candidates were then all taken into an apartment by themselves, and treated with viands

and wines, with whatever else they required. There also they were instructed in the laws of the game. Every one was obliged to contend at every one of the exercises, and the conqueror in each was to retire into the apartment of the ladies, where they were all to be placed in a circle, lay his prize at his mistress's feet, and retire again to the sports without uttering a word.

The exercises were held on the large plain south of the Teviot, so that they were beheld by the whole multitude without any inconvenience. The flowers of the land also beheld from their apartment in the castle, although no one saw them in return, save the fortunate contenders in the field.

Sir Charles Scott won three prizes; one for tilting on horseback, one for wrestling, and one for pitching the iron bar, and he laid all the three prizes at the feet of Lady Jane Howard. Two lords won each of them two prizes, and other two knights won each of them one; and each laid them at the feet of their lady.

When the sports of the day were finished, the conquerors, all crowned with laurel and gorgeously arrayed, were conducted to the gallery, where the ladies still remained; and after walking round the room to the sound of triumphal music, they were desired to kneel one by one in the order in which they had entered before, and each to invoke his mistress's pity in his own terms. Sir Charles Scott kneeled, and casting his eyes gravely toward the floor, said only these words: "Will the lady whom I serve take pity on her humble slave, or shall he retire from this presence ashamed and disgraced?"

Woman, kind and affectionate woman, is ever more ready to confer an obligation on our sex than accept of one. Lady Jane arose without any hesitation, put the crown on the knight's head, and with a most winning grace raised him up, and said, "Gallant knight, thou wert born to conquer my countrymen and me; I yield my hand and with it my heart." A friar who was present lost no time in joining their hands; he judged it best and safest to take women at their first words; and short time was it till the two were pronounced husband and wife, "and whom God hath joined let no man dare to put asunder. Amen!" said the friar, and bestowed on them an earnest blessing.—Fame expatiates largely on the greatness and goodness of this couple; how they extended their possessions, and were beloved on the Border. Their son, it is said, was the famous Sir Robert of Eskdale, the warden of the marches, from whom the families of Thirlstane, Harden, and many other opulent houses, are descended.

THE ADVENTURES OF COLONEL PETER ASTON.

This heroic young gentleman was brought up in the family of John, the eighth Earl of Mar, and was generally supposed to have been a near connection of that nobleman's, but whether legitimate or illegitimate, is nowhere affirmed. It was indeed whispered among the domestics, that he sprung from a youthful amour between Lord Aston, of Forfar, and a nearer connection of the Mar family than I choose to insinuate. Certain it is, however, that the boy was christened by the name of Peter, and retained the surname of Aston to his dying day.

Although young Aston was taught every accomplishment of the age, yet he had no settled situation, either of honour or emolument. He looked forward to the life of a soldier, but hitherto his patron had made no provision for him. He was a principal man at weapon-shaws, excelling every competitor; an excellent bargeman, a most acute marksman, and at the sword exercise he was not surpassed by any young man in the kingdom.

His chief and benefactor, the Earl of Mar, was a man of great power and authority, but about this time he got embroiled in the troubles of the period, and suffered some grievous losses and misfortunes, owing to the malignity of some of the parliamentary leaders; and so hardly was he pressed that he was obliged to make his escape into Ireland, and his family was scattered among his relations.

But perceiving the dangers that were approaching him, he established young Aston in the north, as constable of the castles of Braemar and Kildrummie, and sole keeper of the earl's immense forests in those parts. This was a grand appointment for our young hero, requiring all the energies of his mind, for the forest was then of such extent that no living sportsman knew the limits of it, and concerning which the different foresters were not at all agreed, no not to the extent of ten and twelve miles in some directions. Throughout this boundless chase, the great red deer of the Highlands strayed in thousands, beside numberless roes, wild boars, foxes, and other meaner animals. Here also the king of game, the great cock-of-the-wood, or capercailzie, was to be

found in every copse, with grouse of every description without number, so that it was indeed a scene of prodigious interest to Peter. Here his adventurous life began, and in this early stage of it were displayed many of the rising energies which marked his character. Here he was enabled to maintain the earl's castles and domains against all opposition; for among the woods and fastnesses of the great Mar forest no regular troops durst trust themselves; and here our young hero, with his hardy Farquharsons and Finlays, kept all the straggling bands of the parliament forces at a due distance.

But Peter had other enemies whom he found it harder to deal with. These were bands of deer-stalkers or poachers, who established themselves on the skirts of the forest, and subsisted on its plunder. The deer and the game were so abundant that hordes of sundry neighbouring clans carried incursions into its richest glens occasionally, and made spoil of the earl's deer. Over these men our hero began at once to keep a jealous eye, and soon forced them to escape from his limits, for he could not endure to see the best of the deer slaughtered by men who did not even acknowledge vassalage to his chief. He took several of these marauders prisoners, chastised others, and by dint of watching, threatening, and fearless demeanour, he soon cleared the forest; so that he proved a most unwelcome guest to all the poachers and deer-stalkers of that country; while his pursuits of and engagements with them, contributed greatly to the romantic excitement of his employment, and afforded numerous opportunities for exhibiting that personal prowess for which he was becoming every day more renowned.

Among all those bands of depredators, the worst and most obstinate was one Nicol Grant. This resolute outlaw had established himself and a body of his kinsmen in a little solitary dell, not far from the side of Loch-Bily, where the remains of their hamlet are still visible, though nearly covered with the green sward. It was a perilous situation for Peter and his men; for it was actually upon the chief of the Grants' property, although indented into that of Glen-Gairn, one of the richest glens of the Mar forest: and there Nicol Grant persisted in remaining, and holding the adherents of the Earl of Mar at defiance.

Against this man there were grievous complaints lodged, from the first commencement of Peter's command, and instead of dying away under the new rigours of our determined keeper, the complaints of his under-foresters became still more loud; for though they knew that he harried their forest, they could not catch him, his art of concealment greatly surpassing their skill in discovery. They often caught his warders placed on hills to give him various warnings, but these they could not even punish with any show of justice, as they were all unarmed intentionally, their situations being so much exposed.

Peter at last determined one day, all of a sudden, that he would step into this Highland reaver's den, and expostulate with him on the baseness and impolicy of his conduct, and try to convince him of these, and persuade him to keep his own laird's bounds. Expostulate indeed! never was there a man less likely to succeed in expostulation than Mr. Constable Aston, for he was violently passionate when he conceived himself wronged, and though himself swayed by principles of the most perfect justice and integrity, had no patience with any one whom he deemed in the wrong. Moreover, having been brought up at Alloa Castle, on the Forth, he understood the Gaelic so imperfectly, that he frequently took it up in a sense the very reverse of what it was, which ruined all chance of expostulation. His attendant Farquhar, however, understood both languages middling well, so that there he was not at so great a loss.

Well, it so chanced that Peter and this one attendant were hunting or watching one day upon the eastern division of the great mountain Ben-Aoon, when Farquhar pointed out to his master the smoke issuing from the abode of Nicol Grant and his associates. The smoke appeared so nigh, that all at once the fancy struck Peter of going directly there and hearing what this obstinate freebooter had to say for himself; and notwithstanding of all that Farquhar could say, he persisted in his resolution.

The way was longer than he expected, and on coming nigh the hamlet was almost impervious, so that had it not been for the smoke the two could not have found it; but the smoke was like that of a great camp, or a city on a small scale, and as they approached, a savoury scent of the well-known venison came temptingly over the senses of our two hungry invaders. But though that gave Farquhar a strong desire to partake of the viands, he continued to expostulate with his master on the madness and danger of this visit, but all to no purpose.

If ever there existed a man who really knew not what fear was, as far as regarded beings of flesh and blood, it was Peter Aston, and without the least hesitation in he went, followed by his attendant, to the largest house of the encampment, from whence the greatest quantity of smoke issued, and from which likewise the savoury perfume seemed to proceed. At his very first step within the threshold (Oh woeful sight to Peter's eyes!) he perceived hundreds, if not thousands of deer hams, all hanging drying in the smoke, tier above tier innumerable. The house being something like a large Highland barn, with its walls made of stake-and-rise, there was in the other end a kilnful of malt drying, for ale and whisky to these bold marauders. It was this which had produced the great column of smoke, by which the keeper and his man had been directed through the intricacies of rock and forest to this singularly sequestered abode. There was, moreover, a large fire in the middle of this rude edifice, on which hung an enormous kettle, simmering full of a veni-

son stew, and two coarse-looking Highland women kept constantly stirring and pouching it up.

All this was far too much for the patience of Peter. The moment he cast his eyes on the countless number of deer hams, the calm-expostulation part of his errand vanished. He and his attendant were both well armed with long firelocks, bows, arrows, and broadswords; and stepping up resolutely into the middle of this singular storehouse and refectory, he said fiercely, "By the faith of my body, but you gentlemen deer-stalkers seem to live well here, and rather to know too well where the Earl of Mar's best bucks graze."

There were four or five ragged and sulky-looking fellows sitting on the floor in a ring, employed on something, but as they understood no English they made no answer; but one of the women at the kettle called out, "Eon," and straight a tall hard-featured fellow came from another apartment, who, with a bow that would not have disgraced a nobleman, welcomed the stranger Sassenach to his friend's humble abode.

"Why I was saying, sir," said Peter, "that you seem to live well here, and rather to know too well where the Earl of Mar's best bucks graze; what say you to that?"

"Why, sir," said the fellow, "she just pe saying tat her fare pe very mooch tepending on her creat induster. She pe often tear pought and far sought. But such as she pe, te stranger always welcome to his share."

"Answer me this one civil question, sir," said Peter, in a voice of thunder: "Where did you get all those deer hams, and on whose land, and in what district did you obtain them all? You can answer me, can't you?"

"Yes," said the Highlander, drawing himself up. "To one who can pe knowing a steir's ham from that of a buck, and a Highland shentlemans from a mere gilly, she could pe answering te questions."

Peter, without once thinking of his perilous situation among a horde that had sworn his death, stepped fiercely up, and seized the man by the collar—"I'll have no shuffling, sir," said he. "I am the Earl of Mar's castellan and forester, and I demand an explicit answer, whether, as has been reported to me, those deer have been stolen from his forest."

The man, not doubting that Peter had a strong and overpowering party without, answered him softly, by assuring him that he was not master there, but that he might depend on being satisfactorily answered by his leader and kinsman.

By this time one had run and apprised Nicol Grant of the arrival of a youthful Sassenach, who was assuming unaccountable airs and authority among his kinsmen. Nicol belted on his sword, and hasted into his rude hall, and there perceived a stately youth, of not more than nineteen years of age collaring his kinsman, the redoubted John of Larg, his greatest hero and right-hand man, a well-tried warrior, whom he had never known to flinch. The scene was so ludicrous that the captain of that kateran band could not help smiling, and going up, he tapped Peter on the shoulder, addressing him in the most diabolical English something as follows:—"Fwat pe te mhatter, prave poy? Fwat haif my cousin Larg peen tooing or saying?"

"What?" said Peter: he said no more but that one short monosyllable, yet he expressed a great deal, for what from his look and that one word he set all present into a roar of laughter except Nicol. "Pray fwat should pe your grotharh, tat is your call upon me after?" said the latter.

"What?" said Peter, louder than before, for he really did not understand what Grant said, and to four or five violent speeches of the Highlander, this word was the only answer, still louder and louder. Both were getting into a rage, when Farquhar interposed, desiring each of them to speak in his own mother tongue, and he would interpret between them. By this means Farquhar hoped to soften both answers, and for a short while effected a delay of the breaking out of the quarrel; but to the old question by Peter, "where he destroyed all those deer," Grant made a speech, which Farquhar being obliged to interpret, put an end to all peaceable colloquy. He said he lived upon his chief's own land, and took the deer where he could get them, and defied the Earl of Mar and all his adherents to prove him a thief or dishonourable man. That he had as good blood in his veins as that great chief had, or any belonging to him, and that he set him and his whole clan at defiance.

"Sir, to be short with you," said Peter, "since I find you such a determined and incorrigible villain, I give you this warning, that if I find you or any one of your gang henceforth in the Earl of Mar's forest, I'll shoot you like wild dogs or wolves. Remember, you are forewarned."

"Kill the Sassenach, kill him," shouted a number of voices at once, and half a dozen of naked swords were presented to Aston's breast at once. "No, no, hold off!" cried Nicol, "since he has dared to beard the old fox in his den, I'll show him how little I regard his prowess, or the power of those who sent him. Young gentleman, are you willing to fight me for the right of shooting in Mar forest?"

"By the faith of my body, and that I am," said Peter, pulling out his sword. "But you dare not, sir. You dare not, for the soul that is in your body, fight me single-handed."

"May te teal mon take tat soul ten!" exclaimed Grant. "Hurrah! all hands aloof! It shall never pe said tat Nicol Craunt took odds akainst a Sassenach, far less a stripe of a fhoolish poy. Come on, praif mhaister, you shall never chase a Craunt from the Praemhar forest akhain."

The two went joyfully out to the combat, and were followed by the whole hamlet, men, women, and children, an amazing number, and among the rest not fewer than twenty-five armed hunters were

among the crowd. Farquhar besought a word of his master, and tried to persuade him to come to some accommodation for the present, for as it was, in whatever way the combat terminated, they were both dead men. But his remonstrances were vain. Peter never could be brought to perceive danger. There was a deadly rancour in each heart, and they took the field against each other with the most determined inveteracy.

They fought with swords and bucklers, at which it was supposed each of them believed himself unmatched. But they had not crossed swords for five minutes, till Peter discovered that Grant was no match for him. The latter fought with the violence of a game-cock, and he being more than double the age of Peter, soon began to lose his breath. Peter let him toil and fume on, defending himself with the greatest ease, till at last he chose an opportunity of putting in practice a notable quirk in the sword exercise, that he had learned from M'Dowell, his master, at Alloa Castle. He struck Grant's elbow with the knob of his buckler, so as to take the whole power out of his arm, and the next moment twirled his sword from his hand, making it fly to a great distance, and without the loss of an instant, while the kateran chief was in this dilemma, Aston tripped him up, and set his foot upon his breast, waving his sword above his throat. It was not to be borne by the Grants, as he might easily have supposed. A loud cry and a general rush forward was the consequence, and in one moment Peter Aston was overpowered and bound with cords, his hands behind his back, and his feet with many folds. Why they did not slay him on the instant, as Nicol Grant and his gang had sworn his death many a time, is not easy to be accounted for, but there can be no doubt that some selfish motive predominated.

He was carried to a sort of dark hovel of an outhouse, thrown upon the floor, and a single armed guard placed at the door. He requested to have his servant Farquhar to attend him, but the savages only laughed at him, spoke in Gaelic, and left him. Thus was our hero vanquished by numbers, but still nothing dismayed. His mind seems to have been incapable of terror from man; but hunger came in its place, which was worse to bear, and now began to tease him most unmercifully, nor had he any means of repelling that most troublesome guest, and he began to dread that the savages were going to starve him to death, and his blood ran chill at the thought.

He fell asleep, but it was a troubled sleep; for he had dreams of eating at the Earl of Mar's table, but was ashamed because his appetite was insatiable. He ate up whole quarters of venison, and began to attack the beef with unimaginable glee; but still the desire increased with repletion, and there was no end either of the feast or the most intolerant rapacity. While in the very height of this singular enjoyment, he imagined that he saw a lovely female figure coming in to partake of his viands. He tried to speak and welcome her, but he could not. He tried to stretch out his arms and embrace her, but he could not. She was, however, no vision, for the lovely being loosed the cords from his hands, and as he came to himself by degrees he heard her whispering —"Be not afraid, gallant stranger; I have come at the risk of my life to set you free. I saw how fearlessly and nobly you acquitted yourself to-day, and though you vanquished my own father, I admired you, for we never knew of his being vanquished before. And besides there is a party on the way which will be here shortly, and these men are to carry you into your own bounds and drown or strangle you; for it is a rule with my father that no man, however great his offence, shall be put down here. Knowing all this, and hearing the orders given, I thought it hard that so gallant a youth and a stranger should be cut off in this manner, for doing that which he conceived to be his duty. I have therefore taken my life in my hand, and come to set you at liberty, provided you give me your sacred troth, that you will spare this little community, that by the troubles of the times have been driven to the hard circumstances in which you find us. But in particular you are to promise me, if I now give you your life, which your rashness has forfeited, that you are never to shed the blood of my parent, but to ward off his vengeance in the best way you may; for well I know he never will forgive the stain which you have this day cast on his honour by vanquishing him, and setting your foot on his breast at his own threshold, and in the midst of his dependants. Now, before I set you free do you promise me this?"

Peter was deeply affected by the interest taken in his fortune by this lovely young female, the daughter of his mortal enemy; yea, affected in a way which he had never before experienced. "I would have granted anything at your request, my comely maiden, without any conditions," said Peter; "but as it is *your* request, it is granted. Henceforth Nicol Grant's life shall be held precious in my sight, as if it were the life of my own parent; and as a pledge of my troth, now that my hands are free, I will halve this bonnet-piece of gold between us, and let the sight of your half or mine always remain a memorial between us and a witness of this vow." And then, after a good deal of sawing, cutting, and nibbling, he parted the gold coin between them.

"I am satisfied and happy, brave youth," said the maiden; "and to tell the truth, I had resolved to set you at liberty, and to trust to your generosity and your honour, whether you had promised or not; but your promise and your pledge make me happy: for well I know my father will never forgive you, but will thirst for your blood. But the times are perilous, and you and my father may soon come into the battle-field together, or against each other; and should you once cover his head on such a day, he

then might be all your own; and what a guardian I should then have for my brave old and impetuous parent!"

"Lady, who are you, that I may know you again?" said Peter; "for such sentiment and high and generous feeling in such a place as this, appears to me as an anomaly in human nature."

"I am Marsali Grant," said she; "the sole child and darling of the man whom you this day vanquished in fight. But there is no time for more parley; your executioners will presently be here. There is something both to eat and drink, but for Heaven's sake escape to the solitudes and fastnesses of the hills before partaking of either. Remember you are unarmed, for I durst not bring your armour for fear of a discovery. Haste and make your escape by the western branch of the glen, and avoid the eastern as you would the door of death. Make your way through this divot roof, for though your guard is asleep, which I effected, yet I dare not trust you in his sight. My father and his men are all absent on some expedition. Not another word. God speed you."

"But where is Farquhar?" said he; "what has become of my faithful Farquhar?" Marsali shook her head, and again charged him to look to his own safety; so, after giving her an affectionate embrace, and shedding a tear of gratitude or love, we shall not decide which, on her cheek, our hero took his leave, made his way by the western branch of the glen, as the maid had directed him, and on the following morning reached the castle of Braemar in safety.

Peter had the day before summoned the earl's men of the western glens together, to watch the motions of some of the marching divisions of the enemy, and found them assembled at the castle on his return. To them he related his adventure precisely as it had happened, save that he did not mention his promise to Marsali. The men insisted on being led against that nest of freebooters, to cut them off root and branch, but Peter refused, on which the men of Mar looked at one another, not being able to divine the cause of Peter's backwardness, it being so much the reverse of his general disposition.

Peter really was convinced in his own mind that Nicol Grant only took that mode of releasing him, to give it a little more effect—to make a deeper impression on his mind, and extract a promise from him which Grant could not otherwise have obtained. Our hero was wrong, as will appear in the sequel: but, at all events, he would not have injured a hair of one of that tribe's head, and all for the sake of their lovely young mistress.

The confusion in the south of Scotland became dreadful about this period. Fresh tidings arrived at Braemar every day, of new revolutions and countermovements of the different armies. Certain word at length arrived, that the Earl of Mar had been compelled to flee the country, and that his son Lord John, who commanded in Stirlingshire, had been so hard pressed by Argyle and his party, that he had been obliged to abscond along with a few principal friends. It was rumoured that they had escaped to Argyleshire, and joined Montrose, who was then laying waste the devoted Campbells. But young Aston could not help wondering why his lord should not have retired to his Highland dominions, where the force continued steadfast, strong, and unbroken; but it was to save those dominions from ravage that both noblemen escaped in a different direction.

A messenger at length arrived from Ireland, who brought a confirmation of Peter's investiture in the chief command of all the earl's people in those parts. His instructions were to keep his men prepared, but to temporize as long as possible, without showing a decided hostility to any party; but if fairly forced to take a part, then to join his troops to those of the king, and stand or fall with the royal cause. The earl's people were thus left in a ticklish position, being surrounded on all sides by the whig or parliamentary forces, excepting indeed their powerful neighbours the Gordons of Strathbogie and Aboyne. They had marshalled again and again in great force, but had not yet finally declared themselves; the Marquis of Huntly and his son being both in prison in Edinburgh Castle, so that they were as much at a loss how to proceed, deprived of their leaders, as the Earl of Mar's people were. Peter, now styled Captain Aston, continued to act in the most fearless and independent manner. He held the strong castle of Kildrummie Cogarth and Braemar, and showed a resolution of repelling force by force on the first opportunity.

It is well known, that in the event of any national commotion in Scotland, it has always been the prevailing sin of the clans, in the first place, to wreak their vengeance on their next neighbours, and this disposition showed itself at that time over all the north. And in particular as relates to our narrative, the Grants deeming theirs the prevailing party, became as intolerant as any clan of them all; but many and severe were the chastisements they received from Captain Aston, who missed no opportunity of inflicting on them the most rigorous retaliation. They could live no longer with him, and determined on having him cut off, cost what it would. Nicol Grant of Glen-Bilg, and his desperate gang of deerstalkers, were applied to as the most able and likely to effect this laudable work; and they undertook it with avidity, swearing over the sword to shed his blood, or forego the name and habitation of their fathers.

On the morning after Peter's escape from the hands of these ruffians, Grant's party of executioners arrived at the encampment about the break of day, in order to carry off the prisoner, to hang or drown him in his own bounds. They found the armed Highlander walking backward and forward

before the door, but on entering the bothy there were the bonds lying, and the prisoner gone through a hole in the roof. The Highlander swore to them that he had never for a moment quitted his post, but that he once thought he found the smell of the devil coming from the cottage, and heard him saying to the prisoner, that the Grants might rue the day that he was born. The Grants were astonished, and believing all this, they looked on their very existence as a tribe to depend on the death of this young man, and tried every means of accomplishing their purpose. Nicol Grant burst into the heart of the forest with a stronger party than he had hitherto headed, and defeating a party of Mar's men on the hill above Invercauld, he pursued them with such eagerness, thinking they were led by the captain, that he lost all thought of his danger. The man whom he took for Captain Aston perceived that he was singled out by Grant, and fled toward a ford in the linn of Glen-quaish, where one only can step at a time, and where one good fellow might guard the ford against fifty. Finlay Bawn leaped the gully, and then turned to fight the kateran chief, but Grant heaved a stone with such deadly aim, that Finlay's feet being entangled among the rocks, it knocked him down, or some way caused him to fall, on which old Grant sprang over the gully, and cut the unfortunate youth down as he was trying to gain his feet, and with many curses and oaths began a-hacking off his head. He was that moment saluted by a shower of huge stones, which laid him prostrate at once, and he was seized and bound by three of the Farquharsons.

As they were binding him, he growled a hideous laugh, and said, "Ay, you cravens, do your worst, now I have kept my oath. I have avenged the wrongs of my clan and my own disgrace, and removed the spell of a cursed enchanter. I am satisfied."

"Is it the death of our young friend, Finlay Bawn, that is to effect all this?" said the men.

"Finlay Bawn!" exclaimed the savage in a tone of agony: "and is it only Finlay Bawn, whose death I have effected with the loss of my own life? Bramble! brandling! would that I were at liberty to hew you into a thousand pieces for thus disappointing me of my just and noble revenge."

"What a pity we have not a rope," said one of his captors, "that we might hang him over the first tree."

"What need have we of a rope," said another. "Give me a fair stroke at the monster, and I'll engage to cut off his head as accurately as it had never been on."

"I defy you," said Grant; "now try your hand at it."

"O, that is a stale joke," said the first; "you want to fall by a quick and honourable death, but you shall hang like a dog. Off to the castle with him, that our captain may have the satisfaction of hanging him with his own hand."

Nicol Grant was then hauled away, with his hands bound behind his back, to the castle of Braemar, and flung into the dungeon until the arrival of the captain, who was not expected till the evening. In the meantime, Finlay Bawn's father arrived at the castle, and insisted on inflicting vengeance on the slayer of his son with his own hand. He being a man of some note among the earl's people, none of the assembled vassals opposed the motion, and Grant being delivered up to the irritated father of a beloved son, a scene of great outrage ensued. Old Finlay put a rope about the culprit's neck, and began a-dragging him up to the gallows that stood at the cross of the village of Castleton, about a quarter of a mile from the castle. Grant was so dogged and sulky that he would neither lead nor trail, and a few boors, with braying laughter, were beating him on with sticks like an ox. Grant cursed them; tried to kick them; and said again and again, "Were your lord here, as he is in Ireland, the best of you durst not use me thus."

At this critical juncture, Captain Aston arrived from Kildrummie, and galloping up the green, beheld his sworn enemy Nicol Grant led like a bullock by a long rope, and a parcel of clowns thrashing him on with stones. He rode into the middle of them, knocking sundry of them down with his sheathed sword. "Who dares to lead a prisoner to execution here without my orders?" cried he. "I claim this prisoner as mine to try or to pardon; for though he slew your son in a forest broil, he slew him for me, and therefore the revenge is mine."

"What, sir?" cried old Finlay, "refuse me due vengeance on this old outlaw for the death of my brave son? I'll have it, sir!"

"Hold your peace," cried Aston. "I am captain here, until either the earl or Lord John return, and I'll have no vassal voice to countermand my orders. I am sorry for the loss of the brave young man, but the stroke, as I understand, was meant for my head, not his; therefore, the prisoner is mine."

So saying, he alighted and loosed the rope from the neck of Nicol Grant with his own hands, unscrewing also the chain that held his hands together.

Old Grant gnashed his teeth and bit his lip in astonishment, but said not a word. He was conducted back, and again thrown into the dungeon of the castle, without being offered either meat or drink. "Lie there, and eat the flesh from off your bones, old murderous vagabond," said Aston; "I carry this key to the wars with me, and if I never return, your cursed bones shall never be buried."

Nicol Grant laid him down on his dungeon floor, and after exhausting his curses on Pender-tana-mor, fairly made up his mind to suffer death by hunger and thirst without complaint, and without a cry being heard from the dungeon.

As he was lying half asleep, he thought he heard the outer door of the castle slowly unlocked: then a

few steps as approaching down the stone stair, and finally the dungeon door was unlocked, and in stepped Captain Aston. He carried armour, and old Grant perceived at once that he was to be murdered in private and in cold blood, and grinned a disdainful smile in the face of his hated enemy.

"You have always judged too hard of me, Grant," said he. "I was never your personal enemy, nor the enemy of your clan, but only the enemy of injustice and robbery; and if you and your adherents will desist from robbing my lord and master's forests, I will unite in friendship with you for ever. It is not now a time for loyal subjects to be quarrelling among themselves and cutting each other's throats."

"Young squire, I want no directions from you where I and my men are to hunt or not to hunt. I will hunt where I please over all Scotland," said Grant; "and you or the Earl of Mar hinder me at your peril."

"What folly to speak to me in that manner, Grant," said Captain Aston, "considering that you are in my power, and sensible as you must be that I have spared you and your nest of forest robbers merely that I might not make enemies of my powerful neighbours the Grants; hoping that we shall yet combine in the same noble cause. Nor, for all your malice, shall a chieftain of the Grants be put down by me. I desire to be your friend and your companion in arms, for I know you for a brave man. Therefore, though I dare not tell my men, but must pretend I leave you here to die of hunger and thirst, here is both meat and drink for you in abundance; but haste and escape to the fastnesses of the mountains before partaking of either, for I cannot answer one minute for your life while you are in the environs of this castle."

"Boy! stripling! low-life Sassenach!" exclaimed Nicol. "Do you think I would take my life as a present from you? No, caitiff, I would rather die a thousand deaths!"

"Well, if you put hand to your own life, that is no act of mine," said Aston gaily; "but I hope better things of you, and yet to fight side by side with you." So saying, he thrust him out of the castle, furnished with venison, bread, and wine, and bolted him out.

Grant felt himself degraded below the standard of humanity. Never was there a more wretched and miserable being. He felt himself doubly—trebly conquered; and his savage nature recoiling from the contemplation, he cherished nothing but the most deadly revenge.

He returned home, to the great joy of his clan, but he had not the face to tell them of his degradation; but his darling Marsali wormed it out of him, partly in his sleep, and partly when awake. But by day his whole conversation with his associates was how to accomplish the death of Aston. He was represented as a necromancer, a limb of Satan, and a scourge of God on the Grants; and one on whose death the welfare and very existence of the clan depended. His death was again sworn to over the sword, and shortly after a fit opportunity offered.

A watcher came one night and informed Nicol Grant that he had discovered a nightly retreat of Pender-Mor's, near the head of the Gairn, on the very confines of their bounds; and that, what with the different lights and bugle blasts that he used, the Grants could not stir a foot but they were surprised; and that he had dodged them with a few chosen men for three successive nights, and would likely remain till discovered or expelled.

This was joyful news for old Nicol, and all was bustle among the Grants of Glen-Bilg to secure the success of their great enterprise. The scouts kept all day coming and going, and meeting one another, and at night it was ascertained that the dreaded party was still there, as the smoke was seen ascending from the bothy, although scarcely discernible through the trees that surrounded the rock, at the foot of which the shieling was placed. They then set their guard, so as it was impossible the foe could escape.

But none of their consultations were concealed from Marsali; she was one of themselves, and heard everything. No one ever suspected her of having set their great foe at liberty, the devil having been the only person suspected there. None, however, knew of her lover's engagement to her, and no one but herself knew of the generous relief he had afforded to her indomitable parent. She therefore resolved to save the young and generous hero's life still, if practicable, by sending a private message to him. But how to get that private message to him—there lay the difficulty! However, love will accomplish much. She knew the scene well, though only from hourly description, and she imagined she could direct one to it. But she had as yet no confidant whom she could trust, and such an interest in the clan's greatest tormentor was a dangerous secret to impart.

Captain Aston and six of his bravest followers had again met by appointment at their wild bothy that evening. The place was on the very boundary of the Grants' land, and fixed on as a check to them as well as for its singular safety; for the bothy could only be approached by one man at a time, and that with difficulty. And, moreover, the inmates had a retreat up from behind on a ladder into a concealed cave in a tremendous rock, and when the ladder was pulled up, the men who took shelter there were safe, though assailed by a thousand foes.

Peter (or rather Captain Aston) and his men were sitting in the bothy at the foot of the rock, cooking a hideful of the finest venison, with other game mixed, and always now and then tasting the delicious liquor, to ascertain if it was ready for their grand repast, when all at once a watcher in a loud whisper, gave the word, "A Grant! a Grant!" "By the blessed rood, he dies then, if he were their chief," cried the captain, and fitting an arrow to his bow,

and waiting a little space until the intruder came to the highest part of the path, his form was wholly exposed between the captain's eye and the sky, and was thus rendered a complete butt for an archer's eye. The intruder was a slender youth, and hasting towards them with eager speed. Peter took a rapid aim, the bowstring twanged, the shaft sped, and pierced the stranger's lightsome form, who with a loud cry fell to the ground. The captain was first at him, and found a comely youth lying bleeding on the height, with a deep wound in his shoulder, from which he had just pulled the barbed arrow. The youth wept bitterly, and blamed the captain for shooting a friend who came on a message of life and death. The other retaliated the blame on the wounded youth, for his temerity in coming without the pass-word.

"I want a single word with you in private, sir, before I die," said the youth.

"Die!" exclaimed the captain, "why it is a mere scratch, it would not cause a girl to lose an hour's sleep. Retire, my friends, to your supper, till I hear what this stripling has to communicate." The men did so, when the youth instantly produced the token which our hero had given to Marsali Grant, and at the same time charged him to follow where he should lead the way, else in half an hour he and his party would all be dead men.

"There you are mistaken, my brave boy," said Peter, "for here I and my party are safe, and defy all the Grants of Strath-Aven."

"Are you not bound in honour to answer this token, sir?" Peter bowed, and acknowledged the obligation. "Then," continued the youth, "you must come and speak with my young mistress without, for she has something of the utmost importance to communicate to you."

Peter did not hesitate a moment in complying with his beauteous deliverer's injunctions. He ran to his men, desiring them to take shelter in the cave for the night, and draw up the ladder, and returned to his young ragged and weeping conductor.

"O sir," said he, "if you know of any path out of this entanglement in any direction, for Heaven's sake lead on, for my master's men surround this place in great force, and will immediately be upon us; and if I guess aright, it was to save your life that I was sent. What shall we do? For I am wounded, and cannot flee with you, and if I am taken, my life is the forfeit."

"Fear not, and follow me," said the captain; and taking the youth by the hand, he pulled him along on the narrow path by which he had come. They had not proceeded far, ere they heard the rush of the Grants approaching, on which they were obliged to creep into the thicket on one side, and squat themselves to the earth. The poor timorous youth clung to the captain's bosom, and sobbed and wept; for he heard their whispered vengeance in his native tongue, and their rejoicings that they had their greatest enemy once more in the toil. When they were all gone by, the two arose and pursued another path in deep silence, and it was not long ere they gained the height, and perceived the blue waters of Loch-Bily below them, whose waves glittered bright in the beams of the rising moon.

Here the captain dressed the youth's shoulder, which had still continued to bleed a little and rendered him somewhat faint: but Peter, binding it hard up with some herbs, assured him that it was nothing, and the two proceeded on in silence, the youth taking the lead. In an amazingly short time, our hero found himself in the middle of the encampment of the Grants; and the sly youth who had led him by such a near route, seemed to enjoy his consternation greatly, when he saw where he was, and heard what he heard. This was a wild and terrible anthem, proceeding from the large rude hall in which he had formerly been. The song seemed a battle strain, ending with a coronach for the dead. When it was ended, the youth whispered him to walk deliberately in, and use his own discretion, until he went and apprised his young mistress of his arrival. The mention of her name thrilled him to the heart, and without thinking of aught else, he walked boldly and slowly into the hall amid the astonished group. They were all females, some old and some young; but there was one powerful old dragon among them, whom Peter set down in his mind at once as a witch. One wild exclamation in Gaelic followed another, but these our hero did not fully comprehend, neither did they his salutations: but it was manifest that their astonishment was extreme. The superstition of that age was such as cannot now be comprehended. People lived and breathed in a world of spirits, witches, warlocks, and necromancers of all descriptions, so that it was amazing how they escaped a day with life and reason. Peter believèd in them all; and as for the Grants of the glen, they had from the beginning set him down as a demi-devil—a sort of changeling from the spiritual to the human nature; and there was a prophecy among them which that same old hag continued oft to repeat. It was in Gaelic, but bore that, "when Peter, the great son of Satan, should fall, their house should fall with him"—thus regarding him as the evil angel of their race. His wonderful escape from them formerly, his surprising feats of arms, and most of all, his present appearance in the midst of them as they were singing his death-song, impressed them with the firm belief that he was indeed a superhuman being. They sent off one message after another for their young mistress, but she could not be found, and no one knew where she was. But in a short time Marsali herself stepped in, arrayed in the brilliant tartan of the clan, and really, in such a scene, appeared like the guardian divinity of the wilderness. There was such a combination of beauty, simplicity, and elegance, both in her appearance and deport-

ment, that Captain Aston, brave and resolute as he was, instantly felt that he was only a secondary and subordinate person there.

The guileful creature instantly kneeled before him, and prayed him—in Gaelic, that all the women might thoroughly understand her—that for her sake he would restrain his soldiers, by whom they were surrounded, from ravaging and destroying a parcel of poor helpless women, who had been left without a guard.

"Madam, you know that I do not understand you," said he. "But you also know that I cannot refuse anything to you, if you will speak in a language with which I am acquainted."

She then thanked him again in Gaelic for his boundless kindness and generosity in thus always repaying them good for evil. And the women hearing this, conceiving of course that their adored mistress had gained a great victory, and saved all their lives, danced for joy around them, and blessed them both in a verse of sacred song.

Marsali led her lover into her own chamber, and addressed him in the language to which he was accustomed; and that with a frankness and affection which greatly endeared the maiden to his fond heart, unpractised as it was in any of the blandishments of love or flattery. He gazed and gazed at her, his eyes beaming with delight, and then said, "I am afraid of you, Marsali. And well I may, for I find that I am your captive—that you can make me do what you please; and aware as I am of that, where is my security for not doing every day something that is wrong?"

"O, noble sir, can you not trust my generosity and affection? Let me clasp your knees, and kiss them, for your unmerited kindness in rescuing my infatuated father from an instant and ignominious death."

"And where is my recompense, Marsali? When I thought to have secured him as my friend and companion in arms for ever, you see how I am rewarded. Parent as he is yours, Nicol Grant has the nature of a demon."

"Say not so, noble sir, but listen to me. It grieves my heart to find that my father, in place of being won by your kindness, is more inveterate against you than ever. He feels that he is not only conquered in warrior prowess but in generosity, and feels every moment of his life as if he were writhing beneath your foot. His yearning for vengeance is altogether insupportable; and I have now no other resource but to attempt your separation for ever; and it was to effect this that I sent for you from the forest of Glen-Gairn."

"Bless me! I never till this moment remembered to ask you wherefore you sent for me so hastily, and forced me to leave my men in some danger."

"I sent, in the first place, to warn you of your danger, and save your life, which I need not say I feel now to be too dear to me. But, for shame! how could you shoot my messenger?"

"The rascal came without our pass-word, and what could I do? He had not even the sense to answer our challenge by calling out a 'friend.' But I was little sorry for the accident, for such a poor whining elf I never beheld. I could hardly refrain from kicking him: for what do you think? he actually cried like a girl for a scratch on the shoulder."

"Poor fellow! he's a very kind-hearted, faithful, and pretty boy."

"He a pretty boy! an ugly keystrel! a chit! The worst-looking howlet that I ever saw in my life, ah—a—a—a—." Here our bold captain's volley of obloquy against the poor boy was suddenly cut short, while the hero himself was to be seen standing gaping like one seized with a paralytic affection. For the lovely, the accomplished, and engaging Marsali Grant had thrown back her silken tartan, and there was the identical wound on a shoulder as white as the snows on Ben-Aven, which our hero had recklessly inflicted, and as carelessly dressed on the height of Glen-Gairn.

Peter's mouth turned into the shape of a cross-bow—he looked over his right shoulder, but seeing nothing there worth looking at, his eyes reverted again to the wound on the lovely shoulder, at which the victorious damsel stood pointing. The round tears stood in our hero's large blue eyes, which seemed dilated above measure; and so, to prevent himself from crying outright, even louder than the maiden had done herself, he turned his face over his left shoulder, and began a-laughing, while at the same time his face went awry and the tears ran down in streams.

"So you never saw a shabbier keystrel or a worse-looking boy, did you not?" said she most provokingly.

"Dear, dear Marsali, you are too hard upon me; Heaven knows I wish the wound had been mine. And yet it is nothing to one you have given me, I—I—fear—I love you, Marsali."

"A bold confession! But forgive me for laughing at it. It is however given in good time, for I have a most serious request to make of you, and one that nearly concerns both our happiness and our lives. Did I not hear you say lately, noble Aston, that you could not refuse me anything?"

"Perhaps you did; and if I said so, what then?"

"Alas! the time is hard at hand, when your sword and my father's must both be drawn in this ruinous war, which is a more serious affair than broils about forest land, which God ordained should be free. This country is now destined to be the seat of bloody and destructive war; and no tribe, nor clan, nor family is to be suffered to remain neutral, without being subjected to plunder, fire, and sword. Both parties have issued summonses and threats, and to the one or the other we must cling. I know the part that the Grants will take, and my

father and his followers will be the foremost men. Should you and the men of Mar take the same side, as is reported, think what the issue will be. Either you or my father will never come home again, nor can you even subsist together in life for a single day. He is altogether irreconcileable, and nothing but your blood will satisfy him. He has sworn an hundred times to wash his hands in it, and in the event of either of you falling by the other's hand, *what is* to become *of* me?"

"But, dearest Marsali, what can I do to prevent this? I will be friends with your father for your sake alone; and I will be a shield to him in the day of battle, provided he will be friends with me; but if I am attacked unfairly, or by ruffian ferocity, what can I do but defend myself?"

"There is only one expedient in nature to save one or both of your lives, and mine beside; and that is, for you either to keep personally out of this war, or lead your troops to some other district. It was principally for this that I brought you here, to plead with you in a maiden's habit; and as a maiden should do, move your heart to one of these alternatives."

"What you ask, Marsali, is out of my power. My orders are, to join the king's troops if forced to the field; and where else can I go, or find a leader save the gallant Montrose?"

"Then it is all over with poor Marsali, and the sybil's prediction must be fulfilled. Our happiness is over and our days numbered."

"What *would* you have me to do, dearest Marsali?"

"Either to keep from the war personally, or take the opposite side to my father. In the latter case I have only the chances of war to dread; but in the same army you cannot subsist without bloodshed and ruin to all concerned. But, dear Aston, cannot you live in the forest with me?"

"If I stay another moment, I am a lost and ruined man," cried Peter, and bounded away to the hill like a wild deer. The maid followed by the light of the moon, and contrived to keep sight of him: and when at length he sat down upon a stone, and began to think and repeat to himself, that he had used this matchless girl very ill, he never wist till her own sweet voice said close behind him, "Well, stay, and take me with you, Aston, and be counselled by me, else you will repent it at your last gasp, when there is no redress to be found."

"Spare my honour, for mercy's sake!" cried Aston; "not to-night, my dear Marsali, not to-night! for a fitter time will soon come. I am engaged, and must stick to my engagement. I have nearly forfeited my credit with my lord's men already; and if it were not that they believe your father is locked up in the dungeon of the castle to die of hunger, I could not call out Mar's vassals. Therefore not to-night, for heaven's sake, not to-night."

Marsali sat down, and wiped her eyes, and cried, "I now know that I shall lose both my kind father and my noble and generous lover. But what could a maid do more? Heaven prevent them from meeting in deadly feud." Marsali went home with a heart overpowered with the deepest affliction, and a settled presentiment that a terrible judgment hung over her house and her lover.

Never was there a man so much astonished as Nicol Grant was, on learning what had happened in his absence, and comparing that with what he had himself seen. He had surrounded Aston's bothy at the foot of the rock so that a fox could not have made his escape. He had seen the fire burning, and the guardians of the forest passing and repassing in the light. He had rushed in, to surprise the man he accounted his greatest opponent on earth. The fire was still blazing, the venison steaks were still warm upon the stone table, but human beings there were none to be found. Nicol's hair stood on end, and his looks were so troubled that all his followers partook of the infection, for they imagined they were opposed to men who were in conjunction with the evil one, and who could convey themselves through the air, or the bowels of the solid rock, as suited their convenience. But when Grant came home, and learned from the females appertaining to the clan, that at the very time when he was surrounding Aston and his Brae-Mar men in their bothy, Aston and his men were surrounding the encampment of the Grants, and that if it had not been for the intercessions of Marsali, they would all have been ravaged and slaughtered; why, Nicol Grant knew not what to think. He tried to frame some probable solution of the thing, but he found it impracticable.

But the trump of war was now sounded in the distracted valleys, and by degrees reached the most bewildered of the Grampian glens, where it was hailed with joy by men who could lose nothing but their lives, which were every day laid in peril, and the loss of them naturally the less dreaded, while a foray upon the Lowlands or their rival clans was their highest delight. And while the trivial events above detailed were going on, the war raged in the Western Highlands. The intrepid Marquis of Montrose had turned on the braes of Lochaber, like a lion caught in the toils, and beaten the Campbells to pieces at the battle of Inverlochy, and forthwith the conqueror arrived in the eastern districts, where two powerful armies of the reformers were sent against him. Every clan was then obliged to join the one side or the other, further temporizing being impracticable. The Laird of Grant, a very powerful chief, was the first to declare for the royal cause. He sent a brave array, under the command of Ballindalloch, his brother, consisting of 500 men, while the Strath-Avon men were led by our redoubted forester and freebooter, Nicol Grant; and Captain Peter Aston, having his lord's private orders, raised the forces of the Dee and the Don for his royal master.

It was on the 28th April, that Nicol Grant joined the royal army, with no fewer than 300 men, all robust and wild katerans. He was received by his colonel, Ballindaloch, with high approbation, and placed next in command to himself. Nicol was a proud man that day, on seeing so many of his own name and clan together in arms, and forming the wing of the royal army that lay next to their own country. Forthwith Nicol thought not of advantages over the king's enemies, but with that fiendish malignity of which he possessed a portion above all men, he immediately began to concert plans how he might revenge old jealousies, now that he saw the Grants in such force as appeared to him supreme.

Accordingly, with speech full of malevolence, he represented to his colonel, how that the Earl of Mar's people were rising in great force to join the opposing army, and that it would be of the greatest consequence were he and his men permitted to crush the insurrection in the bud, before their array gathered fairly to a head. Ballindaloch believing this, hasted to Montrose, and laid the intelligence before him: Montrose was hard of belief, knowing the firm loyalty of the Earl of Mar, and charged Ballindaloch to beware how he proceeded rashly in the matter; but at all events to prevent the men of Mar from joining the Covenanters.

This piece of treachery in Nicol Grant had the effect of bringing about great events, for the Grants moving southward to watch the movements of the Mar men, weakened the main body of the king's army, and hastened on the great battle of Auldearn. But, in the meantime, Nicol Grant was despatched with his regiment to the south, to waylay the men of Mar, and bring them to an explanation one way or another. This was the very commission Nicol Grant wanted, for he knew every pass and ford of that country, and now was his time for executing that vengeance which gnawed his heart. He had likewise orders to watch the motions of General Baillie, but to that part of his commission he determined on paying only a secondary regard.

Now, it so happened, that at the muster of the Earl of Mar's clans at Kildrummie, the men of Cluny and Glen-Shee did not appear, but Aston finding 300 gentlemen cavalry assembled, he left John Steward, of Kildrummie, to gather in and bring up the foot, and he himself rode off with the cavalry to join the royal standard, lest the expected battle should be fought ere he got forward with the whole.

Our young hero's heart was never so uplifted, as when viewing this gallant array led on by himself. He thought of what mighty exploits he would perform for his king and country, but he could never help mingling these thoughts with others of what would become of the lovely and accomplished Marsali Grant during the war. If she would accompany the old deer-stalker to the camp, or retire to some place of safety, he wished he had known; for he found he could *not* get her out of his mind.

Such were some of the brave Captain Aston's cogitations, when lo, at the fall of evening, as he was fording a river at the head of his men, which I think, from the description, must have been at the ford of the Don above Kirkton, he was suddenly attacked by a force of great power, which, from its array, appeared to be of the Clan Grant. But certain that they had joined the royal party, he deemed them labouring under some mistake, and for a while he and his troops only stood on the defensive, calling out what they wanted, and likewise that he was for the king and Montrose. It availed nothing; down they came with fury on his first division, while the rest of his troops were entangled in the river, and ere he had given orders for an attack, his front rank, which had gained the firm ground, began to waver. He was as yet but little acquainted with the practical science of war, measuring merely the strength of his army with his own, and at length, waving his sword over his head, he called out, "On them, brethren! follow me."

He was at the head of his column on the left when he gave this order for the charge, and instantly thereon he spurred his horse against the right of the Grants, the place where he knew their leader would be. He was followed by a few resolute fellows, who at the first made an opening in the front ranks of the Grants, but several of them were cut down, and the captain himself nearly inclosed. Terrible were the blows he dealt, but though they made the Grants recoil, it was only to return with redoubled fury; and just while in this dilemma, their leader rushed forward, and closed with him, crying at the same time in Gaelic, as if bursting with rage, "Perdition on thy soul! I have thee now."

With these words, he struck at Aston with the fury of a maniac. The latter warded the first blow, but the second, which was a back stroke, wounded his horse on the head, and at the same time cut the head-band of his bridle. Never was there a warrior who did his opponent a greater service, for the rest plunged onward, and our young hero would have been cut in pieces, for he entertained no thought of a retreat, but his horse, disliking the claymores of the Grants exceedingly, and feeling himself under no further control from the bridle, turned and scoured after his associates swifter than the wind, outrunning the most intense fliers, and thus bearing his rider from instant death.

In less than ten minutes, the handful of the Mar cavalry that had reached the firm ground were broken and chased by their enemies to the eastward, while those still entangled in the river were glad to retreat to the other side.

Captain Aston's heart was absolutely like to burst with vexation, at being thus baffled and broken by the old infernal deer-stalker, whom he had so lately and so generously rescued from death—for too well

he knew his voice and his bearing—and in his heart cursing him as the most implacable barbarian, wished that he had let the men hang him as they intended, and then he should have been guiltless of his blood.

The Grants being on foot, there was no danger of a hasty pursuit. Still the captain continued to scour on, followed by his front division alone, consisting of about 120 men. He knew not what had become of all the rest; if Nicol Grant had slain them all in the coils of the Don, or chased them back again to Brae-Mar. How came he thus to be fleeing from the face of an enemy of whom he had no fear, and whom he still wished to fight? In the confusion of his reminiscences, he did not perceive clearly the reason of this, which the reader will easily do. His horse wanted the bridle, as the reins only hung by the martingal, and our hero wasted his strength in vain, pulling in his wounded and furious steed by the shoulders.

A spruce cavalier of his troop, who had all the way kept close by his side, now ventured to address him, asking him sharply, whither he intended to lead them in such abundant and unnecessary haste?

"It is my horse who is in such a persevering haste, and not I," said Aston. "He is wounded, and so much affrighted that he is beyond control. I may as well try to turn the hill of Loch-na-gaur. No, no! here we go! push on, boy!"

"Captain, this is sheer madness!" said the youth. "If you cannot command your horse, throw yourself from his back and call a muster."

"I never thought of the expedient before. Thank you, young sir," said the captain, flinging himself from his horse, and then, coming to close grips with him, commanded him by force, when it appeared the animal wanted the bits, was wounded in the head, and had one of his ears cut off. A council of war was then called, and it was resolved that they should try to unite their force in the morning by break of day, return in a body, and cut all the Grants into small pieces!

From this laudible resolution there was no dissentient voice, till the stripling before mentioned stood up at the captain's hand, and said, "Brother cavaliers, I, for one, must dissent from this mad resolve, for several reasons; and the first is, the certainty of losing our captain, the first man on the field. It is quite manifest, that he understands no mode of attack beyond what he can do with the might of his own arm, and no mode of retreat save the old one of who to be foremost."

"What do you say, sir? what is your name? and whose son are you?" said the captain, fiercely.

"It is not every man, captain, that can tell whose son he is," retorted the youth with a sly bow, which raised the titter so much against the captain that he only bit his lip and waited in silence what the stripling had further to say. "I am quite serious, captain, for I perceive that in any private broil your bold temerity would be the ruin of your followers. My most serious and candid advice is, that you lead us straight to the royal army, and then fighting at our head in the regular ranks, I know not on whom we would turn our backs. I am the more serious in this advice, that I am certain we were attacked through mistake. These men have been despatched to watch the motions of General Baillie, and prevent the junction of his army with that of Sir John Urry. And as the former general's army consists mostly of cavalry, there cannot be a doubt but that the Grants mistook us for his advanced guard; for how could they expect a regiment of horse from Brae-Mar! Let us then assemble our men, haste on to the main army, and represent the case to the lord-lieutenant, who we are sure will do us justice, either as friends or enemies. This, in my estimation, will be behaving like true and loyal soldiers; while in the other case, it would be acting like savage banditti, to avenge supposed wrongs on friends who believed they were doing their duty."

"Young gentleman, your wisdom is so far above your years, that I request to know your name and lineage," said the captain.

"My name is Colin," said the youth; "I am the son of a gentleman of your acquaintance, and newly returned from school; but my surname I shall for the present keep, lest I behave ill in the wars. Let it suffice then that I am Colin, a young gentleman volunteer to the banner of the Earl of Mar. I came with the intent of following Captain John Stewart, whom you have left behind, but since it has been my fate to fall under the command of another, I shall do my duty, either in council or field. Captain, you shall never find me desert you."

"I admire your sagacity, young sir," said Aston; "but I know more than you do, and I know that you are wrong. However, as my brethren judge your advice the best, I am willing to follow it. And henceforth I attach you to me as my page, for a sword you can scarcely wield yet."

Colin's proposal was immediately applauded and adopted. A whistle from the other side of the river announced the vicinity of their associates, who joined them at day-break at a place called Black-meadow ford, all but five men, and thus they advanced straight on to the army, then lying close to the Moray Firth.

Montrose received them with the greatest kindness and affability, but his staff could scarcely refrain from laughter at the bluntness of our hero, when he made his complaint against the Grants, and told how he had been routed by them and had lost sundry brave men. The marquis looked thoughtful and displeased, and sending for Ballindaloch, requested an explanation. That worthy gentleman could give him none, for he saw that he had been duped from a motive of private revenge. Montrose plainly perceived the same, and after some severe general remarks on the way in which the royal army had been distracted by private feuds, he added, "Colonel

Grant, your lieutenant must be punished." And forthwith there was an express sent off to order Nicol Grant's division from the passes of the mountains.

On the 4th of May, 1645, the famous battle of Auldearn was fought. And here I judge it requisite to be a little more particular on the events relating to this battle, than perhaps the thread of my narrative requires, because I am in possession of some information relating to it not possessed by any other person; it was originally taken from the lips of a gentleman who had a subordinate command in the royal army, and may be implicitly relied on. And, moreover, it proves to a certainty the authenticity of this tale.

At this period, then, Sir John Urry, with a well-appointed army of seven powerful regiments of the reformers, had been approaching nigher and nigher to Montrose for some days; while General Baillie, also approaching from the south with an army equal in magnitude and superior in appointment to either of the other two, their intent was to hem in the royal army between them, when they supposed it would fall an easy prey. The noble marquis had resolved to fight each of these armies singly. Still he was quite unprepared, for his clans were scattered all abroad. But it so happened that Murray of Kennet-Haugh, having had a sharp difference with the Laird of Haliburton, and not being able to obtain any redress owing to that hero's great credit with the general, deserted on the following night to the Whigs. He then represented to Sir John Urry that if he wished to gain immortal renown, that this was the time to crush for ever the redoubted Marquis of Montrose. "His strength is reduced to nothing, and certain victory awaiting you," said he. "The Grants are at a distance on a fool's errand. The Stewarts and Murrays of Athol are gone home to protect their own country from pillage. The M'Leans are still as far off as Glen-Orchy, and in eight days the force of Montrose will be doubled by other western clans, that are all on their way to his camp. At present he has nothing to depend on but the regiments of Colkitto and Muidart, for as for the men of Strathbogie they cannot fight at all."

This was Murray's speech, as afterwards rehearsed to the council by Sir John, and with such words as these he stirred up that general, a vain and precipitate man, forthwith to push on and complete the overthrow and ruin of the terrible Montrose. And truly, the circumstances of his army made the opportunity too favourable a one to be overlooked. Indeed, had it not been for the activity and presence of mind of one Mr. Neil Gordon, who rode with all his speed and apprised Montrose, Urry would have taken him completely by surprise. He put his battle in array with all expedition, took the command of the right wing himself, and assigned the left to a brave and irresistible hero, M'Donald of Colkitto. The centre was commanded by John of Muidart, captain of the Clan-Ranald, and the cavalry by Lord Gordon; so says my authority, for the truth of which I can vouch.

Ere this hurried array was fairly completed, the army of the reformers appeared in columns hasting on to the attack. But this Montrose would not risk, for he never suffered his clans to wait an attack, but caused them always to rush on and break or disorder the enemy's ranks at the first onset; and this mode he never had reason to repent. No man that ever led the clans to battle knew their nature and capabilities so well as he did. Captain Aston and his regiment were of course placed under the command of Lord Gordon, and fought on his right hand, and the men of Lewis and Kintail were opposed to them.

It was a hard-fought and bloody battle, and many were slain and wounded on both sides; for the brave M'Donald having a mixture of Irish soldiers, with both Lowlanders and Highlanders in his division, they fought at odds, disdaining to support one another, so that his wing was driven back and very nigh broken to pieces. It was then that the Lord Gordon and his cavalry were hard put to it; their left wing being left exposed, and the M'Kenzies hotly engaged with them in front, mixing with them, and holding them in such dreadful play, that at that period the issue of the battle was not only doubtful but very nigh hopeless on the part of the marquis, for the army of the reformers was mixed with small bodies of archers which galled the cavalry exceedingly.

The path by which M'Donald was compelled to retreat was a narrow rugged one, between a cattle-fold and a steep rocky ascent, part of the inclosure being formed by a rugged impassable ravine. From the side of this burn there was a little green hollow, which at the top could only be ascended by two or three at a time. On reaching this hollow, the Laird of Lawins, with great spirit and judgment, stopped his regiment in the pursuit, and ordered his men to run up that hollow and attack the rear of the Gordons and the men of Mar.

Montrose galloped to an eminence and called to the Earl of Antrim to assist M'Donald, but still this manœuvre by the Laird of Lawins was concealed from his sight, which if it had even but partially succeeded, at that doubtful and dangerous period of the battle, it would have completed the ruin of the royal army. Captain Aston was the very first man who perceived it, and pointed out the danger to the Lord Gordon. The combat with the M'Kenzies being then at the very hottest, Lord Gordon would not stop it, but swearing a great oath that all was ruined if yon dogs were suffered to rally on the height, he wheeled his charger about, and without giving any orders to follow, galloped full speed to the verge of the precipice, where Lawins' men were beginning to appear. Aston and his page Colin followed close to him, and a few others by chance noticed and flew to the assistance of their brave young lord. He was

indeed a perfect hero, so careering full drive upon the few who had gained a footing on the height, asked what they were seeking there; but without waiting for a reply, he struck the lieutenant that led them in the throat with his spear with such force, that the point of the weapon went out at the back of his shoulder. He was a gentleman of gigantic size, and on receiving the wound he made such a tremendous spring over the precipice, bolting headlong down among his followers, that he overthrew many more, and greatly marred the ascent at that critical moment. Captain Aston seconded his leader's efforts with equal if not superior might, and the page, though he never drew his sword, shot two of the enemy dead with his pistols.

Montrose, who had the eye of the eagle, beheld this gallant action, and asked Alexander Og, who stood next him, if ever an army could be defeated which contained such men! And Alexander answered, "With fair play, my lord, it never will." M'Donald also perceived the dismay wrought among his enemies, principally by the might of two individuals, and he said to the gentlemen around him who had taken shelter in the fold, "What, shall we stand here and see Lord Gordon win the battle with his own hand?" He instantly led his motley array back to the combat, on which Lawins' regiment was forced to retreat in its turn. Montrose at the same time causing his wing to close with the enemy, in half an hour after the rout became general; and every leader acknowledged that the gallant and desperate defence made by Lord Gordon and Captain Peter Aston had turned the fortune of the day. It was the hinge, or rather pivot, on which the fate of the battle turned;—on such small incidents often hang the fates of kingdoms and armies.

My authority says that Sir John Urry's plan was a good one, and boldly executed. He brought the whole strength of his array to bear upon Montrose's left wing, in order to turn the flank of the strong centre division. He had gained his point so far; and if that regiment had fairly obtained a footing on the height in the rear of the horse and the Clan-Ranalds, it is quite evident that ruin to the royalists was inevitable—which two determined heroes alone prevented. While their regiments were still struggling with enemies behind and enemies before, they heard a great shout; and on looking round, they beheld the Kintail men scouring up the rising ground, like so many frighted kyloes galloping before their pursuers. Seaforth tried with all his power to rally them, but in vain, and immediately after he perceived his Lewis regiment coming full speed in the same direction. He then lost all patience, and galloped in amongst them, threatening to cut down every man who would not turn and face the enemy; but his efforts were fruitless, for the Gordons and Mar horsemen were hacking them down behind. The Lord Gordon espied his adversary, and rode up to him, accosting him thus: "Traitor, thou hast betrayed the cause which thou hadst sworn to defend. Dost thou not see the justice of God pursuing thee!"

"Art thou the justice of God, my lord!" said Seaforth. "If so, it shall pursue me no farther." On saying which he rode at young Huntly with his spear. The latter met his career with equal promptitude, and the struggle was very sharp between them for three minutes' space. At that instant three brethren, gentlemen of Lewis's, of the name of M'Lellan, came to their lord's rescue; and time was it, for Lord Gordon had both him and his horse rolling in the mud. The M'Lellans however defended their lord gallantly, got him again on horseback, and fled with him. Aston was too late for this scuffle, but he pursued after Lord Seaforth as far as a place called Ardrier, on the road to Inverness, and got so nigh to him at the bridge of the Nairn, that he struck at him and wounded his horse, and it was with the greatest difficulty his lordship escaped. Captain Aston, however, returned with many gallant prisoners.

Such was the issue of this hard-fought battle, and on these particulars the reader may rely as authentic. It was the absence of the Grants that brought it on, and a few heroic individuals that turned the fate of the day when it was on the eve of being lost. There was a happy and joyful meeting among those heroes. Two of the M'Donalds were knighted in the field, and Captain Aston was raised to the rank of colonel, besides being presented with a gold-mounted sword from the noble marquis's own hand, and publicly thanked in his majesty's name.

Nicol Grant, to whom an express had been sent by his colonel, arrived in the camp the day after the battle and was instantly called to account before the general. A very bungling account he attempted at first to make of it; but on back-questioning with regard to other proofs his proud and unbridled spirit rose, and he owned his hatred of the leader, and his purpose of yet being revenged on him. Montrose pronounced such a fellow incapable of any more serving his majesty, and caused his sword to be broken over his right arm, and himself cashiered and banished the camp, with orders no more to approach it on pain of being shot.

It now seemed as if everything in nature combined to agonize the heart of Nicol Grant, but this was the unkindest thrust of all; his abhorred rival thus advanced, and himself publicly disgraced and debased for ever. His breast again burned with untameable vengeance, and once more he kneeled on the sward, and with clenched teeth and hands swore eternal vengeance on the abhorred wretch that was born for his debasement. He retired into concealment, he and his friend John of Lurg, who attached himself to all his fortunes, and watched for an opportunity of assassinating Colonel Aston. No such opportunity offering, and the army at length moving southward laden with spoil, Montrose crossed the Spey into Banffshire, and set up his head-quarters

at the house of Birken-Bog, while the rest of his army were cantoned in the towns and villages around him. Colonel Aston with his Brae-Mar cavalry were despatched up to Glen-Fiddich, for the sake of the best forage; and here he encamped in a handsome tent taken from the Whigs, with his soldiers around him. His page Colin never quitted him. He would sometimes take a nap in his master's tent by day, but he watched every night along with the patrol, and was beloved by every one for his kindness and affability; but whenever he saw any straggling Highlander hovering about or entering the camp, he was the first to make up to him, inquire his business, and warn him off.

So one evening late he perceived the tall rugged form of John of Lurg approaching Colonel Aston's tent, and straight the stripling made up to him and withstood him. "What do you want, sir?" said he; "and whom seek you here?"

"Och-hon and hersel just pe wanting a von singil worts with te captain."

The youth answered in Gaelic, "Know you so little of the regulations of your sovereign's army, sir, and of the orders issued by our general, as to make such a demand?—a demand the complying with which would cost me my life. Return to the outpost instantly, before I cause you to be arrested; tell your name and commission to him; from him I will transmit it to our colonel; but for your life dare not to come within the outposts till the message be returned."

"On my troth," said the rough Highlander, in the same language, "you are, for a stripling, ane strick disciplinarian! Are you of a gentleman, boy?"

"I am, sir: and he who calls me less shall not do it with impunity," presenting a horse-pistol at him. "Retire instantly. Make good your retreat beyond our outposts, else here goes. But while I remember to ask, and you have life to answer, how did you get within them?"

"Och-hon, just te pest way she coult. Teal mor pe in te poy, fwat a weazel of termagant ting she pe! She pe tell you fwat, young man: since you should pe a shentlemans, she would rather pe telling her message to you tan te post. Will you then, as a mhan of honour, pear Mr. Nicol Graunt's challenge and defiances to your captain, or colonel as you pe plaised to call him, and tell him tat he and mine own self, Jhon Craunt, of Lurg, will fight him to-mhorrow, and te pest mhan in all your army; and if he'll be so coot as name his hour and place. Fwat do you start at agunach? pe you afrait of ploot? Hoo! put tere mhost pe ploot, and heart's ploot too. Teliver tis mhessage, poy, as may pe a shentlemans."

"And dare you try, sir, to make me the bearer of treason, to raise new feuds among the clans, which our lord-lieutenant has been at such pains to put down? I can tell you your head is in forfeit; for the general is well aware of this treason, which was avowed to his face. But that I am a Highlander myself, and related to the Grants, I would have you beheaded by to-morrow's sun-rising. But I will not disclose this: only go instantly to your den in Glen-Bilg, else if our scouts find you to-morrow, you and all concerned in this vile plot are dead men. Sentinels! attend here!" shouted he with a loud voice.

"Och-hon! te creat big teil is in tis cursed poy! Hold your pay-hay for a mhoment, my tear, till she hexplain. Och! plagues be upon her—here comes te Mhar tragoons."

"John Farquharson, you are the captain of the guard for the night," cried the page. "Take this suspicious fellow and convey him without the limits of our camp, and if ever any of you see him again, shoot him—or any of these malevolent deer-stalkers of the forest."

"That we shall, Colin," said the guard, "with better will than ever we shot a stag." Lurg held his peace, and was obliged to submit. They took him to the outpost on the banks of the Fiddich, gave him the bastinado, and pushed him into the river.

"She haif purnt her tongue sipping oder people's khail," said Lurg; "put she shall purn te saul, and te pody, and te heart's ploot of te captain tat ordered tis."

Colin never told his colonel a word about this challenge, and therefore the latter lived in perfect security. But on the second day or the third after this, he got a note from Montrose, requesting him, as his was the outermost station, to send out messengers, and keep a good watch for the return of the Athol men and the M'Leans, who he knew were on their way to join the camp, and he was afraid they might be waylaid by some of the Whigs. Colonel Aston, certain that the clans would return by the forest paths, placed wardens with bugles on every height from the sources of the Tilt to Belrinnes, who were to warn him of their approach. The bugles had never yet sounded; and one day Colonel Aston said to two gentlemen with whom he was walking, "What would you think of a walk to the top of Belrinnes this fine day, to get the news from our warder and see the hills of the Dee?" The names of these two gentlemen were John Finlayson and Alexander Duff. They acquiesced at once, and Colin, who never quitted his master, accompanied them. They reached the top of the hill about noon. The warder had *thought* he had heard a bugle from the south-west that morning, but he had heard no more; but he was assured the clans were coming. Nevertheless, the two gentlemen noted that their colonel's eyes were always fixed in another direction. "Why do you strain your eyes so much in that direction, sir?" said Duff.

"O! I am just looking toward my own beloved hills of the Dee," said he. "But tell me, for you should know that country, is yon Loch-Bilg that we see?"

"Oh, I cannot think it, sir," said Duff. "It is too far to the south; Loch-Bilg should be westerly."

"Begging your pardon, sir," said Colin Ray, as they called him, "yon is Loch-Bilg. Look you, yonder is a small part of Ben-M'Drei westernmost, the king of the Grampians. Then yon next is Benni-Bourd, and that opposite us is Ben-Aven, so yon must be a glimpse of the waters of Loch-Bilg."

"You are quite right, boy," said Colonel Aston: "I know them all as well now as I do the fingers on my right hand. And yon is Glen-Bilg. How I should like to be yonder to-night."

"And I wish I were with you," said the boy.

Colonel Aston was astounded at the soft and serious tone in which these few words were said. He turned and looked with such intenseness on the boy, that his associates wondered. What he thought, or what he felt at that moment is a secret, and ever must remain so. He spoke little more all that day, but seemed wrapped up in some confused and doubtful hallucinations. They lingered on the top of the hill, for the days were long, it being then May, and the weather delightful. Towards evening they descended to their post on the banks of the Fiddich, but many a look Colonel Aston took of his page, with the long matted black hair hanging about his ears, but for what reason was not known. He continued still silent and thoughtful. At length the page accosting him, said, "Sir, had we not better keep the open country down the ridge of Ard-Nethy, and not go by the pass to-night?"

"I care not though we do, Colin," said the colonel.

"It is more than two miles about," said Duff.

"Nay, it is half-a-dozen," said Finlayson. "Nonsense! the boy is afraid of spirits in the pass."

"Yes, sir, I am," said Colin; "I have an eye that can discern spirits where yours cannot. I beg of you, dear colonel, to humour me in this, and do not go by the pass to-night."

"With all my heart, Colin, I will go a few miles about to humour your superstitious fears. With all my heart, boy."

The other gentlemen laughed aloud at this, and swore they would go by the nearest path, though all the devils of hell were there; so the colonel too was obliged to laugh and join them, and Colin followed behind, weeping. As they proceeded through the pass that brought them to the valley of Fiddich, Colin touched his master's arm, and pointed out to him three men who were whispering together, and seemed to be waylaying them. "You would not take my way to the camp, sir," said the youth sobbing, "do you see who are yonder?" Aston knew them too well. The party consisted of Nicol Grant, John of Lurg, and one Charles Grant, younger, of Aikenway, as determined a deer-stalker as any of the other two. "I could not have believed," said Aston, "in aught so ungenerous and malevolent in human nature as this! Gentlemen, it would appear that we will be obliged to fight our way here."

"So much the better," said Duff. "They are only three to three, or rather three to four; for this brave boy will bring down one in a pinch. Who can they be, for those fellows are not in the least like covenanters! Katerans, I suppose, let us have at them."

"Draw your swords," said the colonel; "but if they do not challenge us, take no note of them." The gentlemen did so; but though men of high spirit and courage, they had never been accustomed to war or danger. The three drew their swords and marched boldly on. The three Grants drew up in the pass before them. "Slave! upstart! poltroon!" roared Nicol Grant. "I sent you my challenge and defiance, from which you skulked. I have you now! Stand to your defences."

"Vile, ungrateful charlatan," exclaimed Colonel Aston; "you know that you are no better than a child under my brand; but you know from experience, that I will not harm your life; therefore you take the coward's part, and dare me in safety. Do your worst, I defy you; but as for these gentlemen, who are of so much value in the king's service, let them and your two friends merely stand as judges of the combat."

"I will either fight or kill one or both of them," said John of Lurg.

"Three to three, if you dare, for the blood and the souls that are within you!" said young Aikenway.

The two gentlemen of the Garioch, Duff and Finlayson, advanced boldly, although little used to wield their swords, so that the three veteran Grants had a decided though unacknowledged advantage.

The combat began with the most deadly intent on the one side at least, and at the second turn, Duff received a wound from a back stroke aslant the breast, from the point of Lurg's sword, which brought him down. Finlayson fought most courageously, but finding himself unequal to Charles Grant of Aikenway with the claymore, he closed with him at the risk of his life. After a deadly struggle, they both went down wounded, but they still held firm by each other with the most determined grasps. They tried again and again who to rise first, but Finlayson was the most powerful man, and after a long and hard struggle, he gave Charles Grant such a blow with the hilt of his sword, that it stunned him, but yet, for all that he could do, he could not get out of his grasp. They rolled over and over each other till they tumbled over the bank into the river, when Finlayson fell uppermost, and held his opponent down till he fairly drowned him, which he very quickly effected, for he was wounded and out of breath; but to make sure he run him through the heart, and then let him float his way; for all that, he continued for some time to splash feebly with his arms, and make attempts to rise, although the whole river ran red with his blood, so tenacious is a Highlander of life. At length he came upon an

abrupt rock, which stopped him, and there he lay moving backwards and forwards with the torrent, a ghastly bleeding corpse.

Although the description of this deadly struggle occupies a considerable space, it was nevertheless very short, and when John Finlayson beheld his colonel fighting with odds, he attempted to rise and haste to the rescue, but to his sorrow he found that he could not, for his limb had been dislocated either in the struggle or the fall from the bank, and there he was obliged to lie reclining on some dry rocks, and witness the unequal contest. He lived long after to give an account of this, and often declared that such a gallant and desperate defence never was made by man. Nicol Grant and Lurg were both upon him, and both thirsting for his blood, yet such was his strength and agility, that he kept them both at play for the space of ten minutes without receiving a single wound; while Grant, from his furious impetuosity, was wounded twice. The colonel always fought retreating, bounding first to the one side and then to the other, while they durst not for a moment separate, for they found that, single-handed, they were nothing to him. At length they drove him to the point of the valley, where a ledge of rock met the precipitate bank of the river, and then he had nothing for it but to fight it out against the two swords with his back to the rock; and then, indeed, they dealt him several wounds, though none of them deadly.

In the heat of this last mortal combat, their ears were all at once astounded by a loud shriek of horror which came from the top of the rock immediately above them, where the page Colin and two countrymen that instant appeared, and the former darted from the precipice swifter than a shooting star, and rushed between the swords of the combatants, spreading out his arms, screaming, and staring in maniac wise, at the same time uttering words which neither of the parties comprehended, taking them for the words of raving and madness. Aston was all over covered with blood, but still fighting like a lion when this interruption took place; Nicol Grant, too, was bleeding and sorely exhausted, but the furious Lurg, perceiving the two countrymen hasting round the rock, rushed in upon the gallant youth, and closed with him, and the struggle for about half a minute was very hard; but then Aston made his opponent's sword twirl into the river, and clove his left shoulder to the chest. "Take that, cowardly ruffian, for your unfair and unmanly conduct!" cried he; and John of Lurg tumbled headlong into the river, where he lay grovelling with his head down and his feet up.

During this last struggle, Nicol Grant, seeing that the last stake for executing his hideous purpose of revenge was on the eve of being lost for ever, made a fierce effort to reach Colonel Aston's side; but the youth Colin seized his arm, struggled with, and prevented him, crying out, "O, for the love of Christ! for your own soul's sake, and for the sake of your only child, forbear! forbear! desist!"

But in the mania of rage he would not listen. He threw down the youth, uttered a bitter curse upon him, ran him through the body, and flew now to the unequal combat. "Old ruffian," exclaimed Aston, "I have vowed to spare your life, and *have* spared it ere now, but after such a deed as this——" Aston heaved his heavy sword, his teeth were clenched, the blood dropped from his eye-brows, and the furious gleams of rage glanced from between the drops of blood. That lifted stroke had cleft the old barbarian to the heart, had not these chilling words ascended in a shriek, "Spare! O spare my old father."

Both their swords dropped at the same moment, and they turned their eyes on the prostrate and bleeding youth from whom the words proceeded. They gazed and remained mute till they again heard these killing words, uttered in a sweet but feeble voice, "I am Marsali. I have overcome much to save both your lives, and have effected it. Yes! thanks be to God! I have effected it now, but have lost my own! O! my poor wretched old father! What *is* to become of you?"

Colonel Aston could not utter a word. His bloody face was in an instant all suffused with tears, and he then, for the first time, recollected his thrilling suspicions regarding her identity on the top of the hill of Belrinnes. He lifted her in his arms and carried her softly to the side of the river, and gave her a drink out of the hilt of his sword. Her blue bonnet with its plumes dropped into the river, and down flowed the lovely chestnut locks of Marsali. She drank plentifully, said she was better, and begged to be laid down at her ease upon the sward. Her lover complied, and then, at her request, opened her vest and examined her wound. Never was there seen so piteous a sight! So fair a bosom striped with its own heart's blood, and that blood shed by the reckless hand of a father! Homely phrase cannot describe a sight so moving, and all who beheld it were in agonies. The two countrymen whom she had brought to separate the combatants, could comprehend nothing, but stood and gazed in mute astonishment.

Old Nicol Grant only saw matters darkly, as through a glass, but he saw them in a distorted and exaggerated view. He sat upon a stone, throbbing deeply and awfully, and sometimes growling out a curse in his rude native tongue, and muttering in his breast something about sorcery. At last, as the scene between the lovers became more and more affecting, his passion grew to a sort of madness, and had the two armed countrymen not marked his intent and restrained him, he would have immolated the brave youth without once warning him.

Poor Marsali continued to assure her lover that she was getting a little better, and would soon be quite well; but alas! the blanched roses on her

cheek, the pallid lip, and the languid eye, spoke a different language, while the frequent falling tear proclaimed the heart's consciousness of approaching dissolution. Perceiving the dark looks of her father, she intreated him to come near her and give her his hand; but through grief and rage he shook like an aspen, and only answered her by thrusting his hand in his bosom.

"What! my dear father," said she feebly, "will you not come nigh me that we may exchange forgiveness? And surely you will give me a farewell kiss, and not suffer your poor murdered Marsali to leave this world without your blessing?"

The old barbarian uttered something between a neigh and a groan, hung down his head, and wept bitterly; yea, till the howls of sorrow that he uttered became absolutely heart-rending.

"God of mercy and forgiveness, pity my poor distracted parent, and preserve his reason," cried Marsali, lifting her eyes and her hands to heaven.

Her father then made an attempt to come to her, but felt himself incapable, for he could only bend his looks on the man he hated—the curse of him and of his race, and those looks expressed in language the most intense, how impossible it was for those two to accord, even in an act of pity and commiseration; so he retreated again to his stone, and sat groaning.

But this scene of sorrow was fast wearing to a close, Marsali lifted up her eyes painfully to her lover's. "The thing that I dreaded has come at last, hard as I have striven to prevent it," said she; "O Aston! are you not sorry to part with me so soon?"

"Talk of living or dying as you please, beloved Marsali," said he; "but never talk of parting with you, for where thou goest I will go; for I find the world that wants thee would be to me a world of defeat and darkness, and that which has thee, a world of victory and light. Till this hour I never dreamed what the affection of woman was capable of enduring, but having found one dear instance, I shall never look for another below the sun. O, I should like to have my arms around thee, Marsali, even in death, and in the grave to sleep with thee in some remote corner of the wilderness."

While he yet spoke, the dying maid embraced his neck, and again sunk back on the green; and he heard these heart-piercing words syllabled in a soft whisper—"Farewell!—Kiss me!" It was a last effort; Marsali closed her eyes like one going to sleep, and breathed her last.

Old Grant's irremediable loss now burst full on him, and was expressed in the most passionate sublimity. "O! is she gone! is she gone!" cried he. "Is my darling, my orphan Marsali gone, and left me for ever? No, it cannot be, for she was my all!—My hawk and my hound!—my bow and my arrow—my hands and my feet! The sight of my eyes, and the life of my soul! and without whom I am nothing! God of justice! where are thy bolts of vengeance that thou dost not launch them at a guilty father's head?"

But unable to endure the sight of his abhorred enemy kissing the lips of his dead child and weeping over her, the old man fled from the scene with rapid but faltering steps, and roaring and howling, he sought the thickest part of the forest and vanished.

John Finlayson then called to the two countrymen, who lifted him from his rocky bed and laid him on the green, until the arrival of the camp litters. He lived to an old age, but was lame till the day of his death.

The body of Marsali was at Colonel Aston's request carried into his own tent, where he watched it day and night, weeping over it, and refusing all sustenance. On the morning of the third day, he was found bleeding to death on the floor of his tent, and the body removed. The only words that he spoke after his attendants entered were—"They have taken *her* away."

An express was sent to the marquis, who was soon at the spot. A body of the Grants, who were the patrol for the first watch of the night, were missing. Montrose ordered a hasty pursuit, but as well might he have tried to trace the fox without the hounds, as to trace a party of a clan when the rest are true. The men escaped, but no one doubted that at the last Nicol Grant had got his vengeance sated, and had murdered the brave Colonel Aston. A horrible, bearded, naked maniac, for some time after that, haunted the forest of Glen-Avon:—it was Nicol Grant, whose bones were at last found on the heath.

Colonel Aston died before noon on the day he was found wounded, deeply lamented by all who knew him, and by none more than his noble general.

GORDON THE GIPSY.

It has been tritely, because truly said, that the boldest efforts of human imagination cannot exceed the romance of real life. The best-written tale is not that which most resembles the ordinary chain of events and characters, but that which, by selecting and combining them, conceals those inconsistencies and deficiencies that leave, in real life, our sense of sight unsatisfied. An author delights his reader when he exhibits incidents distinctly and naturally according with moral justice; his portraits delight us when they resemble our fellow-creatures, without too accurately tracing their moles and blemishes. This elegant delight is the breathing of a purer spirit within us, that asserts its claim to a nobler and more perfect state; yet another, though an austerer kind of pleasure, arises, when we consider how much of the divinity appears even in man's most erring state, and how much of "goodliness in evil."

In one of those drear midnights that were so awful to travellers in the Highlands soon after 1745, a man wrapped in a large coarse plaid, strode from a stone ridge on the border of Loch Lomond into a boat which he had drawn from its covert. He rowed resolutely and alone, looking carefully to the right and left, till he suffered the tide to bear his little bark into a gorge or gulf, so narrow, deep, and dark, that no escape but death seemed to await him. Precipices, rugged with dwarf shrubs and broken granite, rose more than a hundred feet on each side, sundered only by the stream, which a thirsty season had reduced to a sluggish and shallow pool. Then poising himself erect on his staff, the boatman drew three times the end of a strong chain which hung among the underwood. In a few minutes a basket descended from the pinnacle of the cliff, and having moored his boat, he placed himself in the wicker carriage, and was safely drawn into a crevice high in the wall of rock, where he disappeared.

The boat was moored, but the adventurer had not observed that it contained another passenger. Underneath a plank laid artfully along its bottom, and shrouded in a plaid of the darkest grain, another man had been lurking more than an hour before the owner of the boat entered it, and remained hidden by the darkness of the night. His purpose was answered. He had now discovered what he had sacrificed many perilous nights to obtain, a knowledge of the mode by which the owner of Drummond's Keep gained access to his impregnable fortress unsuspected. He instantly unmoored the boat, and rowed slowly back across the loch to an island near the centre. He rested on his oars, and looked down on its transparent water.—"It is there still," he said to himself: and drawing close among the rocks, leaped on dry land. A dog of the true shepherd's breed sat waiting under the bushes, and ran before him till they descended together under an archway of stones and withered branches. "Watch the boat!" said the Highlander to his faithful guide, who sprang immediately away to obey him. Meanwhile his master lifted up one of the gray stones, took a bundle from underneath it, and equipped himself in such a suit as a trooper of Cameron's regiment usually wore, looked at the edge of his dirk, and returned to his boat.

That island had once belonged to the heritage of the Gordons, whose ancient family, urged by old prejudices and hereditary courage, had been foremost in the ill-managed rebellion of 1715. One of the clan of Argyle then watched a favourable opportunity to betray the laird's secret movements, and was commissioned to arrest him. Under pretence of friendship he gained entrance to his stronghold in the isle, and concealed a posse of the king's soldiers at Gordon's door. The unfortunate laird leaped from his window into the lake, and his false friend seeing his desperate efforts threw him a rope, as if in kindness to support him, while a boat came near. "That rope was meant for my neck," said Gordon, "and I leave it for a traitor's." With these bitter words he sank. Cameron saw him, and the pangs of remorse came into his heart. He leaped himself into a boat, put an oar towards his drowning friend with real oaths of fidelity, but Gordon pushed it from him, and abandoned himself to death. The waters of the lake are singularly transparent near that isle, and Cameron beheld his victim gradually sinking, till he seemed to lie among the broad weeds under the waters. Once, only once, he saw, or thought he saw him lift his hand as if to reach his, and that dying hand never left his remembrance. Cameron received the lands of the Gordon as a recompense for his political services, and with them the tower called Drummond's Keep, then standing on the edge of a hideous defile, formed by two walls of rock beside the lake. But from that day he had never been seen to cross the loch except in darkness, or to go abroad without armed men. He had been informed that Gordon's only son, made desperate by the ruin of his father and the Stuart cause, had become the

leader of a gipsy gang,[1] the most numerous and savage of the many that haunted Scotland. He was not deceived. Andrew Gordon, with a body of most athletic composition, a spirit sharpened by injuries, and the vigorous genius created by necessity, had assumed dominion over two hundred ruffians, whose exploits in driving off cattle, cutting drover's purses, and removing the goods brought to fairs or markets, were performed with all the audacious regularity of privileged and disciplined thieves. Cameron was the chosen and constant object of their vengeance. His keep or tower was of the true Scottish fabric, divided into three chambers; the highest of which was the dormitory, the second or middle served as a general refectory, and the lowest contained his cattle, which required this lodgment at night, or very few would have been found next morning. His enemy frequented the fairs on the north side of Forth, well mounted, paying at inns and ferries like a gentleman, and attended by bands of gillies or young pupils, whose green coats, cudgels, and knives, were sufficiently feared by the visitors of Queensferry and Dunfermline. The gipsy chieftain had also a grim cur of the true black-faced breed, famous for collecting and driving off sheep, and therefore distinguished by his own name. In the darkest cleughs or ravines, or in the deepest snow, this faithful animal had never been known to abandon the stolen flock intrusted to his care, or to fail in tracing a fugitive. But as sight and strength failed him, the four-footed chieftain was deposed, imprisoned in a byre loft, and finally sentenced to be drowned. From this trifling incident arose the most material crisis of his patron's fate.

Between the years of 1715 and 1745, many changes occurred in Captain Gordon and his enemy. The Laird of Drummond Keep had lost his only son in the battle of Prestonpans, and was now lingering in a desolate old age, mistrusted by the government, and abhorred by the subdued Jacobites. Gordon's banded marauders had provoked the laws too far, and some sanguinary battles among themselves threatened the downfall of his own power. It was only a few nights after a desperate affray with the Linlithgow gipsies, that the event occurred which begins my narrative. He had been long lying in ambush to find access to his enemy's stronghold, intending to terminate his vagrant career by an exploit which should satisfy his avarice and his revenge.

[1] The Lochgellie and Linlithgow gipsies were very distinguished towards the middle of the last century, and had desperate fights at Raploch, near Stirling, and in the shire of Mearns. Lizzy Brown and Ann M'Donald were the leading Amazonians of these tribes, and their authority and skill in training boys to thievery were audaciously systematic. As the poor of Scotland derive their maintenance from usage rather than law, and chiefly from funds collected at the church-door, or small assessments on heritors (never exceeding twopence in the pound), a set of vagrants still depend on voluntary aid, and are suffered to obtain it by going from house to house in families or groups, with a little of the costume, and a great deal of the cant and thievery of ancient gipsies.

Equipped, as I have said, in a Cameronian trooper's garb, he returned to the foot of the cliff from whence he had seen the basket descending to convey Gavin Cameron; and climbing up its rough face with the activity required by mountain warfare, he hung among furze and broken rocks like a wild cat, till he found the crevice through which the basket had seemed to issue. It was artfully concealed by tufts of heather; but creeping on his hands and knees, he forced his way into the interior. There the deepest darkness confounded him, till he laid his hand on a chain, which he rightly guessed to be the same he had seen hanging on the side of the lake when Cameron landed. One end was coiled up, but he readily concluded that the end must have some communication with the keep, and he followed its course till he found it inserted in what seemed a subterraneous wall. A crevice behind the pulley admitted a gleam of light, and striving to raise himself sufficiently to gain a view through it, he leaned too forcibly on the chain, which sounded a bell. Its unexpected sound would have startled an adventurer less daring, but Gordon had prepared his stratagem, and had seen, through the loophole in the wall, that no powerful enemy was to be dreaded. Gavin Cameron was sitting alone in the chamber within, with his eyes fixed on the wood-ashes in his immense hearth. At the hollow sound of the bell he cast them fearfully round, but made no attempt to rise, though he stretched his hand towards a staff which lay near him. Gordon saw the tremor of palsy and dismay in his limbs, and putting his lips to the crevice, repeated, "father!" in a low and supplicating tone. That word made Gavin shudder; but when Gordon added, "Father! father! save me!" he sprang to the wall, drew back the iron bolts of a narrow door invisible to any eye but his own, and gave admission to the muffled man, who leaped eagerly in. Thirty years had passed since Gavin Cameron had seen his son, and Gordon well knew how many rumours had been spread that the younger Cameron had not really perished, though the ruin of the Chevalier's cause rendered his concealment necessary. Gavin's hopes and love had been all revived by these rumours, and the sudden apparition, the voice, the appeal for mercy, had full effect on the bereaved father's imagination. The voice, eyes, and figure of Gordon resembled his son; all else might and must be changed by thirty years. He wept like an infant on his shoulder, grasped his hand a hundred times, and forgot to blame him for the rash disloyalty he had shown to his father's cause. His pretended son told him a few strange events which had befallen him during his long banishment since 1715, and was spared the toil of inventing many, by the fond delight of the old man, weeping and rejoicing over his prodigal restored. He only asked by what happy chance he had discovered his secret entrance, and whether any present danger threatened him. Gordon answered the first question with the mere truth,

and added, almost truly, that he feared nothing but the emissaries of the government, from whom he could not be better concealed than in Drummond Keep. Old Cameron agreed with joyful eagerness, but presently said, "Allan, my boy, we must trust Annet; she's too near kin to betray ye, and ye were to have been her spouse." Then he explained that his niece was the only person in his household acquainted with the basket and the bell; that by her help he could provide a mattress and provisions for his son, but without it would be forced to hazard the most dangerous inconveniences. Gordon had not foreseen this proposal, and it darkened his countenance; but in another instant his imagination seized on a rich surfeit of revenge. He was commanded to return into the cavern passage, while his nominal father prepared his kinswoman for her new guest, and he listened greedily to catch the answers Annet gave to her deceived uncle's tale. He heard the hurry of her steps, preparing, as he supposed, a larger supper for the old laird's table, with the simplicity and hospitality of a Highland maiden. He was not mistaken. When the bannocks, and grouse, and claret were arranged, Cameron presented his restored son to the mistress of the feast. Gordon was pale and dumb as he looked upon her. Accustomed to the wild haggard forms that accompanied his banditti in half-female attire, ruling their miserable offspring with iron hands and the voices of giants, his diseased fancy had fed itself on an idea of something beautiful, but only in bloom and youth. He expected and hoped to see a child full of playful folly, fit for him to steal away and hide in his den as a sport for his secret leisure; but a creature so fair, calm, and saintly, he had long since forgotten how to imagine. She came before him like a dream of some lovely picture remembered in his youth, and with her came some remembrance of his former self. The good old laird, forgetting that his niece had been but a child, and his son a stripling, when they parted, indulged the joy of his heart by asking Annet a thousand times, whether she could have remembered her betrothed husband, and urging his son, since he was still unmarried, to pledge his promised bride. Gordon was silent from a feeling so new, that he could not comprehend his own purposes; and Annet from fear, when she observed the darkness and the fire that came by turns into her kinsman's face. But there was yet another peril to encounter. Cameron's large hearth was attended by a dog, which roused itself when supper appeared, and Gordon instantly recognized his banished favourite. Black Chieftain fixed his eyes on his former master, and with a growl that delighted him more than any caresses would have done, remained sulkily by the fire. On the other side of the ingle, under the shelter of the huge chimney-arch, sat a thing hardly human, but entitled, from extreme old age, to the protection of the owner. This was a woman bent entirely double, with no apparent sense of sight or hearing, though her eyes were fixed on the spindle she was twirling; and sometimes when the laird raised his voice, she put her lean hand on the curch or hood that covered her ears. "Do you not remember poor old Marian Moome?"[1] said Annet, and the laird led his supposed son towards the superannuated crone, though without expecting any mark of recognition. Whether she had noticed anything that had passed, could not be judged from her laugh; and she had almost ceased to speak. Therefore, as if only dumb domestic animals had been sitting by his hearth, Cameron pursued his arrangements for his son's safety, advising him to sleep composedly in the wooden panelled bed that formed a closet of this chamber, without regarding the half-living skeleton, who never left the corner of the ingle. He gave him his blessing, and departed, taking with him his niece and the key of this dreary room, promising to return and watch by his side. He came back in a few moments, and while the impostor crouched himself on his mattress, took his station again by the fire, and fell asleep, overcome with joy and fatigue.

The embers went out by degrees, while the Highland Jachimo lay meditating how he should prosper by his stratagem's success. Plunder and bloodshed had formed no part of a scheme which included far deeper craft and finer revenge. He knew his life was forfeit, and his person traced by officers of justice; and he hoped, by representing himself as the son of Cameron, to secure all the benefits of his influence, and the sanctuary of his roof; and if both should fail to save him from justice, the disgrace of his infamous life and death would fall on the family of his father's murderer. So from his earliest youth he had considered Cameron: and the hand of that drowned father uplifted in vain for help, was always present to his imagination. Once, during this night, he had thought of robbing Cameron of his money and jewels by force, and carrying off his niece, as a hostage for his safety. But this part of his purpose had been deadened by a new and strange sense of holiness in beauty, which had made his nature human again. He thought of himself with bitterness and ire, when he compared her sweet society, her uncle's kindness, and the comforts of a domestic hearth, with the herd which he now resembled; and this self-hatred stung him to rise and depart without molesting them. He was prevented by the motion of a shadow on the opposite wall, and in an instant the dog, who had so sullenly shunned his notice, leaped from beneath his bed, and seized the throat of the hag as she crept near it. She had taken her sleeping master's dirk, and would have used it like a faithful Highland servant, if Black Chieftain's fangs had not interposed to rescue Gordon. The broad copper broach which fastened her plaid saved her from suffocation, and clapping her hands she yelled, "A Gordon! a Gordon!" till the roof rung.

[1] Nurse or foster-mother.

Gavin Cameron awoke, and ran to his supposed son's aid, but the mischief was done. The doors of the huge chamber were broken open, and a troop of men in the king's uniform, and two messengers with official staves, burst in together. These people had been sent by the lord provost in quest of the gipsy chieftain, with authority to demand quarters in Drummond's Tower, near which they knew he had hiding-places. Gordon saw he had plunged into the very nest of his enemies, but his daring courage supported him. He refused to answer to the name of Gordon, and persisted in calling himself Cameron's son. He was carried before the high court of justiciary, and the importance of the indictment fixed the most eager attention on his trial. Considering the celebrity, the length, and the publicity of the gipsy chief's career, it was thought his person would have been instantly identified; but the craft he had used in tinging his hair, complexion, and eyebrows, and altering his whole appearance, to resemble Cameron's son, baffled the many who appeared as his accusers. So much had Gordon attached his colleagues, or so strong was the Spartan spirit of fidelity and obedience amongst them, that not one appeared to testify against him. Gavin Cameron and his niece were cited to give their evidence on oath; and the miserable father, whatever doubts might secretly arise in his mind, dared not hazard a denial which might sacrifice his own son's life. He answered in an agony which his gray hairs made venerable, that he believed the accused to be his son, but left it to himself to prove what he had no means of manifesting. Annet was called next to confirm her uncle's account of her cousin's mysterious arrival; but when the accused turned his eyes upon her, she fainted, and could not be recalled to speech. This swoon was deemed the most affecting evidence of his identity; and, finally, the dog was brought into court. Several witnesses recognized him as the prime forager of the Gordon gipsies; but Cameron's steward, who swore that he saved him by chance from drowning in the loch, also proved, that the animal never showed the smallest sagacity in herding sheep, and had been kept by his master's fireside as a mere household guard, distinguished by his ludicrous attention to music. When shown at the bar, the crafty and conscious brute seemed wholly unacquainted with the prisoner, and his surly silence was received as evidence by the crowd. The lord high commissioner summed up the whole, and the chancellor of the jury declared that a majority almost amounting to unanimity acquitted the accused. Gordon, under the name of Cameron, was led from the bar with acclamations; but at the threshold of the session's court, another pursuivant awaited him with an arrest for high treason, as an adherent to the Pretender in arms. The eagerest crowd would have rescued him by force, and made outcries which he silenced with a haughty air of command, desiring to be led back to his judges. He insisted in such cool and firm language, and his countenance had in it such a rare authority, that after some dispute about the breach of official order, he was admitted into a room where two or three of the chief lords of session, and the chancellor of the jury, were assembled. Though still in chains both on hands and feet, he stood before them in an attitude of singular grace, and made this speech as it appears in the language of the record:—

"The people abroad would befriend me, because they love the cause they think I have served; and my judges, I take leave to think, would pity me, if they saw an old man and a tender woman pleading again for my life. But I will profit in nothing by my judge's pity, nor the people's love for a Cameron. I have triumphed enough to-day, since I have baffled both my accusers and my jury. I am Gordon, chief of the wandering tribes; but since you have acquitted me on "soul and conscience," you cannot try me again; and, since I am not Cameron, you cannot try me for Cameron's treasons. I have had my revenge of my father's enemy, and I might have had more. He once felt the *dead grip*[1] of a Gordon, and he should have felt it again if he had not called me his son, and blessed me as my father once did. If you had sent me to the Grassmarket, I would have been hanged as a Cameron, for it is better for one of that name than mine to die the death of a dog: but, since you have set me free, I will live free as a Gordon."

This extraordinary appeal astonished and confounded his hearers. They were ashamed of their mistaken judgment, and dismayed at the dilemma. They could neither prove him to be a Cameron nor a Gordon, except by his own avowal, which might be false either in the first or second cause; and after some consultation with the secretary of state, it was agreed to transport him privately to France. But on his road to a seaport, his escort was attacked by a troop of wild men and women, who fought with the fury of Arabs till they had rescued their leader, whose name remained celebrated till within the last sixty years as the most formidable of the gipsy tribe.

[1] The grasp of a drowning man.

WAT PRINGLE O' THE YAIR.

On Thursday evening, the 11th of September, 1645, Walter Pringle, an old soldier, came to the farm-house of Fauldshape, then possessed by Robert Hogg, and tapping at the window, he called out, "Are ye waukin, Robin?"

"No, I think hardly," said Robin. "But aince I hae rubbit my een an' considered a wee bit, I'll tell ye whether I'm waking or no. But wha is it that's so kind as to speer?"

"An auld friend, Robin, an' ane that never comes t'ye wi' a new face. But, O Robin, bestir yoursel, for it's mair than time. Your kye are a' gane an' a good part o' your sheep stock, an' your son Will's on in the bed where he used to lie, an' a' is in outer confusion."

"Deil's i' the body. Did ever any mortal hear sic a story as that? Wha are ye ava?"

"It's me, Robin, it's me."

"Oo, I daresay it is, I hae little doubt o' that; but who me is, that's another question. I shall soon see, however."

By this time Robin was hurrying on his clothes and opening the door, there he found Wat Pringle leaning on the window sill; he asked him what was the matter.

"O Robin, Robin! ye hae been lying snorkin' an sleepin' there, little thinkin' o' the judgment that's come ower ye! That bloody monster Montrose, for whom we were a' obliged to gang into mourning, an' keep a fast day; that man wha has murdered more than a hunder thousand good Protestant Christians, is come wi' his great army o' Irish an' Highland papists, an' they hae laid down their leaguer at the head o' Philip-haugh there, down aneith ye, an' the hale country is to be herried stoop an' roop; an' as your's is ane o' the nearest farms, they hae begun wi' you. Your kyes' a' gane, for I met them an' challenged them; and the reavers speered gin the beasts were mine, an' I said they were not, but they were honest Robin Hogg's, a man that could unco ill afford to lose them. 'Well, let him come to head-quarters to-morrow,' said one, 'and he shall be paid for both them and the sheep in good hard gold.'

"'In good hard steel you mean, I suppose,' said I, 'as that is the way Montrose generally pays his debts.'

"'And the best way too for a set of whining rebel Covenanters,' said he.

"'We are obliged to you for your kind and generous intentions, captain,' says I. 'There is no doubt but that men must have meat, if it is to be got in the country. But I can tell you that you will not find a single friend in all this country except Lord Traquair. He's the man for you. But surrounded as he is wi' true Covenanters, he has very little power; therefore the sooner ye set off to the Borders o' the popish an' prelatic countries, it will be the better for ye.'

"'Perhaps you are not far in the wrong, old carl,' said he; 'I suspect every man in this country for a rebel and a traitor.'

"'You do not know where you are, or what you are doing,' said I; for I wanted to detain him, always thinking your son Will would come to the rescue. 'You have only fought with the Fife baillies and their raw militia, an' the northern Lowlanders, wha never could fight ony. But, billy, ye never fought the true Borderers! ye never crossed arms wi' the Scotts, the Pringles, the Kers, and the Elliots, an' a hunder mae sma' but brave clans. Dear man! ye see that I'm nothing but an auld broken down soldier; but I'm a Pringle, and afore the morn at noon, I could bring as mony men at my back as would cut your great papish army a' to ribbons.'

"'Well said, old Pringle!' said he; 'and the sooner you bring your army of Borderers the better. I shall be most happy to meet with you.'

"'And now you know my name is auld Wat Pringle,' said I; 'gin we meet again, wha am I to speer for?'

"'Captain Nisbet,' said he, 'or Sir Philip Nisbet, any of them you please. Good-b'ye, old Pringle.' And now, Robin, it is in vain to pursue the kye, for they're in the camp, and a' slaughtered by this time; it was on the top of Carterhaugh-Cants that I met wi' them, an' the sodgers war just deeing for sheer hunger. But O man, I think the sheep might be rescued by a good dog. Where in the world is your son Will?"

"O, after the hizzies, I daresay. But if he kend there had been ony battling asteer, the lasses might hae lien their lanes for him the night. But I'll gang an' look after my kye, an' gie in my claim, for there will be mae claims than mine to gie in the night. Foul fa' the runnagate papish lowns, for I thought they had gane up Teviotdale."

"Sae we a' thought, Robin; but true it is that there they are landit this afternoon, and the mist has been sae pitch dark, that the Selkirk folks never kend o' them till the troopers came to the cross. But it seems that he is rather a discreet man that

Montrose, for he wadna let his foot soldiers, his Irish, an' Highlanders come into Selkirk at a', for fear o' plundering the hale town, but sent them down by Hearthope-Burn, an' through at the fit o' the Yarrow; an' there they lie in three divisions, wi' their faces to the plain, an' their backs to the river an' the forest, sae that whaever attacks them maun attack them face to face. Their general an' his horsemen, who pretend a' to be a kind o' gentlemen, are lying in Selkirk."

"O, plague on them! they are the blackest sight ever came into the forest. Ye never brought a piece of as bad news a' your days as this, Wat Pringle. I wadna wonder that they lay in that strong place, until they eat up every cow and sheep in Ettrick forest, an' then what's to become o' us a'. Wae be to them for a set o' greedy hallions! I wish they were a' o'er the Cairn o' Mount again."

"But, Robin Hogg, an' ye can keep a secret, I can tell you ane o' the maist extraordinary that you ever heard a' the days o' your life, but mind it is atween you an' me, and ye're no to let it o'er the tap o' your tongue afore the morn at twal o'clock."

"O, that's naething! I'll keep it a month if it's of any consequence."

"Weel, ye see, as I was coming doiting up aneath Galashiels this afternoon among the mist, which was sae dark that I could hardly see my finger afore me—it was sae dark that I was just thinking to mysel it was rather judgment-like awsome, and that Providence had some great end to accomplish, for it was really like the Egyptian darkness, 'darkness which might be felt.' An' as I was gaun hingin' down my head, an' thinkin' what convulsion was next to break out in this terrible time o' bloodshed an' slaughter—God be my witness if I didna hear a roar and a sound coming along the ground that gart a' the hairs on my head creep, for I thought it was an earthquake, an' I fand the very yird dinnling aneath my feet, an' what should I meet on the instant but a body of cavalry coming at full trot, an' a' mountit in glittering armour, an' wi' the darkness o' the mist, the horses an' men lookit twice as big an' tall as they were. I never saw a grander-like sight a' my life. 'Halt!' cried the captain of the vanguard. 'Hilloa! old man, come hither! Are you a scout or watcher here?'

"'No, I am neither,' said I.

"'Be sure of what you say,' returned he, 'for we have cut down every man whom we have met in this darkness, and, with our general's permission, I must do the same with you.'

"'Hout, man!' says I again, 'ye'll surely not cut down an auld broken soldier gaun seekin' his bread?"

"'Then if you would save your life, tell me instantly where Montrose and his army are lying?'

"'But I maun first ken whether I'm speaking to friends or foes,' said I, 'for I suspect that you are Montrose's men, an' if you be, you will find yoursels nae very welcome guests in this country; an' I hae been ower lang a soldier to set my life at a bawbee, when I thought my country or religion was in danger.'

"'So you have been a soldier then?'

"'That I hae to my loss! I was in the Scottish army all the time it was in England, and for a' the blood that was shed we might as weel hae staid at hame.'

"'And are you a native of this district?'

"'Yes, I am. I am standing within a mile of the place where I was born and bred.'

"'Oho! then you may be a valuable acquaintance. Allow me to conduct you to our general.'

"The regiments passed us, and I might be deceived by the mist, but I think there might be about ten thousand of them, the finest soldiers and horses I ever saw. The general was riding with some gentlemen in front of the last division, and whenever I saw him I knew well the intrepid and stern face of Sir David Leslie.[1] I made a soldier's obeisance, and a proud man I was when he recognized me, and named me at the very first. He then took me aside, and asked if I could tell him in what direction Montrose was lying?

"'He's lying within three Scots miles o' you, general,' said I. 'I can speak out freely now, for I ken I'm among friends. But strange to say you have turned your back on him, and have gone clean by him.'

"'I know that,' said he; 'but I have taken this path to avoid and cheat the Earl of Traquair's outposts, whose charge it is, I understand, to watch every road leading towards the army; but of course would never think of guarding those that led by it.' He then took out a blotch of a plan which he had made himself from some information he had got about Lothian, and asked me a hundred questions, all of which I answered to the point, and at last said, 'Well, Pringle, you must meet me at the Lindean church to-morrow before the break of day, for I have not a man in my army acquainted with the passes of the country, and your punctual attendance may be of more benefit to the peace and reformed religion of Scotland than you can comprehend.'

"'I'll come, General Leslie, I'll come,' said I, 'if God spare me life and health; an' I'll put you on a plan too by which yon army o' outlandish papishes will never be a morsel to you. We hae stood some hard stoures thegither afore now, general, an' we'll try another yet. In the meantime, I maun gang

[1] In consequence of the successes of Montrose over the raw levies opposed to him, and especially his victory at Kilsyth, Sir David Leslie with his well-trained cavalry was detached from the Scottish troops in England, to oppose the hitherto irresistible invader; and the confidence reposed in his military abilities was well justified, by his skilful surprise of the royalists and his victory over the great marquis at Philliphaugh. For this success the Scottish committee of estates voted to him a gift of 50,000 merks and a gold chain. His stern disposition and blunt manners are accurately described in the tale.—Ed.

ower the night an' see exactly how they're lying.' An' here I am, sae that ye see, Robin, there will be sic a day on that haugh-head the morn as never was in Ettrick forest sin' the warld stood up. Aih, mercy on us, what o' bloody bouks will be lying hereabouts or the morn at e'en!"

"Wat Pringle, ye gar my heart grue, to think about brethren mangling an' butchering ane another in this quiet an' peaceable wilderness! I wonder where that great bloustering blockhead, my son Will, can be. Sorra that he had a woman buckled on his back, for he canna bide frae them either night or day. If he kenn'd General Leslie were here, he wad be at him before twal o'clock at night. He rode a' the way to Carlisle to get a smash at the papishes, and a' that he got was a bloody snout. He's the greatest ram-stam gomeral that I ever saw, for deil haet he's feared for under the sun. Hilloa! here he comes, like the son of Nimshi. Whaten a gate o' riding's that, ye fool?"

"Oh, father, is this you? Are you an' auld Wat gaun down to join Montrose's army? Twa braw sodgers ye'll make."

"Better than ony headlong gowk like you. But I'm gaun on a mair melancholy subject; they have, it seems, driven a' our kye to the camp."

"Ay, an' cuttit them a' into collops lang syne. I followed an' agreed wi' them about the price, an' saw our bonny beasts knocked down, an' a great part o' them eaten afore the life was weel out o' them."

"Deil be i' their greedy gams! We're ruined, son Will! we're ruined! What will Harden say to us? Ye said ye had made a price wi' them: did ye get any o' their siller?"

"D'ye think I was to come away wanting it? I wad hae foughten every mother's son o' them afore I had letten them take my auld father's kye for nothing. But indeed they never offered—only they were perishing o' hunger, an' coudna be put aff."

"Come, now, tell us a' about the army, Will," said Pringle. "Are they weel clad and weel armed?"

"Oo ay, they're weel clad an' weel armed, but rather ill off for shoon. Ilka man has a sword an' a gun, a knapsack an' a durk."

"And have they ony cannons?"

"Ay, a kind o' lang sma' things; no like the Carlisle cannons though; and ye never saw ony thing sae capitally placed as they are. But nae thanks to them, for they were trenches made to their hand by some of the auld black Douglases, an' they hae had naething ado but just to clear them out a bit. Sae they hae a half-moon on the hill on each side, an' three lines in the middle, with impervious woods an' the impassable linns of the Yarrow close at their backs, whether they loss the battle or win the battle, they are safe there."

"Dinna be ower sure, Willie, till ye see. But think ye they haenae gotten haud o' none o' your father's sheep?"

"O, man, I hae a capital story to tell you about that. Ye see when I was down at the lines arglebargaining about my father's kye, I secs six Highlanders gaun straight away for our hill, an' suspecting their intent, I was terribly in the fidgets, but the honest man, their commissary, handit me the siller, an' without counting it I rammed it into my pouch, an' off I gallops my whole might; but afore I won Skeilshaugh they had six or eight scores o' my father's wedders afore them, and just near the Newark swire, I gae my hand ae wave, an' a single whistle wi' my mou' to my dog Ruffler, an' off he sprang like an arrow out of a bow, an' quickly did he reave the Highlanders o' their drove; he brought them back out through them like corn through a riddle, springing ower their shoulders. I was like to dee wi' laughin' when I saw the bodies rinnin' bufflin' through the heather in their philabegs. They were sae enraged at the poor animal, that two or three o' them fired at him, but that put him far madder, for he thought they were shooting at hares, an' ran yauffin', an' whiskin', an' huntin', till he set a' the sheep ower the hill, rinnin' like wild deers, an' the hungry Highlanders had e'en to come back wi' their fingers i' their mouths. But the Scotts an' the Pringles are a' rising with one consent to defend their country, an' there will be an awfu' stramash soon."

"Maybe sooner than ye think, Willie Hogg," said Pringle.

"For goodness' sake, haud your tongue," cried Robin, "an' dinna tell Will aught about yon, else he'll never see the morn at e'en; an' I canna do verra weel wantin' him, gowk as he is. Come away hame, callant; our house may need your strong arm to defend it afore the morn."

Will did as his father bade him, and Wat Pringle, who was well known to everybody thereabouts, went over to the town of Selkirk to pick up what information he could. There he found the townsmen in the utmost consternation, but otherwise all was quiet, and not a soul seemed to know of General Leslie's arrival in the vicinity. After refreshing himself well, he sauntered away down to the Lindean kirk before the break of day, and as soon as he went over Brigland hill, his ears were saluted by an astounding swell of sacred music, which at that still and dark hour of the morning had a most sublime effect. Leslie's whole army had joined in singing a psalm, and then one of their chaplains, of whom they had plenty, said a short prayer.

Leslie was rejoiced when Wat Pringle was announced, and even welcomed him by shaking him by the hand, and instantly asked how they were to proceed. "I can easily tell you that, general," said Wat, "they are lying wi' their backs close to the wood on the linns o' Yarrow, an' they will fire frae behind their trunks in perfect safety, an' should ye break them up they will be in ae minute's time where nane o' your horse can follow them, sae that

ye maun bring them frae their position, an' then hae at them. Gie me the half o' your troops an' your best captain at the head o' them, and I'll lead them by a private an' hidden road into the rear o' the Irish an' Highlanders' army, while ride you straight on up the level haugh. Then, as soon as you hear the sound of a bugle frae the Harehead-wood answer it with a trumpet, and rush on to the battle. But by the time you have given one or two fires sound a retreat, turn your backs and flee, and then we will rush into their strong trenches, and then between our two fires they are gone every mother's son of them."

Now I must tell the result in my own way and my own words, for though that luckless battle has often been described, it has never been truly so, and no man living knows half so much about it as I do. My grandfather, who was born in 1691, and whom I well remember, was personally acquainted with several persons about Selkirk who were eye-witnesses of the battle of Philliphaugh. Now, though I cannot say that I ever heard him recount the circumstances, yet his son William, my uncle, who died lately at the age of ninety-six, has gone over them all to me times innumerable, and pointed out the very individual spots where the chief events happened. It was at the Lingly Burn where the armies separated, and from thence old Wat Pringle, well mounted on a gallant steed, led off two thousand troopers up Phillhope, over at the Fowlshiel's swire, and then by a narrow and difficult path through the Harehead-wood. When they came close behind Montrose's left wing, every trooper tied his horse to a bush and sounded the bugle, which was answered by Leslie's trumpets. This was the first and only warning which the troops of Montrose got of the approach of their powerful enemy. The men were astonished. They had begun to pack up for a march, and had not a general officer with them, while Leslie's dragoons were coming up Philliphaugh upon them at full canter three lines deep. They however hurried into their lines, and the two wings into platoons, and kneeling behind their breastworks, received the first fire of the cavalry in perfect safety, which they returned right in their faces, and brought down a good number of both troopers and horses. Leslie's lines pretended to waver and reel, and at the second fire from the Highlanders they wheeled and fled. Then the shouts from Montrose's lines made all the hills and woods ring, and flinging away their plaids and guns, they drew their swords and pursued down the haugh like madmen, laughing and shouting "Kilsythe for ever!" They heard indeed some screams from the baggage behind the lines, but in that moment of excitement regarded them not in the least. This was occasioned by Wat Pringle and his two thousand troopers on foot rushing into the enemy's trenches and opening a dreadful fire on their backs, while at the same time General Leslie wheeled about and attacked them in front. The fate of the day was then decided in a few minutes. The men thus inclosed between two deadly fires were confounded and dismayed, for the most of them had left their arms and ammunition behind them, and stood there half naked with their swords in their hands. Had they rushed into the impervious recesses of the Harehead-wood, they would not only have been freed from any possible pursuit, but they would have found two thousand gallant steeds standing tied all in a row, and they might all have escaped. But at that dreadful and fatal moment they espied their general coming galloping up the other side of the Ettrick at the head of three hundred cavalry, mostly gentlemen. This apparition broke up David Leslie's lines somewhat, and enabled a great body of the foot to escape from the sanguine field, but then they rushed to meet Montrose—the very worst direction they could take; yet this movement saved his life, and the lives of many of his friends. The men in the trenches fled to the wood for their horses. Leslie, with his left battalion, galloped to the Mill-ford to intercept Montrose, so that the field at that time was in considerable confusion. Montrose, seeing his infantry advancing at a rapid pace in close column, hovered on the other side of the river till they came nigh, and then rushing across, he attacked the enemy first with carabines and then sword in hand. A desperate scuffle ensued here—Montrose, by the assistance of his foot behind, forced his way through Leslie's army, with the loss of about a hundred of his brave little band, and soon reached the forest, where every man shifted for himself, the rallying point being Traquair. But here the remainder of the foot suffered severely before they could gain the wood.[1]

One girl and a child were suffered to escape from Montrose's camp, by Leslie's party, owing to her

[1] In this amusing tale, the Ettrick Shepherd has quoted one of his usual mythical authorities, and with his best matter-of-fact gravity of countenance; but it will be confessed that he describes the circumstances of Montrose's surprisal and the battle of Philliphaugh not only with minuteness, but striking accuracy—this last being a quality too little respected by those authors who write histories in the form of tales and novels. According to the veritable accounts of the surprise and rout of Philliphaugh, Montrose had established and entrenched his infantry on the left bank of the Ettrick, upon the plain of Philliphaugh, while he was himself encamped with his small body of cavalry at a village on the opposite side of the river. But although his army was thus securely posted, there were other circumstances which made this precaution frustrate. He was in retreat with a diminished force; the people of the district were disaffected to the royal cause, so that they afforded him no intelligence of his opponents; and a dense fog obscured the country for miles around, by which every hostile movement was concealed. Strangely enough also, he who had so often defeated his enemies, and who knew so well the value of precaution, was himself surprised, and chiefly through his own remissness, having neglected the superintendence of the patrols and scouts, a precaution which hitherto he had never neglected. Thus, while his whole camp was asleep or in fancied security, Leslie was at hand, and securely enveloping it on every side. In the attack, 2000 of his cavalry were silently sent across the river, who fell upon the rear of the royalist army, while Leslie assailed it in front; and by this double attack, the force of Montrose was broken in a few moments and swept off the field, and himself obliged to flee with a few attendants.—Ed.

youth and singular beauty, which made the whole corps, officers and men, unanimous in saving her. She retired into the Harehead-wood with the child in her arms, weeping bitterly. Old Wat Pringle kept his eye on the girl, and followed in the same direction shortly after. He found her sitting on a gray stone suckling the baby, always letting the tears drop upon his chubby cheek, and kissing them off again.

"I'm feared, poor woman, that ye'll find but cauld quarters here," said Wat. "If ye hae nae siller I'll gie ye some, for I'm no that scarce the night, an' as I hae nae muckle need o't, I'll blithely share it wi' you."

"I thank you kindly, honest man," said she, "but I have some money, only there is such a rage against our people in this quarter, that neither woman nor child is a moment safe from outrage and murder. I'll go anywhere for safety to myself and my hapless baby. He is the only tie now that I have to life, and I cannot tell you the thousandth part of the anxiety I feel for him."

"Nae doubt, nae doubt; folk's ain are aye dear to them, an' the mair helpless the dearer. I hae a bit cot o' my ain, and a daughter that leeves wi' me: gin I could get ye hame, I could answer for your safety. Think ye the bairn wad let me carry him? see gin ye could pit him intil my pock."

"O mercy on us!"

"Na, but it's no sic an ill place as ye trow. I hae carried mony a valuable thing in there. But I'm no sayin' I hae ever carried aught sae valuable as that callant. Poor little chield, if he be spared he'll maybe be somebody yet."

This bag of old Wat's was one something like a sportsman's bag of the largest dimensions, for he was a sort of general carrier to all the gentlemen in the neighbourhood, and a welcome guest in all the principal houses. So the young woman, smiling through tears at the conceit, placed her boy in old Wat's bag with his head out, and as she walked beside him, patted and spoke to him. He was quite delighted, and soon fell sound asleep; and in that way they crossed Phillhope, and reached Wat's cot before sunset, which seems to have been near where the mansion-house of Yair now stands. As they were going over the hill, Wat tried all that he could to find out who she was, but she parried every inquiry, till at length he said, "I'm very muckle interested in you, my bonny woman, an' sae will every ane be that sees you. Now, my name's auld Wat Pringle, what am I to ca' you?"

"O, you may call me either May, June, or July; which you please."

"Then I'll ca' you by the ane o' the three that's nearest us, I'll call you July, an' suppose I pit an *a* to it, it winna spoil the name sair."

"I fear you know more of me than I wish you did. That is indeed my Christian name."

"I suspectit as muckle. I find out a great deal o' things gaun dodgin' about the country. An' what do ye ca' yon thing i' your country that the fo'ks are working at up in the meadow?" She made no answer, but held down her head, while he continued, "O, never mind, never mind, ye're in a bad scrape an' a dangerous country for you, but ye're safe enough wi' auld Wat Pringle. He wadna gie up a dog to be hanged that lippened till him, let be a young lady an' her bairnie wha are innocent of a' the blood sae lately spilt."

"I shall never forget your disinterested kindness while I have life. Pray, is your wife not living, Walter?"

"Hem—hem!—Na, she's no leevin."

"Is it long since you lost her?"

"Hem—hem!—Why, lady, an' the truth maun be tauld, I never had her yet. But I hae a daughter that was laid to my charge when I was a young chap, an' I'm sure I wished her at Jericho an' the ends o' the earth, but there never was a father mair the better of a daughter. Fo'ks shoudna do ill that gude may come, they say; yet I hae been muckle behaden to my Jenny, for she's a good kind-hearted body, an' that ye'll find."

Julia (for we shall now call her by her own name) accordingly found Jenny Pringle a neat coarsish-made girl, about thirty, her hair hanging in what Sir Walter Scott would have called elf-locks, but which old Will Laidlaw denominated pennyworths, all round her cheeks and neck, her face all of one dim greasy colour, but there was a mildness in her eye and smile that spoke the inherent kindness of the heart. She received Julia in perfect silence, merely setting the best seat for her, but with such a look of pity and benevolence as made a deep impression on the heart of the sufferer, more especially the anxiety she showed about the child; for all sorts of human distress, and helpless infancy in particular, melt the female heart. Julia's great concern was how to get home to the north to her friends, but Wat advised her seriously to keep by her humble shelter until the times were somewhat settled, for without a passport from the conquerors there was no safety at that time of even journeying an hour, so irritated was the country against the royal party, whom they conceived to be all papists, spoilers, and murderers, and rejoiced in rooting them out. "But as the troops pass this place early to-morrow," continued Wat, "I'll try if the general will grant me a passport for you. I did him some good, an' though he paid me wi' a purse o' goud, ae good turn deserves another. I fancy I maun ask it for dame Julia Hay?"

"Yes, you may; but I know you will not receive it. Indeed it is far from being safe to let him know I am here. But oh, above all things, try to learn what is become of my husband and father."

Wat waited the next day at the ford, for there were no regular roads or bridges in this country at that period. The military road up Gala water, or

Strath-Gall as it was then called, crossed the water sixty-three times. When General Leslie saw his old friend, he reined his steed and asked what he wanted with him. Wat told him that he wanted a passport to Edinburgh for a young girl named Julia Hay, and her baby.

"What! Lady Julia Hay?" said Leslie.

Wat answered that he supposed it was she. The general shook his head, and held up his hand. "Ah! Pringle, Pringle, she is a bird of a bad feather," cried he; "a blossom of a bad tree! Were it not for the sanctity of her asylum under your roof-tree, I should give her and her little papist brat a passport that would suit her deserts better than any other. Give my compliments to her, and tell her that we have both her father and husband in custody, and that they will both be executed in less than a fortnight. You will see her husband there riding manacled and bound to a dragoon. Do you think I would be guilty of such a dereliction from my duty as grant a safe-conduct to such as she? I shall tell you, as a true covenanted Protestant soldier, what you should do. Just toss her and her bantling over that linn into Tweed." And then with a grim satanic smile, he put spurs to his charger, and left the astonished old soldier standing like a statue in utter consternation; and when that division of the army had all passed, Wat was still standing in the same position looking over the linn.

"Ay, General Leslie! an' these are your tender mercies! 'Od bless us, an' we get sic orders frae a covenanted Christian soldier, what are we to expect frae a pagan, or a neegur, or a papisher, the warst o' them a'? But thae ceevil wars seem to take away a' naturality frae among mankind." Thus talking to himself, Wat went home on very bad terms with General Leslie.

But here he committed a great mistake. He did not intend that Julia should learn the worst of his news, but in the bitterness of his heart he told the whole to his daughter Jenny, that she might see in what predicament their hapless lodger stood, and deprecate the awards of the general. Now, owing to the smallness of the cottage and Wat's agitation, Julia heard some part of what he said, and she would not let poor Jenny have any rest until she told her the whole; pretending that the injuries she had suffered from the world had so seared every feeling of the soul, that nothing could affect either her health or her procedure through life. She had laid her account, she said, to suffer the worst that man could inflict, and she would show her country what a woman could bear for the sake of those she loved. Alas! she did not estimate aright the power of that energy on which she relied; for when she heard that her father and husband were both in custody, and both to be executed in less than a fortnight, her first motion was to hug her child to her bosom with a convulsive grasp, and then, sitting up in the bed and throwing up her hands wildly, she uttered a heart-rending shriek, and fell backward in a state of insensibility.

Now came Jenny Pringle's trial, and a hard one it was. The child was both affrighted and hurt, and was screaming violently; and there was the young and beautiful mother lying in a swoon, apparently lifeless. But Jenny did not desert her post; she carried the child to her father, and attended on the lady herself, who went out of one faint into another during the whole day, and when these ceased, she was not only in a burning fever, but a complete and painful delirium, staring wildly, waving her arms, and uttering words of entire incoherence, but often verging on sublimity. "Without the head!" she exclaimed that very night. "Do the rebel ruffians think to send my beloved husband into heaven without the head? Ay, they would send him to the other place if they could!—but I see a sight which they cannot see. I see my beautiful, my brave, my beloved husband, in the walks of angels, and his sunny locks waving in the breeze of heaven. O sister, won't you wash my hands? See, they are all blood!—all blood! But no, no, don't wash my lips, for though I kissed the bloody head, I would not have it washed off, but to remain there for ever and ever. Sister, is it not dreadful to have nothing left of a beloved husband but his blood upon my lips? Yes, but I have, I have! I have this boy, his own boy, his father's likeness and name. Bring me my boy, sister; but first wash my hands; wash them, wash them!"

They brought her the child, but she could not even see him, but stretched her arms in the contrary direction, and though he cried to be at her, they durst not trust her with him. So Jenny was obliged to bring him up with the pan and the spoon, as she called it, and the lady lay raving like a maniac. She slept none, and never seemed in the least to know where she was: yet these kind-hearted simple people never abated one item of their attention, but sat by her night and day. When the child slept, Jenny rocked the cradle and waited on the mother, and when he waked, old Wat held him on his knee and attended to the sufferer. This they did alternately, but they never once left either the lady or the baby by themselves. It was indeed a heavy task; but the interest that the father and daughter took in the forlorn and deserted pair cannot be described. Never was there a mother's love for her child more intense than Jenny's was for the little nursling thus cast so singularly on her care. He was, moreover, a fine engaging boy. As for old Wat, he had got more money than he and Jenny both could count, for Montrose's military chest was then very rich, owing not only to the spoil of all the great battles he had won, but the contributions raised in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and all the principal towns in the kingdom. And though Wat declared that "he never rippit ane o' the dead men's pouches,

yet the siller poured in on him that day like a shower o' hailstones." The officers and soldiers were quite aware that Wat's stratagem had secured them an easy victory, and every one gave him presents of less or more, and he conceived that it was all sent by Heaven as a provision for the mother and child which had been predestined to come upon him for support; and he generously determined, as the steward of the Almighty, to devote his wealth solely to that purpose.

Meanwhile, Lady Julia's distemper took a new and strange turn, for she began to sit up in the bed and speak distinctly and forcibly, and for a time Wat and Jenny listened to her with awe and astonishment, and said to one another that she was prophesying; but at length they heard that she was answering questions as before a judge with great fervour, till at length her malady drew to a crisis, and she prepared for submitting to the last sentence of the law. She made a regular confession as to a Catholic clergyman, and received an ideal absolution. She then made a speech as to a general audience, declaring that she gloried in the sentence pronounced against her, because that from her earliest remembrance she had made up her mind to lay down her life for her king and the holy Catholic church. She next, to their astonishment, asked to see her boy; and when they brought him, she weened she had parted with him only yesterday. She took him in her arms, embraced him, fondly kissed him, and once more shed a flood of tears over him, and those were the last as well as the first tears she had ever shed since the commencement of her woeful delirium. Then blessing him in the names of the Holy Trinity, the blessed Virgin, and some of the apostles, she returned him decently to Jenny, kneeled, and recommended her soul to the mercy of her Redeemer, and then laying her head decently over an ideal block, was beheaded, and after a few shivers expired.

Wat and his daughter were paralyzed with astonishment; but never doubted that it was a temporary fainting fit caused by some extraordinary excitement; but as no signals of reanimation were visible, Wat ran for the town surgeon, an able and celebrated man. But all attempts at resuscitation proved fruitless; the vital principle was gone, the heart had ceased to beat, and the face was swollen and discoloured, the blood having apparently rushed to the head, on the belief that it was cut off, and would find a vent by the veins of the neck. In this extraordinary manner died the lovely Julia Hay, connected with some of the most noble and ancient families in Scotland, and the youthful wife of a valiant warrior, no one knowing where she was, but all her friends believing that she had perished in the general massacre at Philliphaugh, as they could trace her there, but no further.

Wat having no charge at home now save little Francis Hay, determined on leaving him and his kind foster-mother, Jenny, together for a space, and travelling to the north to learn what had become of his darling boy's father; so on reaching Edinburgh he began his inquiries, but could find no one who either knew or cared anything about the matter. The general answer he got was, that nobody heeded or cared about the lives of men in these days, for the two adverse parties were slaughtering, hanging, and cutting off each other's heads every day. He then sought out the common executioner, but he was a drumbly, drunken stump, and could tell him nothing. He said he did not even know the names of one-half of the people he put down, but that he was very willing to give him a touch of his office for the matter of half a merk, for he had of late thrown off many a prettier man. They were fine going times, he said, but he sometimes got very little pay, and sometimes uncommonly good from gentlemen for hanging them or cutting off their heads. And then the savage sot laughed at the conceit. He said the soldiers were conducting a great number of prisoners through the town one day, and they selected four out of the number, two Irish gentlemen and two from Argyleshire, and brought them to the scaffold without judge or jury, and were going to hang them. "No, masters," says I, "the perquisites and emoluments of this board belong solely to me, and I cannot suffer a bungler to perform a work that requires experience and must be neatly done. I said, neatly done! and so it ought; and now, for a half-mutchkin of brandy, I'll show you how neatly I'll do it, either with the rope or maiden, if you dare trust me. Eh?—eh? What do you say to that?"

"Ye're a queer chap, man," said Wat; "but I hope never to come under your hands."

"You may come under worse hands though, friend. Many a good fellow has entertained the same hopes and been disapppointed. Only half a merk. Nothing! Men's lives are cheaper than dung just now. I made only two silver merks out of all the four I was talking of; but when Montrose and his grand royalists come on, and then Argyle and his saints, oh! I shall have such fine going days! Well, I see you won't deal, so let's have the brandy at any rate; if you won't treat me I shall treat you, so that you shall not go back to the Border and say that Hangie's a bad fellow. He has seen better days, but brandy was his ruin. He was once condemned to be hung, and now he is what he is."

Wat ordered the brandy and paid for it, but took care to drink as little of it as possible, of which his associate did not much complain; and after they had finished, the executioner led him away a few doors across the Parliament Close, and bid him ask there for a Mr. Carstairs, the clerk of the criminal court, who would give him what information he wanted; and by all means to return to him at the Blue Bell, and he would give him the history of a hangman.

Wat found Mr. Carstairs—a little old gray-headed man, with eyes like a ferret—who answered to Wat's request that there were certain fees to be

paid for every extract taken out of his journal, and until these were laid down he turned not up the alphabet. Wat asked what were the regular dues. "Joost thretty pennies, carle," said he, "an' I'll thank ye for the soom."

"Man, thretty pennies are unco mony pennies for answering a ceevil an' necessary question, but I'll gi'e ye a siller merk."

"Aweel, aweel! Ye may try me wi' that i' the first place," said the clerk. Wat laid down the money, when the honest man returned him two-thirds of it. His thretty pennies came only to two-pence-halfpenny, it being denominated in Scots money. He found there had been two Hays executed, a baronet and a young nobleman, but whether they were married or unmarried he could not tell, or anything further about them, save that they had both lost their heads; of that he was certain. One of them had been on the roll for execution before, and was liberated by a party of his Catholic friends, but had lately suffered the last sentence of the law.

When the day of Sir Francis Hay's execution was stated he was struck dumb with amazement, for it turned out to be the very day and hour, and as near as could be calculated the very instant, when his poor, devoted, but distracted wife died by the same blow. I have heard and read of some things approximating to this, but never of a sympathetic feeling so decisive. Verily there "be many things in heaven and earth that are not dreamed of in man's philosophy."

Wat returned to the Blue Bell, but found his crony the hangman too far gone to give him his history that night, which the other was rather curious to hear. The important story was begun many times, but like Corporal Trim's story of the King of Bohemia, it never got further. "Well, you see, my father was a baronet. Do you understand that?"

"Yes, I think I do."

"Because if you do not understand, it is needless for me to go on. A baronet, you see, is the head of the commons. Do you understand that? That is (*hick*) he is in the rank next to nobility."

"Yes, I think he is."

"Well (*hick*), well—I—think so—too. And my mother was an hon. right hon. though (*hick*). Do you understand that? Mind—take—that along with you (*hick*), else it is needless—for—me to proceed. I was the—third of five—devil of a boy—O, but I forgot to tell you that—my—father was a baronet—eh!—Would not like a tidd of the tow, would you? Ha—ha—ha!—would be grand sport!—Here's to General Leslie."

Wat was obliged to quit the son of a baronet, and the next morning he set out for the north, to see if there remained any chance for his dear little foster-son regaining his lands and honours. I am at fault here, for I do not know where the fine estate of Dalgetty lay. I think, perhaps, on the banks of the Don; for I know that Wat Pringle journeyed by Perth and through Strathmore. However, the first information he got concerning the object of his journey was from a pedlar of Aberdeen, whom he overtook at a place called Banchony-Fernan, or some such daft-like Highland name; and this body, in his broad Scandinavian dialect, told Wat all that he desired to know. He confirmed the day and the hour that Sir Francis suffered, for he had been present at it; and on his reciting part of the loyal sufferer's last speech, judge of Wat's wonderment when he heard they were the very same words pronounced by Lady Julia before her marvellous execution. And on Wat inquiring who was the heir to the estate, the pedlar, whose name was Muir, or perhaps Mair, said, "Eh, mun! the kurk and the steete hiv tucken them all untee their ein hunds. The land's fat they ca' quuster'd and neebuddy can ave it, sin-ing he hiv tucken the kivinents. Now Frank wudna hiv tucken the kivinents if gi'en hum a Mud-Mar: but whut dis he dee but reeses a rugement, and thucht tee kull the kivinent mun every saul o' thum: and he gurt several theesands of them slupp in thur beets and thur sheen tee. He murried a vury swat dar ying liddy, and she hid a seen; but when the kivinent men beguid to come reend hum, he sent hur awa to a pleece they call the Beerder, to be suff out of the wee, and they nuwer saw't eether agin."

"And then if that boy is leevin'," said Wat, "will he no heir his father's estates an' titles?"

"Ney, ney, min! ney jist noo. But thungs wunni lung continee thus gate. We're no to be all our days rooled and trimpled on bee a whun bleedy-mundit munisters; and then when thungs come all reend agin, the wee laddie will git his father's prup-perty." Having got all from the pedlar which he went to the north to learn, he treated him well at the little change-house beside the kirk; and there he told the astonished vendor of small wares, that the sole heir of that ancient and illustrious race was living in his house and under his protection, his mother likewise being dead.

"Eh! guid kinshens min, but that's a sungilar piece o' noos!" said Mair. "Then I cun be tulling you fat ye mebee dunna kene, that he has seme o' the bust bleed of a' Scotland in his vens, and as tumes cunna bude thus gate, that wee laddie will be a mun yet worth thousands a year."

Wat then, by the pedlar's advice, went to the sheriff-clerk of Aberdeen, and made him take a register of the boy's birth, name, and lineage, that in case of any change of government the true heir might inherit the property. Wat then returned home, and found his daughter and darling child quite well; but in a very short time after that, to their unspeakable grief, the boy vanished. Wat ran over all the town and the country in the neighbourhood, but could hear nothing of the child, save that one woman who lived on the sandbed said that

"she saw him gaun toddlin' about the water-side, and a man, a stranger to her, ran an' liftit him, an' gae him a cuff on the lug for gangin' sae near a muckle water;" and this was the last news that Wat and Jenny heard of their beloved child, the sole heir to an ancient and valuable estate, and it was conjectured that he had been drowned in the river, although his body was never found.

Wat was the more confirmed in this by an extraordinary incident which befell him. On coming up a sequestered loaning close by Hawick in the twilight, he met with a lady without her head carrying a child at her breast, and frightened as he was, he recognized the child as Lady Julia's, not as he was when he was lost, but precisely as he was on that day his father and mother died; and that was the anniversary of the day. The appalling apparition was seen by other three men and a woman that same night; but it was too much for honest Wat Pringle; he took to his bed, from which he never arose again, although he lingered on for some months in a very deranged and unsettled state of mind.

This may seem a strange unnatural story, but what is stranger still, that apparition of a lady without her head pressing a baby to her breast, continued to walk annually on the same night and on the same lane for at least one hundred and fifty years, and I think about forty of these within my own recollection. The thing was so well certified and believed, that no persons in all that quarter of the town in the vicinity of the ghost's walk would cross their thresholds that night. At length a resolute fellow took it into his head to watch the ghost with a loaded gun, and he had very shortly taken his station when the ghost made its appearance. According to his own account, he challenged it, but it would neither stop nor answer; on which, being in a state of terrible trepidation, he fired and shot a baker, an excellent young man, through the heart, who died on the spot. The aggressor was tried at the judiciary circuit court at Jedburgh, and found guilty by the jury of manslaughter only, although the judge's charge expressed a doubt that there was some matter of jealousy between the deceased and his slayer, as the sister of the former, in the course of her examination, said that her brother had once been taken for the ghost previously, and had been the cause of great alarm. There was no more word of the ghost for a number of years, but a most respectable widow, who was a servant to my parents, and visits us once every two or three years, told me that the lady without the head, and pressing a baby to her bosom, had again been seen of late years.

Jenny Pringle, a girl of fortune for those days, thanks to the battle of Philliphaugh and a certain other windfall, was married in 1656 to her half cousin, Robert Pringle, who afterwards took some extensive farms about Teviot side, and their offspring are numerous and respectable to this day. One day, when this Robert Pringle was giving a great feast to the neighbouring gentlemen and farmers, the guests had mostly arrived and were sauntering about the green until the dinner was ready, when they saw a gentleman come riding briskly over the Windy-brow; and many conjectures were bandied about who it could be, but none could guess; and when he came up to the group and bid them good day, still none of them knew him. However, Pringle, with genuine Border hospitality, went forward to the stranger, and after a homely salutation desired him to alight.

"Are you Robert Pringle of Bidrule?" said the stranger.

"I wat weel, lad, that I'm a' ye'll get for him."

"Then I have ridden upwards of a hundred and fifty miles to see you and your wife."

"Faith, lad, an' ye hae muckle to see when ye have come. I hae hardly kenn'd anybody travel sae far on as frivolous an errand. But you're welcome howsomever. If ye had come but three miles to see Jenny an' me, that's introduction enough, let be a hunder an' fifty, an' as we're just gaun to sit down to our dinner, ye've come i' clipping-time at ony rate. Only tell me wha I'm to introduce to Jenny?"

"I would rather introduce myself, if you please." So in they all went to their dinner.

Mrs. Pringle stood beside her chair at the head of the table, and took every gentleman's hand that came up, but her eyes continued fixed on the handsome young stranger who stood at the lower end. At length she broke away, overturning some plates and spoons, and screaming out in an ecstasy of joy—"Lord forgie me, if it's no my ain wee Francie!" He was nearly six feet high, but nevertheless, regardless of all present, she flew to him, clasped him round the neck, and kissed him over and over again, and then cried for joy till her heart was like to burst. It was little dinner that Jenny Pringle took that day, for her happiness was more than she could brook; she had always believed that the boy had been drowned in the river, until she saw him once more in her own house at her own table; and she was never weary of asking him questions.

It was the Aberdeen pedlar who stole him, for the sake of a reward, and took him safely home to his maternal uncle, whose small but valuable estate he then possessed; but he found his father's property so much dilapidated by the Covenanters, and under wadsets that he could not redeem, so that he could not obtain possession. He remained there several weeks, and the same endearments passed between Jenny Pringle and him as if they had been mother and son, for, as he said, he never knew any other parent, and he regarded her as such, and would do so while he lived.

When he was obliged to take his leave, Jenny said to him, "Now, Francie, my man, tell me how muckle it will tak' to buy up the wadsets on your father's estate?" He said that a part of it was not redeemable, but that nearly two-thirds of it was so,

and since the restoration, as the rightful heir, he could get it for a very small matter—about three thousand pounds Scots money.

"Aweel, my bonny man," quoth Jenny, "ye came to my father and me by a strange providence, but there was plenty came wi' you, and a blessing wi' it, for Robie an' I hae trebled it, an' I hae a gayin muckle wallet fu' o' gowd that has never seen the light yet. I hae always lookit on a' that money as your ain, an' meant to lay it a' out on your education an' settlement in the warld, sae ye sanna want as muckle to redeem your father's estate. But this maun a' be wi' Robie's permission, for though I hae keepit a pose o' my ain in case o' accidents, yet ye ken me an' a' that I ha'e are his now."

"My permission!" exclaimed Pringle; "my trulies, my woman, ye's ha'e my permission, an' if the bonny douce lad needs the double o't it shall be forthcoming. Ye ha'e been a blessed wife to me, an' there's no ae thing ye can propose that I winna gang in wi'. But I maun ride away north wi' him mysel' to the kingdom o' Fife, an' see that he get right possession an' investment, for they young genteel-bred birkies dinna ken verra weel about business. I confess I like the callant amaist as wel as he war my ain."

Accordingly Mr. Pringle set him home, whether to Dalgetty in Fife or Aberdeenshire I am uncertain, though I think the latter; advanced what money he required, and got him fairly settled in a part of his late father's property, called Dalmagh. He visited the Pringles once every year, and at length married their eldest child, Helen, so that he became Jenny's son—in reality.

END OF FIRST VOLUME

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